

Agenda with talking points: RWPG Chairs' Conference Call
June 28, 2017 1 pm – 3 pm

- 1. Introductions and opening comments** (Sarah Backhouse, Manager Regional Water Planning)
- 2. Statewide Water Conservation Study** (John Sutton, Manager, Municipal Conservation)
 - A. This item was requested as a topic of discussion on the last call
 - B. Overview of the study and expected deliverables
 - i. The 84th Texas Legislature appropriated funds to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to develop and manage a contract to deliver the most effective and accurate process to measure conservation statewide and quantify sufficient municipal water conservation strategies to meet the conservation goals of the 2016 regional water plans. This work is to be completed by September 1, 2017.
 - ii. The TWDB issued an RFQ and awarded the contract to Averitt & Associates. The TWDB initially identified 235 utilities with a need within the first two planning decades, used conservation to meet that need, and had a water conservation plan. Those utilities were asked utilities to participate. The project also kept in mind representation by region and by size of utility.
 - iii. Averitt & Associated reached out to the regional water planning groups (RWPGs) to inform the planning group of the project and ask for support and the utilities were contacted. Those utilities who agreed to participate were interviewed. The interview provided information on 15 different data points on what conservation activities the utility has implemented.
 - iv. Participating utilities will receive a report that shows the regional water plan's water conservation volume, the utilities' conservation programs already in place, and estimates of any savings or shortfalls to those strategies and goals.
 - v. The utility report will include the actual quantified savings from specific measures adopted by the utility and compare the utility's water conservation plan goals and the RWPG's water conservation goals. The report will also identify practical and fiscally responsible strategies that will allow the utility to meet their RWPG's water conservation goals.
 - vi. A report will also be prepared for each RWPG. The report will assess and quantify the water conservation strategies in the region and include
 - a. the actual quantified savings achieved from the conservation measures used by the RWPG;
 - b. a comparison of the utilities' water conservation plan goals with the RWPG's water conservation volumes; and
 - c. identifying any challenges to implementing the recommended conservation strategies and to achieving water conservation for the individual utilities and the region.
 - vii. The reports to the RWPGs and the participating utilities will
 - a. explain findings and encourage a plan of action;
 - b. provide recommendations on how to ensure meeting the water conservation volumes in the Regional Water Plans; and

- c. communicate the advantages of following best management practices.
 - viii. The deliverables will include the reports as previously mentioned identifying sufficient and appropriate municipal water conservation strategies to meet the conservation goals for each water user group that has conservation as a recommended strategy.
 - ix. A final statewide report will be developed that includes
 - a. a practical method to estimate and measure the implementation of recommended municipal water conservation strategies in the approved 2016 regional water plans;
 - b. a summary of the individual utility and regional reports; and
 - c. a database containing the data used to estimate and measure the implementation of recommended municipal water conservation strategies and the procedure(s) used to produce the final reports from these data.
 - x. These reports and data have the possibility of being used by the utilities in establishing conservation goals when updating their water conservation plans and by the RWPG in identifying appropriate water conservation strategies for use in the regional water plans.
- 3. 85th Legislature Update** (Temple McKinnon, Director, Water Use, Projections, & Planning)
- A. Special Session will begin July 18th.
 - B. Bills that passed relevant to regional water planning include
 - i. **Senate Bill (SB) [347](#)** – Author: Watson. Effective September 1, 2017.
 - a. This bill stipulates that each RWPG, committee, and subcommittee of the RWPG are subject to the Government Code, Chapters 551 (Open Meetings Act) and 552 (Public Information Act).
 - b. Links to Office of Attorney General’s Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act handbooks and training videos have been posted on the TWDB’s [RWP 5th cycle working documents webpage](#) under planning task 10.
 - c. Email any concerns to your RWGP Project Manager and staff will compile for the TWDB’s Office of General Counsel to review and see if there is any additional guidance we can point them to. **Please note the TWDB is not in a position to provide legal advice to outside entities.**
 - ii. **House Bill (HB) [2215](#)** – Author: Price. Effective Immediately.
 - a. This bill synch’s the schedules of the state water plan (SWP) and desired future conditions (DFCs). Groundwater conservation districts will propose DFCs by 5/1/21 and the DFCS must be adopted by 1/5/22. Subsequent DFCs will be proposed and adopted before the end of each future five-year period. Theoretically, this should result in modeled available groundwater being available earlier in each planning cycle. This was a recommendation in the TWDB Legislative Priorities Report, 85th Texas Legislative Session.
 - iii. **SB [1511](#)** – Author: Perry. Effective September 1, 2017. This bill contains several items that impact the RWPGs and the planning process (paraphrased below).
 - a. The bill adds additional requirements to be included in the SWP regarding projects previously given a high priority by the Board for

SWIFT funding. The additional requirements include an assessment of the extent to which projects were implemented in the decade in which they were needed and an analysis of any impediments to the implementation of projects that were not implemented in the decade they were needed.

