



Minutes

**Paso del Norte Watershed Council
Executive Committee meeting
May 7, 2010 – 10AM-noon
New Mexico Dept of Agriculture
3190 S. Espina
Las Cruces, NM
575-646-3007**

Conrad Keyes, Chair
Hilary Brinegar, Asst Chair

Sue Watts, Secretary
Ari Michelsen, Treasurer

Present:

Conrad Keyes, Jr.-Corps consultant
Hilary Brinegar-NMDA
Sue Watts-ecologist
Ari Michelsen-Texas AgriLife Research
Inga Groff-League of Women Voters
Joe Groff-Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue
Jennifer Montoya-BLM
Julie Maitland-NMDA
Brian Hanson-private citizen
Christopher Brown-NMSU
Peter Bennett-City of Las Cruces
Woody Irving-USBR
Elizabeth Verdecchia-USIBWC
Les Owen-NMDA
Patricia Depner-NMDA
Zach Edwards-NMSU
Zhuping Sheng-Texas Agri-life Research

1. Meeting of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council called to order by Conrad Keyes at 10:05 AM. All present introduced themselves.
2. Agenda approved after adding Brian Hanson to item 7d.
3. Minutes from Mar 8, 2010 meeting were approved with one correction.
4. Council GIS and web support-Chris Brown and Zach Edwards from the GIS lab of the NMSU Dept of Geography presented a proposal to move the Council's internet resources from NMWRI to the Geography Department's servers and then provide support for the Council's website and GIS data. There would be operational costs for maintaining the website but there would be costs associated with upgrading to an ARCGIS (~\$6000). A motion was made and

approved to support the concept. Funding discussions and approval were delegated to the officers.

5. RG Environmental Management Program-Conrad Keyes sent a letter of support but the funding was not updated. The House is scheduled to consider WRDA again.
6. Letter of support for NSF proposal-Conrad Keyes reported that Karl Wood (NMWRRRI) had requested that the Council provide a letter of support for his NSF proposal which will study climate change and water availability from the Rio Grande headwaters to Ft Quitman. The project would include UTEP, NMSU, and TAMU. The letter went out on April 6.
7. Work plans, updates and reports
 - a. PdNWC Financial Report - Ari Michelsen reported that we have \$27,000 from the Bureau of Reclamation. There is ~\$200,000 in URGWOM funding pending.
 - b. 319(h) grant update: The in-kind letters are going out to Council members and they need to be signed and returned to Hilary. The Council's brochures are being updated for distribution at stakeholder meetings. Chris Canavan reported that a watershed-based training workshop will be held and that he and Hilary would be attending. An SOP for water quality sampling is being developed between the EBID contractor and our contractor. Dr. Geof Smith has begun calibration experiments with split samples. A QAPP is being finalized and will be reviewed by the Clean Water Subcommittee, but there is still a question about the appropriate method for sampling. Liz Verdecchia will send Chris the method that TCEQ uses. The job announcement for the coordinator position has gone out.
 - c. Technical Committee- Several Council members serve on the URGWOM steering committee. The work plan has been distributed and the next phase of the project will be addressing water quality issues, particularly salinity, among other tasks. The contract for next phase of development of RiverWare models is in processing. The committee has begun to address future uses of the GIS data. Could it be utilized for modeling associated with the biological plan or URGWOP?
 - d. Biological Committee - Jennifer reported that the committee would like to develop a watershed restoration plan based on the Blue Earth proposal that was written several years ago. Perhaps Blue Earth could help define the scope of specific project(s) that could be supported by the USBR grant funds. Brian Hanson reviewed his handout which described various activities that the Council could undertake to protect the watershed. It is important for the Council to identify priorities and start moving forward.
8. Next EC meeting - IBWC in mid-July. Liz Verdecchia to find out which dates are available.
9. Meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM.