

**FAR WEST TEXAS WATER PLANNING GROUP
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Monday, November 23, 2009

Conducted via videoconference at the following locations:

2:00 PM (MST) at:

**Carlos M. Ramirez Tech2O Water Resources Learning Center
10751 Montana Avenue, El Paso, Texas**

and

3:00 PM (CST) at:

**Sul Ross State University, Warnock Science Building, WSB 101
East Highway 90, Gate 2, Alpine, TX 79832**

MINUTES

Committee Members Present	Committee Members Absent
Janet Adams, Groundwater Districts	Teresa Todd, Legislative, Exec. Committee
Ed Archuleta, Municipalities, Vice Chairman	Becky Brewster, Municipalities, Exec. Com. Alt.
Tom Beard, Agriculture, Chairman	
Dave Hall, Public, Executive Committee	Others Present
Chuy Reyes, Water Districts, Exec. Committee Alt.	Scott Reinert, E. Archuleta alt.
	Barbara Kauffman, RGCOG

I. Roll call and determination of quorum.

Mr. Beard called the meeting to order, established that a quorum was present and that notice of the meeting had been properly posted. Mr. Beard and Ms. Adams were present at the Alpine location and the rest of the participants were in El Paso.

II. Discussion and possible action on policy recommendations to be included in the regional plan.

The committee members worked from an annotated copy of sections 8.1 and 8.2 from the 2006 regional water plan. Mr. Ashworth provided comments on various recommendations from the previous planning cycle, as a starting point for committee review. That file was dated November 20, 2009 and titled John Ashworth Comments on Chapter 8 Recommendations. Committee members reviewed each bullet point under section 8.2 in order.

- 1. More local planning initiatives.** Consensus was reached that the paragraph should emphasize loss of local control, expanding the current discussion. The sentence referring to a PGMA in El Paso County was removed. Mr. Archuleta stated that he would draft a new bullet point addressing the need to include wastewater and reclaimed water in the regional water planning process. Mr. Beard and Ms. Adams questioned whether the SB450 language was still relevant. Mr. Archuleta said he believes it is, but no consensus was reached on the point.
- 2. Reimbursement of reasonable expenses.** Consensus was reached to delete.
- 3. Ability to contract.** Consensus was reached to delete.
- 4. Eliminate the unfunded mandate.** Consensus was reached to retain the paragraph with minor wording changes deleting the phrase "In a time of record surpluses".
- 5. Planning member training.** Consensus was reached to delete.
- 6. Modification of demand numbers.** Consensus was reached to retain.
- 7. Funding for rural data collection.** Consensus was reached to retain.
- 8. Open records exception for private water data.** Consensus was reached to retain.

9. Plan implementation. Consensus was reached to retain this paragraph, with additional language to be provided by Mr. Archuleta addressing the need to provide funding for implementation of plan recommendations.

10. Groundwater Management Area Councils. Consensus was reached to delete as GMACs have been dissolved.

11. Regional planning cycles. Extensive discussion on this point centered around TAGD's proposal to push the due dates GCDs are required to meet back to better coincide with regional water planning cycle schedules. Ms. Adams drafted a proposed schedule to be included in the Chapter 8 recommendations. Mr. Beard will draft additional language addressing these points, as well as the collapsing planning cycle which leaves no time for the regions to prepare their plans. Additional language will recommend 10 year planning cycles, rather than the current 5 year cycle. Consensus was reached on these modifications.

12. Strategy economic analysis. Consensus was reached to delete.

13. In-stream flows. Consensus was reached to delete.

14. Salt cedar eradication. Consensus was reached to delete.

15. Data needs.

a. Irrigation surveys. Mr. Reyes & Mr. Archuleta will draft new language focusing on the need for a real-time information system focusing on amount of water used, type of use and point of use.

b. Rio Grande Alluvium. Consensus was reached to delete.

c. Pecos River gain-loss study. Consensus was reached to delete.

d. Diablo Plateau groundwater availability. Consensus was reached to delete.

e. Other aquifers water availability studies. Consensus was reached to delete.

f. Presidio Bolson GAM. Consensus was reached to delete.

g. Brewster Co. Cretaceous limestone. J. Ashworth will be consulted as to current relevance.

h. New: Transboundary assessment of the Mesilla Bolson. Mr. Archuleta will draft new language.

i. New: Rio Grande Project integrated data management system. Mr. Archuleta will draft new language focusing on better management and decision-making of irrigation releases and flood control.

j. New: Funding for the Rio Grande Salinity Management Coalition and salinity research. Mr. Archuleta will draft new language.

Committee members also discussed whether section 8-3, policy issues, was still relevant or necessary. While Mr. Beard and Ms. Adams both felt that the section was outdated and irrelevant, and should therefore be deleted, Mr. Archuleta disagreed. He offered to rewrite the section, updating it with current priorities, and correlating the recommendations with broader policy issues.

III. Adjourn.

Mr. Beard adjourned the meeting at 3:02 PM (Mountain time).