

**Minutes of the PdNWC Executive Committee (EC) Meeting
Held on 1/9/09 at the IBWC Offices in El Paso, Texas**

Participants present

Chris Brown, Chair - NMSU

Hilary Brinegar - NMDA

John Marino – USIBWC Principal Engineer

Sue Watts, Asst Chair -Texas Tech

Mike Roark - USGS

Marc Sidlow - USACE

Conrad Keyes – USACE and NMSU Emeritus

Bobby Creel – NM WRRI

Vanessa Lougheed - UTEP

Dan Carter – BLM

Juan Lopez – Isleta del Sur Pueblo

Rong Kwo - USIBWC

Liz Verdecchia - USIBWC

Ed Hamlyn - UTEP

Garisha Gangjegute – TAMU/Texas AgriLife Research

Zhuping Sheng, Chair of Tech Comm. - TAMU/Texas AgriLife Research

Daniel Borunda - USIBWC

Juan Flores - UACJ

Ari Michelsen, Treasurer - TAMU/Texas AgriLife Research

Meeting was called to order at 9:08 am, and the attendees did a series of introductions around the table. Chris also asked Marc Sidlow to introduce himself, provide some background data, and comment on how he sees the PdNWC linking to the work he is doing on URGWOM. The EC did not have a quorum for this meeting, and decided to deal with items needing a vote as follows. Agenda approval was a moot point. Minutes will be handled via EMAIL, with people sending their edits electronically. Chris will revise the minutes with these edits, then send out a final draft for approval in EMAIL.

Membership – Conrad reminded us that the Council needed to hold a 2008 Annual Meeting of the Membership of the entire Council, at which up to 20 members of the WC will be selected as members of the EC. Several people are in flux, as they are leaving or joining agencies, and this poses some questions as to who would be willing to serve on the EC or as an officer. The officers decided to contact the people for whom questions exist and get their read, then call the 2008 Annual Meeting at the next meeting of the EC in middle or late February to both elect members of the EC, discuss leadership issues, and elect officers.

Mike Roark from USGS then gave a presentation on the URGWOM activities above Elephant Butte. He provided an historical background of the modeling work, laid out the basic modeling framework of RiverWare and URGWOM using groundwater objects, and then lead us down the various reaches of the river, demonstrating the different model elements and reaches of the river. He then displayed the output of the calibration runs of the river. Chris asked Mike if he would share the PPT with us, and Chris would then work with Bobby to get them up on the URGWOM website. Mike agreed to do so.

Update on Coordinated DB, GIS, and Modeling Project – Zhuping gave an update of the project, including a meeting held with modeling team to discuss how model should be modified to deal with changes to conceptual model, use of groundwater objects to deal with SW/GW interactions, new operating agreement, consumptive uses of different crop mixes, and simulation of drainage flows. NMISC version of MODFLOW will be used to examine regional groundwater boundary conditions. Next meeting of modeling team is 1/27/09 in LC to discuss the recently approved USBR operating agreement and how this will impact flows all the way to Ft. Quitman. Use of GW objects is only being done in the Mesilla Valley. Bobby raised questions on why not go into Hueco Bolson and Lower El Paso Valley, and Zhuping noted that interaction between surface water and groundwater is not as strong as Mesilla basin due to limited groundwater pumping for agricultural water uses. Some of reaches do not have enough data to support such work. It can be incorporated in future phases of model development when additional data become available.

Current contract end date on the Corps Mod 5 is 31 March 2009. Also, Zhuping is working on contract with USACE for Mod 6 (USACE advises they can fund \$90,000 for this Mod) and also the related subcontracts involving TAMU and NMSU. Goal is to have this in place by February to insure seamless funding to Mod 6. Bobby would like to see enhanced discussion of GIS in this Mod. NMWRRI is also updating the USGS NHD (National Hydrograph Dataset) for the region and would like to see these data included in the next round of work.

Marc provided updates on 5-year plan for URGWOM. They are gathering comments at present, and they will be presenting updated 5-year plan at the next SC meeting. Conrad asked about the future funding picture. Monies are now in the President's budget, not URGWOM per se, and this should make the funding more stable in the future (Marc did NOT note any specific levels of funding that would be available in the future).

Issue of water quality came up, and Ari commented that TAMU has a contract on salinity damage economic assessment work, and the physical model and salinity work will be available in the fall. Some 729 funds from the Corps were provided and various other groups provided matching funds. The goal is to examine different management scenarios that may impact water quality and salinity, and also to explore the economic impacts of these scenarios. Focus of this work is the Rio Grande Project part of the Basin, reflecting some political realities.

Ari then gave Marc and Mike a brief review of the background of the PdNWC, how the PdNWC came into existence, and the major things we have done in the past.

Topics for open discussion

- Potential for future Surface Water treatment plant in the Las Cruces area and how the Council may interact with planning, design and construction, both on ideas and the potential for funding. Chris is talking to Doña Ana Mutual people informally; what else can we do
- Groups to be invited to present their work to the Council – who do we want to invite to the table?
- Letter to the USIBWC reminding them about the ROD on the Sustainable Water Project as it related to construction on the Riverside Canal, with copies to the RGCF, USBR, USFWS, USEPA (Border 2012), and perhaps EBID and EP#1. Kevin was to take a lead/assist with letter. Who would like to help us on this?
- Exploration of potential new funding sources, and this effort should include a review of the strategic plan and business plan (confirm folks have the most current version of these documents to guide the discussion. Potential ideas include potential USFWS funds for use on private lands (Brian Hanson's ideas).
- Council to present to CLC and EP City Councils, reminding them of what we do and the 2% funding obligation on projects associates with the SWP.
- PdNWC and EC internal housekeeping issues – this includes setting our annual meeting and providing food (need funds), cleaning up the membership list and enlisting new members, and dealing with the transfer of our membership DB so we can easily and seamlessly EMAIL our people.
- Liz Verdecchia (USIBWC) would like to explore a comprehensive means of SW quality monitoring. Liz has good data in Clean Rivers Program for the Texas portion, but we don't have anything comprehensive for about the NM/TX line. Liz is asking their fiscal people if they can use their funds above the state line, and if so, they would need a partner in NM to help do the field work. I noted the problem with standard methods and holding times, and Liz noted that TCWQ had a petition into EPA for a 48 hour extension for holding times. Liz notes she just wants baseline data, so the methods issue would not be a major problem. Potential lab partners would be Dr. Boyle's lab at NMSU, the new lab in NMSU Engineering, or others. Chris suggested that the EC bring this back as an item for a future meeting, after doing some additional research.

Juan Pedro Flores (juflores@uacj.mx) and Alfredo Granados Olivas need a letter from us to Dr. Alejandro Martinez, Director of the Dept. of Basic Sciences, noting their membership, the value of their participation, and the details of the meetings.

Date, place, and time for next meeting – 9AM, 13 Feb 2009 is primary date, with 27 Feb as backup date if the WRRI talk gets in the way. Place is somewhere in LC where we can do meals, and Chris will advise later.

Meeting adjourned shortly after 11am.