

## DATA MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING RECORD

### TIME AND DATE:

10:00 a.m., Wednesday, October 25, 2006

### LOCATION:

Texas Water Development Board Offices, Stephen F. Austin State Office Building,  
Room 465A, 1700 North Congress, Austin, TX 78711

### PURPOSE OF MEETING:

Regular meeting

### AGENCIES/ENTITIES REPRESENTED:

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality [TCEQ]  
Texas Department of Agriculture [TDA]  
Texas Water Development Board [TWDB]  
Railroad Commission of Texas [RCT]

### ATTENDEES:

Janie Hopkins	TWDB, Co-Chair
Lynne Fahlquist	USGS, Co-Chair
Radu Boghici	TWDB
Cary Betz	TCEQ
Richard Eyster	TDA
Bill Renfro	RCT
Jim Lester	GeoTechnology Research Institute (GTRI)
Stephanie Glenn	GeoTechnology Research Institute (GTRI)

### MEETING SUMMARY:

#### I. Call to Order and Introductions

Janie Hopkins (TWDB), Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 a.m. Members attending introduced themselves.

Handouts were provided. Handout #1 - Meeting Agenda; Handout #2 – Final workplan for monitoring strategy contract; Handout #3 – Ambient Groundwater Monitoring Strategy.

#### II. Business Discussion and Possible Action

The first item was discussion of statewide groundwater quality monitoring strategy. Stephanie Glenn asked about the nomenclature “Basic”, “Reference”, and “Targeted”.

“Basic” is interpreted as aquifer-wide, general types of wells that would be a good indicator of ambient conditions.

“Reference” should be what wells that we have selected for status and trends – least disturbed conditions, representative of the aquifer conditions prior to development – baseline is an appropriate terminology. Jim Lester pointed out that we have been collecting data for many years, and asked if there was an older “baseline” that we wish to use, or if a set of wells that are in the “undisturbed” areas be a better “baseline”. Can an historical “baseline” be established? This was not possible when sampling started for surface water, can it be done for groundwater?

“Targeted” should be concerned with water quality issues – possibly health (drinking water) criteria. A specific set of “Targeted” monitoring requirements could be established based on spatial criteria, land use criteria, hydrogeology or water use criteria. TCEQ leans more toward land use criteria.

Can TCEQ stop groundwater use if a potential hazard is identified? No, not for private water well. The TCEQ’s Public Drinking Water program can regulate public water supplies in this respect, but there is no jurisdiction over private wells.

Is there health criteria for livestock uses? No. Total Dissolved Solids is generally the only constituent looked at, and on rare occasion, nitrate. There is some concern with habitat for endangered species, in the Edwards Aquifer. Springflow quantity and quality is a concern for some species and economics as well.

Are the goals for this monitoring strategy driven by the Clean Water Act or something beyond this. TCEQ objectives include Clean Water Act (CWA), Texas Administrative Code, Safe Drinking Water Act. The CWA requires that states have active monitoring programs for “waters of the State” in order to receive Federal funds. The State and EPA have always considered “waters of the State” to include groundwater, however, they have not specified the form that groundwater monitoring programs must take, only that we must have one. The TWDB Ambient Monitoring Program has always been the State’s groundwater monitoring program, but EPA can change criteria quickly, and whether the Ambient program will continue to suffice as our monitoring program is anybody’s guess.

During the development of the Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy, the participants overwhelming stated that they needed more data. The purpose of the questionnaire in phase I was to determine what types of issues were driving those stated needs. The Water Development Board does not regulate water quality, but they are in the business of insuring that water resources are available as needed by citizens, so their needs will be reflected as “non-regulatory” in nature. Similarly, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) is concerned with water quantity and quality for habitat, wildlife and fisheries issues.

For sampling protocols, EPA methods are of primary importance to the TCEQ. USGS methods are more scientifically oriented, but are generally recognized and accepted by

EPA. The TWDB may use some protocols that are not EPA approved, but the data may still be acceptable by EPA. TWDB's sampling protocols are documented on-line.

There was some discussion of lab certification. There are different types of lab certification. TCEQ "certifies" labs, but no one in the room is familiar with that certification process. USGS is NELAC approved, but not EPA approved. Most agencies use the QA information that is returned back with the data to determine the validity of the data. There can be instances where a labs at universities, may pass off lab analysis duties to graduate or undergraduate students, and the data may not meet quality standards.

Monitoring for organic chemicals was discussed. All organic monitoring in the state we should expect to be spatially and/or temporally focused.

Among other state's groundwater monitoring programs to look at, Iowa is of special interest. States adjacent to Texas, and Florida are also of particular interest. New Jersey, New York and Montana might also be of interest.

Discussion of the Texas Groundwater Data Dictionary – Janie Hopkins requested that further discussion of the Groundwater Data Dictionary be tabled, until they have finished revising the TWDB data dictionary. Cary Betz indicated that this should be no problem, but that members should still be looking at the Groundwater Data Dictionary to identify areas with the potential for being changed. The review/revision of the TWDB data dictionary presents a prime opportunity for them to review and compare their dictionary with the Committee's. For now, further discussion of the Groundwater Data Dictionary is tabled, pending completion of the monitoring strategy.

Scheduling the next meeting was postponed due to numerous conflicting meetings and conferences, as well as upcoming holidays. The Texas Water Development Board has again offered to host subsequent meetings at their offices in Stephen F. Austin State Office Building, 1700 North Congress, Austin, Texas. Members will be contacted via e-mail as to the next meeting time and date.

#### IV. Adjourn

There being no other business or information exchange, Ms. Hopkins adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:12 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Cary Betz (TCEQ), December 8, 2006  
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