

**TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
 RECORD OF MEETING
 First Quarterly Meeting, Fiscal Year 2025**

Meeting Date: January 8, 2025
 Meeting No.: 148

Place: TCEQ Campus, Bldg F
 Room: 5108

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MEETING ATTENDANCE

Committee Members

Kelly Mills	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Natalie Ballew	Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
James Harcourt	Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)
David Villarreal	Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)
Jana Lloyd	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
David Van Dresar	Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)
Justin Thompson	Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas at Austin (UTBEG)
David Gunn	Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)

Agency Staff

<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Program</u>
TCEQ	Water Availability Division (WAD)
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
TDLR	
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	Environmental Law Division (ELD)
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)	
TCEQ	Water Supply Division (WSD)
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)	

Interested Parties

<u>Affiliation</u>
Harris County
Kelly Hart & Hallman, LLP
Communities Unlimited
Hemphill County Underground Water Conservation District (UWCD)
Children’s Environmental Health Network (CEHN)
Grundfos
Northwest (NW) Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU)

MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Agenda for Texas Groundwater Protection Committee meeting on January 8, 2025
2. Record for Texas Groundwater Protection Committee meeting on October 9, 2024
3. Summary of Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting, December 4, 2024
4. Summary of Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee Meeting, December 4, 2024
5. Draft 2024 *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report* Table of Contents
6. *Children's Health and Groundwater Quality at Child Care Operations Using Private Water Wells* white paper
7. *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 89th Legislature*
8. TGPC Website Activity Report, October 1 – December 31, 2024
9. TCEQ Rules Update, 1/8/2025
10. 2025 Water-related Conferences in Texas, January 2025
11. APO Project Summary Update to TGPC Member Agencies

MEETING RECORD OF JANUARY 8, 2025

1. PRE-MEETING REMINDERS

Before the meeting started, Kelly Mills (TCEQ) provided the attendees with some tips that would facilitate a productive videoconference option for the meeting.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

The member of the TGPC presiding over this meeting was physically present at the location listed on the first page and this meeting location was accessible to the public. Other designated TGPC members and the public were also able attend this meeting via videoconference or teleconference at no cost.

Kelly Mills (TCEQ), Designated Chairman of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC), called the meeting to order at approximately 1:33 PM CST and called the roll of TGPC members. The designated representative or alternate from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research) were not present at the meeting.

3. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Groundwater Issues

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that Subcommittee last met via videoconference on December 4, 2024, and 13 state agencies and organizations were represented.

The Agricultural Chemicals Task Force Status Report was reviewed with the following highlights:

- TWDB had completed its Cooperative Monitoring for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 and TCEQ's spectrophotometer had been repaired. Eighty-one samples had been analyzed via immunoassay screening for atrazine and were qualified in the TCEQ Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD) as having exceeded their holding times by 2 – 3 weeks. There were no appreciable detects of atrazine.
- The proposed FY 2025 Pesticide Monitoring Plan would continue Cooperative Monitoring with TWDB. Additionally, pesticide groundwater monitoring data from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and other TCEQ monitoring programs would be provided to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as available.
- On December 4, 2024, Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) was scheduled to meet with new Region 6 U.S. EPA management to familiarize them with what was being done under the U.S. EPA Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide (FIFRA) Performance Partnership Grant (PPG).
- The annual Texas Plant Protection Conference in Bryan was scheduled for December 10 – 11, 2024, and Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) was registered to attend and provide a tabletop exhibit of his grant-related work.

- The annual U.S. EPA/States/Tribes FIFRA Fall grant meeting for FY 2025 was held in Dallas on November 18 – 19, 2024. Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) attended the meeting virtually and reported on his work for TCEQ’s FIFRA PPG. There was minimal discussion of water quality, which had a low priority with U.S. EPA and the other states.

