



Minutes

Paso del Norte Watershed Council **May 17, 2012 | 9:00-11:00AM** **Dona Ana County Government Center** **845 N. Motel Blvd. | Las Cruces NM 88007**

Conrad Keyes, Chair
Hilary Brinegar, Asst Chair

Sue Watts, Secretary
Ari Michelsen, Treasurer

Present:

Adrian Tarin-USDA NRCS
Ari Michelsen-Texas AgriLife Rsrch Ctr
Bill Hargrove-UTEP CERM
Brian Hanson-NMSU
Christopher Brown-NMSU
Chris Canavan-NMED
Conrad Keyes, Jr.-Corps consultant
Corey Durr-BLM
Fernando Cadena-EBID
Geof Smith-NMSU
Gilbert Anaya-USIBWC
Gina Posada-TCEQ
Henry Cornales-Dona Ana County
Hilary Brinegar-NMDA
Jan Kirwin-NMED
Joe Gonzalez-citizen

Jonah Ruybald-Dona Ana Flood
Kevin Bixby-SWEC
Kevin Von Finger-Keystone Park
Les Owen-NMDA
Mary Evans-Dona Ana Flood
Mike Landis-USBR
Mohamed Nash-BLM
Peter Bennett-C of LC
Phil King-NMSU
Sue Watts-ecologist
Tammy Hunsman-Dona Ana Flood
Tejasurini-Martich Associates
Tom Mobley-rancher
Zhuping Sheng- Texas AgriLife Rsrch

1. Introductions - The meeting of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council was called to order by Chair, Conrad Keyes, at 9:04AM. All present introduced themselves.
2. Reports from contractors conducting activities for the 319(h) grant.
 - a. Introduction by Brian Hanson who explained that the goal of the 319(h) grant is to identify sources of *E. coli* in impaired reaches of the Rio Grande and to develop a watershed-based plan that includes best management practices for addressing this and future impairments.
 - b. Report from Dr Phil King on *E. coli* sampling. Monthly sampling was conducted at 7 regularly spaced sites along the mainstem of the Rio Grande plus sampling during high flow events at arroyo and drain sites. Water flow data were available for some of the sites. During one storm event there were elevated counts at all sites. Similarly, there were many exceedences at East Drain, many of them storm-related. Additionally, high *E. coli* counts were recorded at Leasburg,

Mesilla, Anthony, and downstream from Sunland Park. Best management practices to address fecal contamination of water include ensuring that wastewater treatment plants are operating properly. Improved stormwater management could include increased retention times, allowing for more infiltration, and strategies for direct use. (full report available at www.pdnwc.org)

- c. Report from Dr Geof Smith on biologic source tracking. Samples for biologic source tracking were collected at Anthony Bridge and East Drain in the summer of 2010 and at Leasburg Cable and Sunland Park in 2011. Samples were collected 2 times per week and results showed that there were generally more *E. coli* in the drains than in the river. Bacterial loading to the river was estimated based on colony counts from water samples (concentration) and flow rates. Genetic analyses of isolated organisms were performed to identify the animals from which they were excreted. The majority of isolates were derived from wildlife and animal sources with human/sewage inputs making up less than 10% of the *E. coli* loading. (full report available at www.pdnwc.org)
3. Business meeting of PdNWC
 - a. Minutes of April 19 meeting distributed for comment.
 - b. Next meeting in July or August
 4. Meeting adjourned at 11:09 AM.