

**TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE  
RECORD OF MEETING**

Third Quarterly Meeting, Fiscal Year 2025

Meeting Date: April 9, 2025  
Meeting No.: 149

Place: TCEQ Campus, Bldg F  
Room: 5108

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## MEETING ATTENDANCE

### Committee Members

Abiy Berehe	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
Natalie Ballew	Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
David Villarreal	Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)
T.J. Helton	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)
Giovanni Piccinni	Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research)
John Malito	Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas at Austin (UTBEG)
Larry Estrada	Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR)

### Agency Staff

<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Program</u>
TCEQ	Water Quality Planning Division (WQPD)
TCEQ	Water Availability Division (WAD)
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
United States Geological Survey (USGS)	
DSHS	
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD)	
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	Radioactive Materials Division (RMD)
TCEQ	WAD
TCEQ	WAD
Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)	
DSHS	

### Interested Parties

<u>Affiliation</u>
Water Protection Association (WPA)
Black & Veatch
Texas Rural Water association (TRWA)
Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA)
City of Houston

## MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Agenda for Texas Groundwater Protection Committee meeting on April 9, 2025
2. Record for Texas Groundwater Protection Committee meeting on January 8, 2025
3. Summary of Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Groundwater Issues (GWI) Subcommittee Meeting, March 12, 2025
4. Summary of Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee Meeting, March 12, 2025
5. TGPC Website Activity Report, January 1 – March 31, 2025
6. TCEQ Rules Update, 4/9/25
7. *Nonpoint Source Pollution Management in Texas: 2024 Annual Report*,  
<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/water-quality/nonpoint/plans-reports/nps-2024-annual-report-sfr-066-24.pdf>
8. 2025 Water-related Conferences in Texas, April 2025

## MEETING RECORD OF APRIL 9, 2025

### 1. PRE-MEETING REMINDERS

Before the meeting started, Abiy Berehe (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.

Abiy Berehe (TCEQ), Designated Alternate Chairman of the TGPC, called the meeting to order at approximately 1:34 PM CDT. Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) then called the roll of TGPC members. The designated representative or alternate from the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC), DSHS, and TAGD were not present at the meeting. The designated representative or alternate from TDLR was not present at the beginning of the meeting. At the end of the roll call, Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) acknowledged the recent retirement of David Gunn (TDLR) and his two decades of service to the TGPC.

### 3. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Groundwater Issues

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) reported that the Subcommittee last met via videoconference on March 12, 2025, and 12 state agencies and organizations were represented.

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

- TWDB would be sampling the Gulf Coast and Yegua-Jackson aquifers in 2025, typically from April through August.
- TCEQ's spectrophotometer was repaired, and on November 11, 2024, immunoassay (IA) analyses were completed for 81 Cooperative Monitoring samples, but they exceeded holding times by 2 – 3 weeks and had been qualified as such in the TCEQ Interagency Pesticide Database (IPD). On December 20, 2024, these results were provided to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in an updated Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 report.
- On December 4, 2024, Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) met with Eric Nystrom (the new Region 6 U.S. EPA Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) Grant Liaison) and others to familiarize them on what was being done at TCEQ under that Performance Partnership Grant (PPG).
- On December 10 – 11, 2024, Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) attended the annual Texas Plant Protection Conference in Bryan and provided a tabletop exhibit from which FIFRA grant-related information and other materials of the TGPC were distributed.

- On December 17, 2024, the annual Pesticides of Interest Tracking System (POINTS) Pesticide Assessment Database update was completed.
- On March 11, 2025, Alan Cherepon (TCEQ) conducted the annual IA refresher training for TWDB.
- On May 13 – 14, 2025, the annual U.S. EPA/States/Tribes FIFRA Spring grant meeting for FY 2025 was scheduled to be held in Austin with TDA as the host.

