

MINUTES
REGION H WATER PLANNING GROUP MEETING
10:00 A.M.
JANUARY 6, 2010
SAN JACINTO RIVER AUTHORITY OFFICE
LAKE CONROE DAM
1577 DAMSITE ROAD
CONROE, TEXAS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Roosevelt Alexander, John R. Bartos, John Blount, Robert Bruner, Reed Eichelberger, Mark Evans, Art Henson, John Hofmann, John Howard, Robert Istre, Gena Leathers, Ted Long, Marvin Marcell, Ron Neighbors, Jimmie Schindewolf, William Teer, Steve Tyler, Danny Vance, C. Harold Wallace, and Pudge Willcox

DESIGNATED ALTERNATES: Lisa Lattu for Jun Chang and Mike O'Connell for Bob Hebert

MEMBERS ABSENT: Glynn Leiper and James Morrison

NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Wayne Ahrens, William Schubert for Rebecca Hensley, and David Meeseey for Temple McKinnon

PRESIDING: Mark Evans, Chair

CALL TO ORDER PUBLIC MEETING AT 10:12 A.M.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2, 2009 MEETING

Item deferred.

RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS 4 THROUGH 11

Dan Davis with Montgomery County Utility District No. 8 was introduced to the group. He had a procedural question related to the submittal of comments on the plan. Jace Houston explained the process, including the submittal of comments on the draft plan.

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON THE SELECTION OF A REGION H LIAISON TO REGION I

Mr. Evans explained that Steve Tyler has been serving as the Region H liaison to Region I, but that Mr. Tyler has asked to be replaced. Ron Neighbors stated that further discussion should take place before selecting a replacement for Mr. Tyler, including possible discussions with the executive committee or nominating committee. The item was deferred.

RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM CONSULTANT REGARDING THE CONSIDERATION OF UNIQUE RESERVOIR SITES AND UNIQUE STREAM SEGMENTS

Jason Afinowicz with AECOM summarized discussions from the December meeting related to the nominations of Unique Reservoir Sites and Unique Stream Segments. He discussed the consultant's recommendations related to the proposed Unique Reservoir Sites and the Unique Stream Segments, all of which were summarized in a letter and detailed technical memorandum included in the Initially Prepared Plan.

Discussion ensued regarding the recommendations related to reservoir sites, including funding for studies and planning related to same. Jace Houston briefly explained the protocol for planning and the inclusion of proposed sites, including the review process for each site. The purpose, strategies, and the effect of including the proposed sites were discussed in length.

Mr. Evans introduced guests in the audience to the Group, including Montgomery County Judge Alan B. Sadler, Tara Garcia with Representative Brandon Creighton's office, and Luine Hancock with Senator Robert Nichols' office.

Comments on Agenda Item No. 5, related to the Consideration of Unique Reservoir Sites and Unique Stream Segments were received as follows:

Judge Alan B. Sadler discussed the need and availability of funding sources. He stated that he did not want the lack of funding to create an obstacle for further consideration.

Dr. Catherine Albers with the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service briefly discussed the letter submitted by Linda C. Brett, Forest Supervisor. She reiterated the adverse effects to biological, physical, cultural, and heritage resources that the proposed reservoir site would have on the area. Dr. Albers requested that the Forest Service be at the table for further discussions related to the proposed reservoir sites in Montgomery County.

Brandt Mannchen with the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club requested that the Regional Water Planning Group reject the proposed Little Lake Creek Dam as a proposed water management strategy or unique reservoir site. He discussed the Sierra Club's reasons for same.

Tom Ivy with Texas Stream Team reiterated Dr. Catherine Albers' comments and support for the wilderness area.

Mike Winters with Lone Star Trail Hiking Club requested that the Regional Water Planning Group oppose the development of the reservoir in the Little Lake Creek Wilderness Area. He submitted a summary related to the placement of Little Lake Creek Dam, including information related to the impact on the wilderness trails and their opposition to same.

Dave Peterson with the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service discussed concerns of the Forest Service, including the negative affects resulting from urbanization, such

as erosion, reservoir impacts, and invasive aquatic vegetation. He continued by requesting the consideration of alternatives and possible mitigation.

John Copenhaver, President of Lone Star Hiking Trail commented on the impact that the proposed dam would have on the wilderness area in the Sam Houston National Forest. He urged the Group to consider other strategies in their planning efforts.

Mark Evans discussed the separate correspondence related to the agenda item received from Representative Brandon Creighton, Senator Robert Nichols, and Mayor Webb Melder with the City of Conroe.

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON CONSULTANT'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING UNIQUE RESERVOIR SITES AND UNIQUE STREAM SEGMENTS FOR INCLUSION IN CHAPTER 8 OF THE REGIONAL WATER PLAN

Discussion ensued regarding the planning responsibilities of the Group and the need to include the proper parties in discussions. The timeline was discussed pertaining to the submittal of the plan document, including the feasibility of conducting additional studies in a short period of time to allow for the inclusion of the proposed reservoir sites in the planning document. Due to the time constraints and the availability of funding to conduct the needed studies, it was determined that consideration for future reservoir sites should be given in the next planning cycle.

Motion was made by Ron Neighbors to accept the consultant's recommendations and not include the proposed lake sites as Unique Reservoir Sites or the proposed stream segments as Unique Stream Segments for inclusion in Chapter 8 of the Regional Water Plan; seconded by Danny Vance. The motion carried unanimously.

RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM CONSULTANT REGARDING LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE RESULTS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Item deferred.

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUSION IN CHAPTER 8 OF THE REGIONAL WATER PLAN

Item deferred.

RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM CONSULTANT ON THE DRAFT INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN

Jason Afinowicz presented the 2011 Initially Prepared Plan to the Group. He stated that comments could be made on the draft until January 25, 2010. Approval for the Initially Prepared Plan will be requested at the next meeting in February.

RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM CONSULTANT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS FOR PRESENTATION OF THE INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN

Mr. Afinowicz continued by discussing the schedule for the public meetings to receive comment on the Initially Prepared Plan. The following dates were discussed:

- Tuesday, March 30, 2010 – In Houston at the Houston-Galveston Area Council
- Thursday, April 1, 2010 – In Madisonville at the Truman Kimbro Convention Center
- Wednesday, April 7, 2010 – In Conroe at the Lone Star Convention Center

John Bartos requested that reminders be sent out to the Group.

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE FOR PRESENTATION OF THE INITIALLY PREPARED PLAN

Motion was made by Steve Tyler to approve the public meeting schedule as discussed; seconded by John Bartos. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Cindy Loeffler with Texas Parks and Wildlife introduced their representative to replace Rebecca Hensley, William “Jamie” Schubert. She also announced the *Freshwater Inflows: Beyond 2010 Conference* in Corpus Christi, Texas starting on February 8, 2010.

David Meesey with Texas Water Development Board reiterated their availability to answer questions and present information as needed. He discussed the recent email reminder that went out, and the questions that came up related to water management strategies and unique reservoir site designations.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dan Davis thanked the group for the proposed lakes recently submitted and stated that more engineering data would be forthcoming.

NEXT MEETING:

February 3, 2010
San Jacinto River Authority
Lake Conroe Dam
1577 Dam Site Road
Conroe, Texas 77304

ADJOURNED AT 11:40 A.M.