The TGPC Publications Status Report was reviewed with the following highlights:

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2023 (“Joint Report”, SFR-056)*
 - The 2023 *Joint Report* was published in October 2024, and work on the 2024 *Joint Report* would begin in January 2025.
- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 89th Legislature (“Legislative Report”, SFR-47)*
 - On October 9, 2024, the TGPC met and approved the *Legislative Report* with some edits. The *Legislative Report* was in the publication process, and it would be distributed to the 89th Texas Legislature by December 31, 2024.
- *Groundwater Assessment (AS-465/24) for the 2024 Texas Integrated Report for Clean Water Act Sections 305(b) and 303(d) (“Texas Integrated Report”)*
 - The 2024 *Groundwater Assessment* was published in June 2024. The published report was included in the *Draft 2024 Texas Integrated Report* which was approved by the TCEQ commission on June 26, 2024, and the *Draft 2024 Texas Integrated Report* was submitted to U.S. EPA in October 2024 for final approval.
- *Priority Groundwater Management Areas and Groundwater Conservation Districts, Report to the 89th Texas Legislature (“PGMA/GCD Legislative Report”, SFR-53)*
 - The *PGMA/GCD Legislative Report* was under development, and it would be made available to the 89th Texas Legislature in January 2025.

The following current groundwater issues were discussed:

- Oil and Gas Produced Water;
- Emerging Chemical and Biological Contaminants;
- Evapotranspiration Networks; and,
- Others (i.e., a company planned to conduct in-situ leaching (ISL) uranium mining operations in Goliad County within the Evangeline Aquifer, and a contract report was completed for TCEQ in November 2024 on the uranium resources in Texas).

The final draft of the *Children’s Health and Groundwater Quality at Child Care Operations Using Private Water Wells* white paper was reviewed and approved, and it would be presented to the TGPC for final approval at their next meeting.

As required by the Subcommittee’s *Charge*, a draft of the next edition of their biannual *Activity Plan* was reviewed. Several updates were proposed to the draft *Activity Plan*, and it would be discussed again at the next meeting.

The next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for March 12, 2025.

Public Outreach and Education

Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) reported that the Subcommittee last met via videoconference on December 4, 2024, and seven state agencies and organizations were represented.

Joel Pigg (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; AgriLife Extension) reviewed the Texas Well Owner Network (TWON) training schedule. During the previous quarter, TWON staff held 11 one-day events and one three-hour event, and they collected 331 samples. There had been 4,393 samples or attendees at TWON events since May 2021.

The Outreach Events Status Report was reviewed with the following highlights:

- AgriLife Extension Water Well Screening Events
 - Joel Pigg (AgriLife Extension) reported that there four events planned for the next quarter (December 2024 – February 2025).
- TGPC Exhibit Booth
 - Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) reported that no TGPC exhibit booth events had been held during the previous quarter.

The list of upcoming conferences and the drought monitor report were reviewed. The *Groundwater Educational Outreach Plan* was tabled while the Subcommittee's *Charge* was being reviewed for changes, and a draft would be developed and presented at the next meeting. A change in the meeting frequency was also discussed.

The next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for March 12, 2025.

Legislative Report

The Legislative Report Subcommittee had not met during the previous quarter, but Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) provided the status of the final report and its delivery to the Texas Legislature. The Legislative Report Subcommittee had completed working on the *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee – Report to the 89th Legislature*, and it was published and distributed to the Governor, Lt. Governor, Speaker of the House, Chairman Perry, and Chairman King on December 16, 2024. The report was also posted on the TGPC and TCEQ websites.

4. PRESENTATION

Larry Estrada (TDLR) reviewed their Water Well Driller and Pump Installer laws and rules, including those related to water well construction, surface completion, location, and casing; commingling and injurious water; and the capping and plugging of abandoned and deteriorated water wells.

Presentations at TGPC meetings are always available on the Meeting Records of the TGPC webpage (<https://tgpc.texas.gov/meetings/meeting-records-of-the-texas-groundwater-protection-committee/>).