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

- *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report – 2024 (“Joint Report”, SFR-056)*
  - Staff were working on the 2024 *Joint Report*.
- *Activities and Recommendations of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee: Report to the 89th Legislature (“Legislative Report”, SFR-47)*
  - The *Legislative Report* was distributed to the 89th Texas Legislature in December 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 published Groundwater Assessment was included in the 2024 Texas Integrated Report which TCEQ’s commissioners approved on June 26, 2024.
  - U.S. EPA approved the 2024 Texas 303(d) List on November 13, 2024.
- *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 transmitted 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;
- Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR);
- Abandoned Water Wells;
- Groundwater Quality Monitoring;
- Brackish Groundwater;
- Evapotranspiration Networks; and,
- Others (i.e., a company planned to build a carbon capture facility in 2025 outside of Odessa).

As required by the Subcommittee’s *Charge*, an updated draft of the next edition of their biannual *Activity Plan* was reviewed. No additional changes were suggested, and the final draft would be presented for approval at the next meeting.

The next TGPC GWI Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for June 18, 2025.

David Villarreal (TDA) asked how reports are sent and distributed to the Texas Legislature. Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) indicated that reports are emailed to the Texas Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, and appropriate Senate and House Committee Chairs and their clerks.

## Public Outreach and Education

Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) reported that the Subcommittee last met via videoconference on March 12, 2025, and eight 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 one four-hour event and three one-hour events, and they collected 166 samples. There had been over 497 samples or attendees at TWON events since September 2024.

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

- AgriLife Extension Water Well Screening Events
  - Joel Pigg (AgriLife Extension) reported there were four events held during the previous quarter.
- TGPC Exhibit Booth
  - Peggy Hunka (TCEQ) reported that there was one TGPC exhibit booth event during the previous quarter at the Texas Plant Protection Conference in December 2024.

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.

One updated Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) was reviewed and approved for posting on the TGPC website.

The next TGPC POE Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for June 18, 2025.

## 4. PRESENTATION

There was no presentation at the meeting.

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*

Katie Brice (TCEQ) reported that staff were working on the 2024 *Joint Report* with a publication goal of June 1, 2025. When the final draft *Joint Report* was ready, it would be provided to TGPC members during the agency-wide review process and any comments would be needed within three working days. The format was very similar to

the previous year's *Joint Report*, and the groundwater contamination case numbers were relatively consistent with what had been seen in recent *Joint Reports*.

David Villarreal (TDA) asked about the recently-filed Texas Senate Bill (SB) 2124 (<https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=89R&Bill=SB2124>) which amended Texas Water Code (TWC) Chapter 26.406(c) regarding the publication deadline for the *Joint Report*. Cindy Hooper (TCEQ) indicated that the bill was moving through the process. Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) added that a recommendation in the TGPC's biannual *Legislative Report* since 2015 had been to move the date from April 1 to June 1, and the bill reflected this recommendation.

Kathy McCormack (TCEQ) made an announcement regarding the *Joint Report's* associated interactive, online, map-based Viewer:

- Texas Water Code 26.406(c) (<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/WA/htm/WA.26.htm#26.406>) requires the TGPC to publish the *Joint Report* each year. In addition, TCEQ's goal is to provide increased data availability and useability to the public. Two ways that this is accomplished is through the *Joint Report's* webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/groundwater/groundwater-planning-assessment/sfr-056-joint-groundwater-monitoring-contamination-report>) and the Groundwater Contamination Viewer (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/gis/groundwater-contamination-viewer>). The Viewer's visualization of the *Joint Report's* data is not required by statute, but it provides additional benefit for the public.
- The Viewer debuted in its present format in 2015 with each subsequent *Joint Report's* data being added to the layer list and to each of the three custom queries. The application in which it was created and had been updated was being replaced by the end of 2025. Due to the Viewer's maturity and the new application, and in order to ensure that the annual updates were completed in a timely manner, it was proposed that only the current year's active and inactive case layers be maintained in the Viewer, while the raw data for previous years would be made available on the *Joint Report's* webpage.
- It was believed that most users were not interested in seeing, querying, and obtaining data from previous years in the Viewer; however, those that were interested in this older data would still be able to access it from the *Joint Report's* webpage in order to create their own queries and maps.

TGPC members did not anticipate any issues with this proposed change.

#### Set Future Meeting Date

The next TGPC quarterly meeting was scheduled for July 9, 2025, at 1:30 PM CDT as a hybrid meeting. TGPC members were reminded that the usual Legislative Roundtable would be conducted at the next meeting where they would discuss the groundwater-related legislation passed by the recent session and its effect on their agencies and organizations.

