Draft Minutes

PdNWC Executive Committee
December 15, 2009 – 3-5PM
Dona Ana County Government Center
845 N. Hotel Blvd, Rms 113/117, Las Cruces, NM

Conrad Keyes, Chair                                Sue Watts, Secretary
Hilary Brinegar, Asst Chair                        Ari Michelsen, Treasurer

Present:
Conrad Keyes, Jr.-Corps consultant
Kevin Bixby-SWEC
Sue Watts-TTUHSC
Inga Groff-League of Women Voters
Joe Groff-Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue
Peter Bennett-City of LC
Daniel Borunda-USIBWC
Mike Landis-USBR
Louis Irwin-Rio Grande Citizen’s Forum
Kevin Von Finger-Frontera Land Alliance
Katrina Martich-Martich Professional Services
Hilary Brinegar-NMDA
Jennifer Montoya-BLM
Zhu Ping Sheng-Texas AgriLife Research
Adrienne Widmer-City of Las Cruces
Gilbert Morales-City of Las Cruces
Ian Leslie-Leasburg Water Board
Lupe Garcia-Leasburg Water Board

1. Meeting of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council called to order by Conrad Keyes at 3:04 PM. Those present introduced themselves.

2. Minutes from Sept 29, 2009 meeting approved with corrections noted by Hilary.

3. City of Las Cruces: In reply to the NY Times article that reported that wastewater treatment plants were out of compliance on numerous occasions, Jorge Garcia, Gilbert Morales, and Adrienne Widmer gave a presentation describing the new Board of Utility Commissioners for the City of Las Cruces and how they will set strategic policy directions. They also brought us up to date on all of the new water and wastewater projects that have recently come on line and those that will be coming on line in the near future. They will also be relocating the composting facility.
4. Updated Principles and Guidelines for Water and Land Related Resources Implementation Studies-Conrad Keyes. Guidelines apply to all projects funded by WRDA and are being expanded to apply to other agencies as well. There is new emphasis is on non-monetary benefits. Agencies must have public comment on projects and will be reviewed for compliance. Public comment period is 90 days. Biological committee will follow-up and a comment letter will be drafted by Kevin, Mike and Conrad by mid-January.

5. Public comment for Dona Ana MDWCA project-Conrad Keyes. Ian Leslie explained that Leasburg MDWA is opposed to Hope Road Sewage Treatment Plant proposed by DAMDWA. Alternatives not being considered. Conrad will draft a comment letter if Council wishes to submit one.

6. Letters-Conrad Keyes. Letters to Rep Teague encouraging support of WRDA were sent. Hilary will circulate a letter to Oberstar for comment and she would like to get it mailed before the end of the month.

7. La Mancha Wetland-Kevin Bixby. Located on west back of the Rio Grande north of Mesilla Bridge. The design is underway and is proposed to be a backwater slough that will reduce sediment input as compared to a flow through system. Water depletions due to evaporation are to be off set by water rights.

8. Committee and subcommittee reports/updates:
   a. Clean Water Subcommittee – 319(h) Workplan– Hilary Brinegar. Subcontracts are being signed. Funds should be available by mid-January. Contracts and position description for coordinator are being developed.
   c. Biological Committee-Jennifer Montoya and Kevin Bixby.
      • NM Outstanding National Resource Waters proposal—Aldo Leopold in Black Range may qualify. Hilary will send update.
      • Rio Grande Canalization Project—Conceptual restoration plan and projects need to be prioritized. To get most ecological benefit projects are likely to be clustered. Using public/private partnerships, interagency agreements and environmental consultants.
   d. Education Committee-re-organization-tabled


10. Other:
   a. Weather modification association annual meeting; Santa Fe; April 21-3
   b. Urban Green Space Enhancement through Use of Runoff and Stormwater: Defining the Potential in the Paso Del Norte Region – Resend to everyone
   c. IBWC Presidio flood control project EIS out for comment-Dan Borunda

11. Date for Annual Meeting-Conrad Keyes. At Texas AgriLife March 8

12. Adjourn