5. BUSINESS DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2024 – Format and Content Approval

Katie Brice (TCEQ) presented the draft Table of Contents for the *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2024*. There were no substantive proposed changes to the Table of Contents compared to the 2023 *Joint Report*. David Van Dresar (TAGD) proposed, David Villarreal (TDA) seconded, and all remaining TGPC members approved the draft format and content of the *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2024*, while allowing TCEQ staff to make any non-substantive changes required for publication on the TCEQ website. TCEQ staff would continue working on this annual TGPC report so that it would be published later in 2025.

Katie Brice (TCEQ) also announced that the initial emails requesting updated information from TGPC members would be sent out by January 10, 2025, and that feedback would be requested by February 20, 2025.

Children’s Health and Groundwater Quality at Child Care Operations Using Private Water Wells White Paper

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) presented the *Children’s Health and Groundwater Quality at Child Care Operations Using Private Water Wells* white paper. Margaret Willis (NW PEHSU) had developed this white paper which, in addition to some potential regulatory and non-regulatory actions, listed five Recommendations. David Van Dresar (TAGD) proposed, David Gunn (TDLR) seconded, and all remaining TGPC members approved the *Children’s Health and Groundwater Quality at Child Care Operations Using Private Water Wells* white paper. The white paper would be posted on the TGPC website.

Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee – Report to the 89th Legislature – Deactivation of Legislative Report Subcommittee

With its most recent work completed, Kelly Mills (TCEQ) announced that it was time to deactivate the Legislative Report Subcommittee. David Gunn (TDLR) proposed, David Van Dresar (TAGD) seconded, and all remaining TGPC members approved deactivation of the TGPC Legislative Report Subcommittee pending its re-activation in January 2026 in order to prepare the TGPC’s next *Legislative Report*.

Set Future Meeting Date

The next TGPC quarterly meeting was scheduled for April 9, 2025, at 1:30 PM CDT as a hybrid meeting.

6. INFORMATION EXCHANGE FOR GROUNDWATER-RELATED ACTIVITIES – STATUS UPDATE

Groundwater Contamination Notice Coordination (Texas Water Code §26.408)

Katie Brice (TCEQ) reported that, since the last TGPC meeting, the TCEQ Impact Evaluation Team (IET) had met four times and reviewed five groundwater contamination cases with 19 notices subsequently being sent to potentially affected private water well owners and users.

TGPC Website Activity Report

Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) presented a report on the TGPC website's activity from October 1 through December 31, 2024. More than half of the 2,766 users engaged the TGPC website for longer than 10 seconds, 795 files were downloaded, and 923 outbound links were clicked.

Groundwater Management Areas

David Van Dresar (TAGD) reported that Groundwater Management Areas (GMAs) were working on their current round of planning for Desired Future Conditions (DFCs) which were due to TWDB in 2026.

Updates on Regional Water Planning, Groundwater Availability Modeling, Brackish Groundwater Studies, and Innovative Water

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) reported that draft 2026 Regional Water Plans would be due to TWDB by March 3, 2025.

Regarding their Groundwater Availability Modeling (GAM), Natalie Ballew (TWDB) provided the following updates:

- They had updated the conceptual model report for the Igneous and West Texas Bolsons Aquifers;
- They were finalizing the report for the central and southern Gulf Coast Aquifer System GAM recalibration;
- They planned two stakeholder advisory forums:
 - Marathon Aquifer GAM in Marathon on January 14, 2025; and,
 - Seymour and Blaine Aquifers GAM via Teams on January 22, 2025.
- A public comment period for the southern Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta Aquifers GAM was open through February 20, 2025.

David Van Dresar (TAGD) asked about the target date for the Gulf Coast Aquifer GAM; Natalie Ballew (TWDB) indicated that they hoped to be able to distribute it by the end of January 2025.

Justin Thompson (UTBEG) asked about a unified Greater Edwards Plateau Aquifers model that had been scheduled for release in 2024; Natalie Ballew (TWDB) indicated that they might have a working model which was undergoing internal review.