- b. The bill adds a non-voting member to the RWPGs from the State Soil and Water Conservation Board.
- c. The bill requires that preplanning public input meetings and public hearings related to the initially prepared regional water plan, interregional conflicts, and conflicts regarding groundwater conservation district management plans to be held at a location "readily accessible to the public" within the regional water planning area.
- d. A requirement is added regarding amendments to RWPs, stipulating that RWPGs shall amend their approved RWP to exclude a water management strategy or project if the strategy or project becomes infeasible and shall consider amending the plan to include a feasible strategy or project to address the same need. "Infeasible" is defined as the proposed sponsor having not taken an affirmative vote or other action to make expenditures to construct or file permit applications to implement by the time the projects is projected to be needed in the RWP or SWP.
- e. RWPGs will be allowed to implement simplified planning every other planning cycle in accordance with guidance provided by the TWDB if there are no significant changes to the water availability, water supplies, or water demands in the regional water planning area based upon the RWPG's own initial analysis using updated water availability information. This simplified planning provision requires that an adopted regional water plan be submitted every five years for approval and, at a minimum, include updated groundwater and surface water availability values and meet any new statutory or other planning requirements in effect during each five-year planning cycle.

C. Is there interest from the Chairs' in attending an additional work session with the TWDB Board?

4. 5th cycle initiatives and general timelines (Sarah Backhouse, Manager, Regional Water Planning)

A. Contract amendments

- i. All out the door by 6/1 – please execute and send back to the TWDB as soon as possible. Must be executed by both parties by August 31. We have all back except two.
- ii. Amendments included estimated total study costs, increase in committed funds, first amended scope of work (SOW) and first amended general guidelines for 5th cycle of regional water plan development (Exhibit C). The latter two documents are online on the [RWP 5th cycle working documents webpage](#), under contract documents. Reimbursement for technical or administrative work for tasks added in amendment is eligible back to 4/20/17.

- iii. Moved final plan submittal date (and prioritization submittal) to October 14, 2020
 - iv. Future amendments will be issued for committing additional funds for FY 2018-2019 and 2020. Next amendment will also include updated guidelines for data deliverables (Exhibit D) and anticipated FY18-19 funds, to occur later this year .
- B. Communication of information
- i. Fewer emails with lots of information this cycle – is there any preference to this or more frequent emails? We will continue to point to new guidance requirements as relevant to information being disseminated and upcoming tasks.
- C. Timelines and upcoming deliverables – see [Handout A](#) – **working schedule that will be updated throughout the cycle and is posted on the 5th cycle page**
- i. Sub-Water User Groups (WUGs) deadline: **9/1/17**. This deadline is necessary for structuring new entities in the state water planning database (DB22) prior to releasing the database for consultant use next Spring.
 - a. If this optional approach is utilized, approval will be needed from the planning group prior to the deadline.
 - b. If not utilizing this option, inform your project manager (PM) via email.
 - ii. Projections revision requests due: **1/12/18** (shifted in response to feedback from consultants)
 - a. Planning group approval of submitting draft projections revision requests are subject to regular meeting posting requirements.
 - b. We suggest targeting the identification of wholesale water providers (WWPs) that will be planned for by this deadline (by the end of August we will be providing WWPs for confirmation to RWPGs).
 - iii. Technical Memorandum due: **9/10/18** (contents required are listed in SOW Task 4C, item (1)).
 - a. These include DB22 reports for WUG population projections, water demands, existing water supply, identified water needs, as well as a WUG category summary report and source water available report. The tech memo should also include the documented process to identify potentially feasible water management strategies (WMS), list of any potentially feasible WMS identified to date, and information regarding models used to estimate surface water availabilities and non-modeled available groundwater (MAG) groundwater availabilities.
 - b. If alternative methodologies other than water availability model (WAM) Run 3 for surface water analysis will be used this cycle, the RWPG will need to approve and submit hydrovariances variance requests (this process will follow last cycles and please note there are examples of modeling assumptions in Exhibit C – First Amended General Guidelines for Fifth Cycle of Regional Water Plan Development in Section 3.6.2).
 - c. We also suggest targeting the identification of Major Water Providers that will be planned for this cycle.
 - iv. Developing the SOW for WMS evaluations will follow the same process as last cycle. Consultants must develop a detailed SOW and budget allocations for each strategy.

- a. The first step in this process is for RWPGs to hold a public meeting to determine the process for identifying potentially feasible WMS, and allow for public comment.
- b. Potentially feasible WMS may then be identified and the consultant may propose a SOW for WMS evaluation (Task 5A this cycle). This must be presented to the RWPG for approval with an opportunity for public input).
- c. The proposed SOW will be submitted to TWDB with a request for a notice to proceed. The TWDB will review the SOW and if acceptable, issue a contract amendment to incorporate the SOW and issue a notice to proceed. Like last cycle, the TWDB will provide a template and information sheet on the process.
- v. Initially prepared plan due **3/3/20**.