## 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 five times and reviewed 10 groundwater contamination cases with 17 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 January 1 through March 31, 2025. More than half of the 2,763 users engaged the TGPC website for longer than 10 seconds, 803 files were downloaded, and 993 outbound links were clicked.

### Groundwater Management Areas

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) reported that Groundwater Management Areas (GMAs) were meeting more frequently regarding the current round of planning for their aquifer's 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) provided the following updates:

- TWDB staff were reviewing the initially prepared 2026 Regional Water Plans (RWPs).
  - All regions would receive TWDB's comments on the draft 2026 RWPs by July 1, 2025. Draft plans were available on the TWDB website at <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/rwp/plans/2026/index.asp>.
  - All regions would be holding at least one public hearing on their draft plan, with a public comment period before and after the hearing. Hearing information was available on the TWDB website at <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/rwp/schedule/2026RWPIPPHearings.asp>.
- Groundwater Availability Modeling (GAM) and Brackish Resources Aquifer Characterization System (BRACS)
  - A new study was available documenting the available information on slightly saline water in the deep Glen Rose Formation in South Texas, also known as the Maverick Basin Aquifer. The final report was available on the TWDB website at [https://www.twdb.texas.gov/groundwater/bracs/projects/MBA\\_paper/index.asp#finalreport](https://www.twdb.texas.gov/groundwater/bracs/projects/MBA_paper/index.asp#finalreport), and it was intended to serve as a foundational document for future research on this potential water supply.



- Expected Spring 2025 GAM update releases:
  - § Southern portion of the Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta aquifers;
  - § Northern portion of the Edwards (Balcones Fault Zone) Aquifer; and,
  - § Igneous and West Texas Bolsons aquifers.
- Expected Summer/Fall 2025 GAM releases:
  - § Central and southern portions of the Gulf Coast Aquifer system;
  - § High Plains Aquifer system;
  - § Cross Timbers Aquifer;
  - § Northern portion of the Trinity Aquifer;
  - § Southern portion of the Trinity Aquifer; and,
  - § Edwards-Trinity (Plateau) regional aquifers.
- There were no updates regarding Innovative Water (i.e., Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and desalination).

David Villarreal (TDA) suggested that staff or an attorney from a state water association could also be invited to the next TGPC meeting to provide an overview of the recent legislative session.

Larry Estrada (TDLR) joined the meeting at approximately 2:00 PM CDT and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

#### Nonpoint Source Pollution

T.J. Helton (TSSWCB) reported that the *Nonpoint Source Pollution Management in Texas: 2024 Annual Report*, TCEQ publication SFR-066, January 2025, <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/water-quality/nonpoint/plans-reports/nps-2024-annual-report-sfr-066-24.pdf>, was recently published and it was available on both the TSSWCB and TCEQ websites.

#### National Groundwater Information

There was no discussion of this topic at the meeting.

### 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;
- 2023-139-321-OW – Land Application of Dairy Waste and Disposal of Dairy Waste in Control Facility; and,
- 2024-009-285-CE – Proposed Changes to 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 285, On-site Sewage Facilities (OSSFs).

Natalie Ballew (TWDB) asked about the number and location of counties that would potentially be eligible for the Leaking Water Wells Grant Program. Cindy Hooper (TCEQ) indicated that Pecos and Crockett counties were eligible, along with perhaps a few other counties.

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

#### New Publications

Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) noted that publication of the 2024 Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS) *Annual Report* was reported earlier in the meeting.

#### Upcoming Conferences

Abiy Berehe (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.

### 8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ted Boriack (WPA) provided public comment regarding the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer in Gonzales County (e.g., the Gonzales County Underground Water Conservation District, well pumping and placement, aquifer modeling, subsidence, distribution line leaks, and groundwater quality). Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) indicated that a presentation file related to the public comment could be sent to [tgpc@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:tgpc@tceq.texas.gov) after the meeting.

### 9. ADJOURN

Abiy Berehe (TCEQ) adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:18 PM CDT.