Nonpoint Source Pollution

Jana Lloyd (TSSWCB) reported that they were working with TCEQ to deliver the *Nonpoint Source Pollution Management in Texas: 2024 Annual Report* to the U.S. EPA by January 31, 2025, and that they were working to submit their 2025 nonpoint source (NPS) pollution grant application to the U.S. EPA by March 2025.

National Groundwater Information

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) reported that the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/pcast/>) Working Group on Groundwater had released their final report (https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/PCAST-Report-on-GW_14DEC2024_Final-1.pdf). Justin Thompson (UTBEG) noted that Bridget Scanlon (UTBEG) had been involved with this effort.

Kelly Mills (TCEQ) noted that the USGS would be accepting proposals for its National Ground-Water Monitoring Network funding program through January 16, 2025. This initiative aimed to enhance the collection and accessibility of groundwater data across the United States. The funding supported:

- New and existing data providers in classifying monitoring sites;
- Monitoring well maintenance;
- Drilling new monitoring wells; and,
- Purchasing continuous water-level data collection equipment.

Those that were considering applying could contact TWDB (GroundwaterData@twdb.texas.gov, 512-475-3302) to coordinate data delivery to the USGS more effectively, and TWDB could assist with the application process and possibly also be able to provide a letter of support.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rules Update

Cindy Hooper (TCEQ) reported on current TCEQ rulemaking and non-rule projects that were of interest to the TGPC:

- 2025-008-353-OW – Leaking Water Wells Grant Program;
- 2024-006-230-OW – Groundwater Certification Requirements;
- 2023-139-321-OW – Land Application of Dairy Waste and Disposal of Dairy Waste in Control Facility;
- 2024-009-285-CE – Proposed Changes to 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 285, On-site Sewage Facilities (OSSFs); and,

- 2024-020-331-WS – Senate Bill (SB) 786 and SB 1186: Transfer of Class V Closed-Loop Geothermal Injection Wells and Class V Brine Disposal Injection Wells to RRC.

Additional information on a specific TCEQ rule could be found at <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/rules/whatsnew.html>.

New Publications

Kelly Mills (TCEQ) announced the publication of:

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2023*, TCEQ publication SFR-56/23, October 2024, <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/groundwater/groundwater-planning-assessment/sfr-056-joint-groundwater-monitoring-contamination-report>;
- *Uranium Resources in the State of Texas – A Comprehensive Review*, TCEQ publication SFR-131/24, November 2024, <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/permitting/radioactive-materials/publications/uranium-resources-in-the-state-of-texas.pdf>; and,
- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee – Report to the 89th Legislature*, TCEQ publication SFR-47/24, January 2025, <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/groundwater/publications/sfr-47-24-tgpc-report-89th-legislature.pdf>.

Upcoming Conferences

Kelly Mills (TCEQ) referred TGPC members to the conferences listed in the “2025 Water-related Conferences in Texas” handout – the current version of this handout was always available on the TGPC’s POE Subcommittee webpage at <https://tgpc.texas.gov/tgpc-subcommittees/tgpc-public-outreach-and-education-subcommittee/> under the “Additional Resources” heading.

Kelly Mills (TCEQ) announced that the TGPC had again prepared a National Groundwater Awareness Week poster for its members. The event was scheduled for March 9 – 15, 2025, and the file would be available for download from the TGPC homepage by the end of January 2025.

Michael Parr (TCEQ and the TGPC’s Legal Counsel) referred TGPC members to the handout about TCEQ’s Aggregate Production Operations (APO, i.e., quarries) Best Management Practices (BMPs) project (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assistance/industry/aggregate-production/best-management-practices>) that was announced at the TGPC meeting in October 2023 and presented to the TGPC in January 2024. TCEQ regulates various aspects of this industry, groundwater is one the BMP topics, and TGPC feedback on this information was requested by January 24, 2025.

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) announced that Brooke Paup (formerly TWDB Chairwoman) was now TCEQ Chairwoman, and that L'Oreal Stepney (formerly a member of the TWDB Board) was now TWDB Chairwoman.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

9. ADJOURN

Kelly Mills (TCEQ) adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:49 PM CST.