5. Projections (Yun Cho, Manager, Economic & Demographic Analysis)

- A. Upcoming tasks, supporting data, and timeline
 - i. All draft projections have been released including the remaining non-municipal draft projections and supporting data.
 - ii. The draft projections, methodology summaries, and supporting documentation are all available on the [RWP 5th cycle working documents webpage](#), under Task 2.
 - iii. **Supporting Data** to be released:
 - a. Historical population estimates and GPCDs for utility water user groups (WUGS) (6/30)
 - b. Historical population and water use estimates for county-other WUGs (July)
 - c. Additional manufacturing water use data (July)
 - d. Texas Demographic Center (TDC)'s new county population projections (July/August depending on the TDC release date)
 - iv. **Sub-WUG projection data** - the list must have geographic information including region, county, and basin. Subsequently, population and water demand projection data for each Sub-WUG must be developed by consultants and submitted as part of the revision request by revision request deadline. The revision criteria is provided in Section 2.1 of the Exhibit C.
 - v. **Deadlines for revision requests is 1/12/18** (regions are encouraged to submit earlier if possible).
 - vi. The TWDB coordinates with three agencies (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and Texas Department of Agriculture) for their approval before taking the projections to the TWDB Board for approval.
 - vii. Estimated timeline for taking projections to TWDB Board - March or April 2018.
- B. We will be available to provide any technical assistance or additional data needed for the planning groups during the revision process.
 - i. Will attend RWPG meetings upon request from the planning groups (to give a presentation on draft projections, methodologies, or revision criteria).
 - ii. Will assess and accommodate any needs of meetings or technical calls on projections with consultants.

6. **DB22 Update** (Sabrina Anderson, Team Lead, Water Supply & Strategy Analysis)
 - A. We are currently working with the TWDB IT department to prepare the new DB22 data entry application. The application will look similar to the DB17 version. The changes we are making include improving existing functionality and adding new tools that will assist consultants with their data entry.
 - i. *Examples: WMS Data Checks Module and a tool that will allow users to update WUG water supply volumes in batches rather than having to go into individual application pages to update the data.*
 - B. Once the projection data has been finalized by the RWPGs in January and we have the complete WUG list, we can begin restructuring the DB17 data into the DB22 database using the new utility based WUG data structure so that the DB22 application will be ready for consultants to use in April 2018.
 - C. We are working with the TWDB staff on a rewrite of the Guidelines for Regional Water Planning Data Deliverables, also known as Exhibit D. A draft version will be sent out for consultants to review this fall.
 - D. A conference call with the consultants will be scheduled around September of this year to discuss DB22 data entry and the new resources that will be available to them. If consultants need data sooner than the September conference call, they should contact me and we will provide them with what they need.

7. **Planning housekeeping** (Sarah Backhouse, Manager, Regional Water Planning)
 - A. An updated planning rules pamphlet is on the RWP 5th cycle working documents website – Staff will bring limited copies to upcoming RWPG meetings. We will update this after next rule revision.
 - B. Staff is working on follow up from work session last fall.
 - i. Political Subdivision best practices guide (under development with initial input from the Region N political subdivision).
 - ii. New member guide will be developed soon (goal of helping RWPG members understand their tasks and responsibilities).
 - C. Member survey – 50 percent response rate, 160 written responses
 - i. Will develop FAQs based on common concerns brought to our attention from written feedback.
 - ii. We are also planning to develop program one-pagers for educational material.
 - iii. Some noted that there are room for improvements make planning program more effective but didn't offer suggestions. Pass along any continuing concerns or suggestions to us.
 - D. Chairs feedback on other education material
 - i. The TWDB gives RWP 101 Presentation at the beginning of each cycle. Projections and contract webinars were developed earlier this year. What else would be helpful from us?
 - E. Contract reminders
 - i. Submit invoices and progress reports at least quarterly (required by contract).
 - ii. Submit subcontracts for TWDB acceptance.
 - F. ISWP strategy pages – we will be updating the interactive state water plan this fall to show additional views for WMS and WMS types.

8. **HB4 Stakeholder Committee process/timing** (Sarah Backhouse, Manager, Regional Water Planning)

- A. The 83rd Texas Legislature in 2013 passed HB4, which required RWPGs to develop criteria for prioritizing projects at the regional level.
- B. The HB4 Stakeholder Committee was composed of the Chair's from all the RWPGs. The uniform standards were developed over the course of several meetings and adopted on 11/14/13 by the committee. These were approved by TWDB on 12/5/13. Committee reconvened on 1/13/15 and using the consensus process again determined that no changes to the uniform standards were necessary for the 2016 RWPs. There was agreement that TWDB staff guidance was available for use when prioritizing the 2016 RWP projects, but this guidance was not formally adopted.
- C. Staff recommends meeting every cycle. TWDB available to help organize material and facilitate the meeting. When does the committee want to meet again?

9. Other topics for Chairs

10. Wrap-up and next call topics and date (Sarah Backhouse, Manager, Regional Water Planning)

Supporting Materials/Handouts:

- A. [Preliminary working timeline for 5th planning cycle](#)