



## Draft Minutes

**PdNWC Executive Committee (EC) Meeting  
6 April, 2009 9:30-11:45 AM  
USIBWC Conference Room  
4171 N. Mesa, Bldg C, El Paso TX 79902-1441**

**Conrad Keyes, Chair  
Hilary Brinegar, Asst Chair**

**Sue Watts, Secretary  
Ari Michelsen, Treasurer**

### **Present:**

Ari Michelsen-TX Agrilife Research  
Bobby Creel-NMWRRI  
Zhuping Sheng- TX Agrilife Research  
Katrina Marlich-Martich PS  
Conrad Keyes, Jr.-Corps consultant  
Kevin Bixby-SWEC  
Barbara Kauffman-Rio Grande COG  
Sue Watts-TTUHSC  
Gilbert Anaya -USIBWC  
Inga Groff-League of Women Voters  
Joe Groff-Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue  
Peter Bennett-City of LC  
Hilary Brinegar-NMDA  
Julie Maitland-NMDA  
Vanessa Lougheed-UTEP  
Elizabeth Verdecchia-USIBWC  
Daniel Borunda-USIBWC  
Gina Posada-TCEQ  
Mike Landis-USBR  
Woody Irving-USBR  
Bert Cortez-USBR  
Wayne Treers- USBR  
Chris Canavan-NMED

**1-Meeting of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council called to order by Conrad Keyes at 9:35 AM.** Those present introduced themselves.

**2-Approval of the agenda** –Approved without amendment. Action items for next agenda: Kevin Bixby will request that a staffer in Senator Bingaman’s office come to the next meeting and give us an update on funding opportunities. Hilary will ask Erin Ward to furnish submission info for the new transboundary journal she mentioned at the January meeting. Hilary

will contact Aimee Roberson from the USFWS about an update on the reintroduction of the silvery minnow in the Big Bend area.

**3- Approval of minutes from Sept 8, 2008, Nov 7, 2008, Jan 09, 2009, Feb 27, 2009.** Minutes from 3 previous meetings were approved without additional edits. The draft minutes for the Feb 27, 2009 meeting were approved as amended. Secretary Sue Watts will send all approved minutes to Bobby Creel so they can be posted on the PdNWC website.

**4-319(h) Final Financial Report for Phase I and Next Steps – Hilary Brinegar, NMDA,** provided a breakdown of the budget for the Phase I 319(h) grant. A writing group (Hilary Brinegar, Julie Maitland, Jennifer Montoya, Sue Watts) are beginning a proposal for a second phase that will address filling water quality data gaps, further stakeholder outreach, and initial selection and a preliminary plan for the implementation of best management practices to remediate identified impairments. Once a draft proposal is ready, it will be sent to EC and Clean Water Subcommittee members for comment. Proposal selection and subsequent work plan development will not begin until around June 2009, with awards for selected work plans to occur around December 2009 or January 2010. NMDA has agreed to be the fiscal agent again. Any member agency that can provide a letter of support is encouraged to do so.

A motion approving the activities of the writing group and Clean Water Subcommittee passed and they were charged with completing and sending the proposal to the NM Environment Dept.

**5- Presidio Flood Control Rehabilitation update – Daniel Borunda, USIBWC,** reviewed the activities that IBWC is undertaking in the Presidio area to remediate the damage caused by last year's flooding and to improve the levee system to prevent future problems.

A motion was approved for the Chair of the Council to send Commissioner Ruth a letter that expresses the Council's interest in the EIS process for this project and our desire to be notified of scoping meetings and opportunities to comment. The Secretary will distribute the letter to the EC for approval via email.

**6- Potential USBR Funding for FY 2010 and Brief Spread Sheet Prediction for Average 2009 Monthly Flows – Wayne Treers, USBR,** gave a presentation of the expected runoff for the season and the predicted irrigation allotment for spring. **Bert Cortez, USBR,** reported on the challenge grants for the Water for America program. This is a water planning initiative. Funding for the URGWOM hydrologic modeling project for the lower portion of the Rio Grande Project area is moving from the Corps of Engineers office in Albuquerque to the El Paso USBR office.

**7- URGWOM 2009 Planning Model Output with emphasis on the EB and Caballo reservoirs – Zhuping Sheng, Tech Committee Chair,** presented information developed by **Marc Sidlow, USACOE,** about the modeling effort that compares actual to predicted operations over the last year. The model is not yet being used for daily operations.

**8- PdNWC Tech Committee activities – Zhuping Sheng, Tech Committee Chair,** reported on the committee's progress regarding the development of a conceptual model describing surface

water-ground water interactions. Using RiverWare, the initial efforts will focus on the Rincon Valley and will expand from there if successful.

**9- Draft Letter to USIBWC and EPWU about the ROD advisory provisions for the Sustainable Water Project activities – Kevin Bixby, SWEC,** presented a draft letter to be sent to Commissioner Ruth and the head of the El Paso Water Utilities reminding them of the provisions in the ROD for the Regional Sustainable Water Project that stipulate how environmental enhancements are to be funded and implemented.

A motion was approved that the letter was to be sent after EC members had the opportunity to comment on the final draft via email from Secretary Watts.

**10- Updating PdNWC Strategic Plan –** An updated strategic plan had been circulated via email.

A motion was approved to accept the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan as amended.

Chair Keyes will update the work plan and it will be reviewed by email and at the next meeting.

#### **11- Other issues**

Hilary Brinegar had attended a NM Watershed Forum meeting and was able to provide information about the PdNWC to other NM watershed groups and discuss issues that watershed groups face in New Mexico. The NM Forestry and Watershed Health Institute is an active member of the group and will be providing support to this organization.

Kevin Bixby reported on a meeting that SWEC had with USIBWC about a tornillo bosque that was in peril because of the river trail near Sunland Park, They were hoping to have the trail moved to the levee top instead of near the river.

Raft the Rio event will be June 13 and will be from Picacho to the Mesilla Bridge.

**12-Location and date of next meeting: June 22, 2009, 3PM to 5PM before the Citizens Forum meeting at 6:30 in Las Cruces, possibly SWEC.**