

Minutes
Paso del Norte Watershed Council
August 25, 2006 10:30 AM
New Mexico Department of Agriculture
New Mexico State University

In Attendance:

Sue Watts-Chair	Bobby Creel
Julie Maitland-Assistant Chair	Mike Fahy
Ari Michelsen-Treasurer	Jose Lopez
Kevin Bixby	Mike Landis
Chris Brown	Brian Hanson
Inga Groff	Lorenzo Arriaga
Joe Groff	Cynthia Campo
Geri Quisenberry	Steve Smullen
Conrad Keyes	Debra Tellez

1. Convene Meeting 10:45 a.m. –Meeting called to order by Sue Watts.
2. Introductions
 - Those present introduced themselves.
3. Jose Lopez from Ysleta del Sur Pueblo discussed new and on-going projects at the Pueblo.
4. Discussion of the relationship between Paso del Norte Watershed Council and NM-TX Water Commission
 - At the August 25, 2006 meeting of the Management Advisory Committee (MAC) of the NM-TX Water commission, they passed a resolution canceling their October 13, 2000 resolution that established the Paso del Norte Watershed Council.
 - Sue-MAC suggested that Council draw up a resolution re-establishing the Paso del Norte Watershed Council.
 - Ari- A “dissolution” of the Council by the MAC should not affect the contracts currently in place. Questions were also raised about whether there was a legally binding relationship for the Council in regard to the EIS for the Regional Sustainable Water Project where the Council is named as the organization responsible for overseeing mitigation projects associated with the Regional Sustainable Water Project.
 - Bobby-Council does not have to have a resolution, Council merely needs to amend the by-laws and mission statement.
 - Ari- A review was conducted by Irene Tejeda of all Council documents and web references to identify wording linking the Council to the

Commission. A handout of the joint references was distributed to the Council. These are the references and language that need to be reviewed for changes. Chris-Introduced draft resolution re-establishing Paso del Norte Watershed Council. A motion was made to sign the resolution which was followed by discussion Ari-Suggested re-wording the resolution to say “Re-affirming” rather than “re-establishing”, because the Council is continuing it’s functions rather than reorganizing. Other Council members suggested changing the resolution to include all four officers as signers.

- If done as literal minutes need to have a second. . All members voted in favor of the resolution with the amendments. .
- Sue will draft a letter about the “re-affirmation” of the Council that will go to watershed stakeholders.
- Steve Smullen will provide updated distribution list for the ROD for the Sustainable Water Project EIS so that letter referred to above will reach these stakeholders.
- Committee established to review Watershed Council documents and suggest revisions given the change in relationship with the NM-TX Commission. Members: Mike, Steve and Officers.

5. Alternative watershed council organizational structures

- Geri has started looking at structures of other councils to explore what type of organizational arrangements are most effective under different situations and objectives. One question is the Council direction and activity after the WRAS is completed.
- Ari noted that the EPA has already compiled and published information about successful watershed councils. The recommendation was made to review this information to seek answers for questions such as: what are other council’s funding sources? What are other council’s objectives?
- Note then delete: Texas is not using WRAS as the means to develop TMDLs. . Once the WRAS is completed, implementation of recommended actions could possibly be funded through the EPA Targeted Watershed program.
- Sue- Mentioned two types of 319 grants: Capacity building grant and Implementation Grant. We have a capacity building grant now. Council needs to complete the WRAS before considering applying for an implementation grant.

6. Update on URGWOM/ URGWOPS by Keyes

- URGWOM committee will be meeting September 14, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. in Albuquerque.
- URGWOPS-EIS is currently being finalized. Publication is planned for September and shooting for ROD for November.

7. “Other Business”

- Kevin Bixby announced SWEC's annual fundraiser: *On the River-For the River* on September 29, 2006 Downtown Mall in Las Cruces.

8. Paso del Norte Water Task Force update

- Chris-Suggested that the PdNWC put in a bid to be a member of the Task Force
- The next Task Force meeting on will be Sept 29th in Las Cruces
- Task force presently consists of 5 TX, 5 NM and 5 Mexico voting members
- At their last meeting it was recommended that they broaden membership and make meetings open to the public.
- Julie-asked where the budget is coming from to support the Task Force?
Ari- one program is with the Center for Border Health (an education project on reclaimed water in Juarez and El Paso); the Task Force has relied upon Hewlett grant funds but these funds may be ending. .
- Lorenzo-At this time most Task Force funding supports specific projects. There is no unified budget for Task Force. It might change since Task Force is undergoing a by-law revision process.
- Lorenzo-Rio Grande Salinity Program needs a non-federal sponsor and the Task Force may be that sponsor. At the September 29th Task Force meeting, they will discuss a basinwide salinity project.
- Chris-Environmental components Task Force should include the Council because that is a weak spot for the Task Force.
- Julie-In regards to funding overlap-the Rio Grande Alliance in the Albuquerque/Santa Fe area was created because several organizations were working on similar projects and did not communicate with each other. Consequently, they were competing for the same funding.

9. Coordinated Data Base

- The Phase IV COE agreement with TAMU has been signed.
- The USBR 2025 Grant project - a meeting of the Council Technical Committee will be held next week to discuss Coordinated Database user survey responses.

10. 319 Grant

- Geri-RFP's for stakeholder consultants and data survey consultants have been written. Stakeholder consultant RFP went out last week. Data Survey RFP was supposed to go out yesterday; if not it will go out Tuesday or Thursday.
- Starting a stakeholder consultant list within the city, any feed back from council greatly appreciated.

Program Coordinator - Irene Tejada

- Irene is completing translations for the PdNWC website. This will be her last task for the Council as funding has run out for her support. Thank you Irene for the help you've provided to the Council.

11. Treasurer's Report

- Michelsen distributed and reviewed a spreadsheet summary of Council grant awards, fund allocations, expenditures and current balances with the exception of the NMED 319 project. . .

12. Other Business

- Senator Domenici has secured \$1.7 million for EBID to upgrade irrigation system and to conduct a drip-irrigation pilot study.
- IBWC will host meeting on Sept 7-WWF, ACOE and EBID about Canalization EIS. Letters of invitation for a workshop will go out in Oct.

13. Meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.