

**TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE**  
**RECORD OF MEETING**  
**Third Quarterly Meeting, Fiscal Year 2003**

Meeting Date: April 10, 2003  
Meeting No.: 56

Place: TCEQ Campus, Building F  
Room: 2210

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MEETING ATTENDANCE

MEETING HANDOUTS

MEETING RECORD OF JANUARY 23, 2003

- I. Call to Order and Introductions
  
- II. Subcommittee Reports -
  - Agricultural Chemicals
  - Data Management
  - Water Well Closure
  - Groundwater Protection Strategy Work Group
  - Groundwater Research
  - Nonpoint Source
  
- III. Presentation
  - Perchlorate in Texas - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
  
- IV. Business - Discussion & Possible Action
  - Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy - Discuss *Strategy*
  
  - Implementation Issues: concurrence letter status; implementation of recommendations; and implementation project coordination
  
  - Review and Approval of Revised Subcommittee Charges - Data Management Subcommittee, Water Well Closure Task Force, and Nonpoint Source Subcommittee
  
  - Review and Approval of Revised Draft Table of Contents - Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report - 2002

Discussion of Future Presentation Topics.

Set Future Meeting Dates

V. Information Exchange for Groundwater Related Activities/Status Update

Development of the State's Nonpoint Source Assessment and Management Plan

VI. Announcements (All Members)

Rules Update

New Publications

Upcoming Conferences

VII. Public Comment

VIII. Adjourn

TGPC Members

Affiliation

|                 |        |
|-----------------|--------|
| Mary Ambrose    | TCEQ   |
| Janie Hopkins   | TWDB   |
| Ambrose Charles | TDA    |
| Richard Ginn    | RCT    |
| Allan Jones     | TAES   |
| Donna Long      | TSSWCB |
| Barry Miller    | TAGD   |
| Ken Ofunrein    | TDH    |
| Lee Parham      | TDLR   |
| Bridget Scanlon | BEG    |

Agency Staff

Affiliation

Program

|                 |      |                                   |
|-----------------|------|-----------------------------------|
| Jennifer Allis  | ORCA | Office of Rural Community Affairs |
| Abiy Berehe     | TCEQ | Technical Analysis Division       |
| Cary Betz       | TCEQ | Technical Analysis Division       |
| Patricia Bobeck | TDH  | Bureau of Radiation Control       |
| Leon Byrd       | TCEQ | Technical Analysis Division       |
| Alan Cherepon   | TCEQ | Technical Analysis Division       |
| Chuck Dvorsky   | TCEQ | Technical Analysis Division       |

|                 |      |                                  |
|-----------------|------|----------------------------------|
| Frank Fuller    | TCEQ | Policy and Regulatory Division   |
| Isacc Jackson   | TCEQ | EXEC/Intergovernmental Relations |
| Steve Musick    | TCEQ | Technical Analysis Division      |
| Jeanette O'Hare | TDA  | Risk Assessment & Toxicology     |
| Kathy Ramirez   | TCEQ | Policy and Regulatory Division   |
| Alice Rogers    | TDH  | Bureau of Radiation Control      |
| Joe Thomas      | TCEQ | Policy & Regulation Division     |

Interested Parties

Affiliation

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Jim O'Connor | SAWS |
| Mary Etter   | LCRA |
| Eric Strom   | USGS |

MEETING HANDOUTS

1. Agenda
2. Agricultural Subcommittee Report
3. TGPC Record of Meeting , Second Quarter Meeting, FY 2003
4. Groundwater Data Management Subcommittee - *Draft Charge*
5. Private Well/Landowner Outreach Subcommittee - *Draft Charge*
6. Nonpoint Source Subcommittee - *Draft Charge*
7. *Draft* - Table of Contents - "Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report - 2002"
8. *Publication Announcement* - "2002 Annual Report: Texas Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program"
9. TGPC Rule Log Update on April 10, 2003
10. TCEQ Publications Announcement
11. *Memorandum* - Change in Distribution of Meeting Records/Minutes and Committee Publications
12. Environmental Trade Fair Conference Brochure

MEETING RECORD OF APRIL 10, 2003

**I. Call to Order and Introductions**

Mary Ambrose, Designated Chairman of the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC), called the FY2003, Third Quarterly Meeting to order at 1:06 P.M., CDT.

## II. Subcommittee Reports

**Agricultural Chemicals** - Steve Musick, TCEQ, Chair. The Agricultural Chemicals Subcommittee held its FY 2003 third quarter meeting on April 10, 2003, at 10:00 A.M.

Members were updated on Task Force activities:

Site Selection - the Chairman (TWDB) provided a brief overview of the FY 2003 Atrazine/Metolachlor Monitoring Plan. Sampling of approximately 350 wells in the Trinity Group and Edwards-Trinity Plateau aquifers is planned for each aquifer. Additional sampling of minor aquifers is under discussion. Seventy samples have been analyzed thus far. TCEQ staff will make one monitoring trip to the Panhandle region this fiscal year to be timed just following the usual atrazine application in the region.

Under the Subcommittee's Business items:

The Chairman (TCEQ) presented a brief summary of the issue as to whether atrazine investigations were indicating a point source or nonpoint source concern in Texas and how the PMP program would be effected. There was a brief discussion by the subcommittee members. The Chairman ended the discussion by indicating that it would be continued at the next meeting.

The Subcommittee viewed a summary presentation of findings related to the investigation of sources of atrazine detections in groundwater from Public Water Supply wells in the Texas Panhandle. The presentation covered such items as pesticide monitoring data, investigation methods, inventory and mapping of potential sources of contamination, and task force peer review of the data and report.

The Subcommittee heard announcements and there were no public comments.

**Data Management** - Cary Betz, TCEQ, representative. The Data Management Subcommittee did not meet this quarter. TCEQ staff is working on the *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report - 2002*. A draft of the Table of Contents and Charge to the Subcommittee were carried over to the Business Discussion portion of the meeting.

**Abandoned Water Well Closure Task Force** - Bruce Lesikar, TCE, representative was not present. Steve Musick, TCEQ, pointed out that a contract was being worked on between the TCEQ and Dr. Lesikar/TCE to fund water well closures. Currently a Scope of Work is being drafted for the closure of five wells.

**Groundwater Protection Strategy Work Group** - Frank Fuller (TCEQ) reported that the strategy work group has not met this quarter.

**Groundwater Research** - Bridget Scanlon, BEG, representative. The subcommittee met last month. There was a presentation from EQIS software (Environmental Quality Information Systems) which pointed out the value of EQIS for data management at the

TCEQ; also it's GIS capability and how it can interface with several other programs.

Following the presentation, there was a discussion on how to implement EQIS at TCEQ using 319 funding to carry out a demonstration pilot project.

The primary goals of the Groundwater Research Subcommittee are to identify procedures for determining areas of common research needs of the different agencies, identifying funding sources, and documenting that process, all of which are in progress with no definitive conclusions at this time.

**Nonpoint Source** - Donna Long, TSSWCB representative. This subcommittee will be discussed in the business part of the meeting since it has not been officially charged yet. The preliminary draft of the Nonpoint Source Assessment and Management Plan is due in June 2003, and a draft for public review and comment is due in September 2003. Future projects from the TGPC will be reported in this Plan.

### **III. Presentation**

**Perchlorate in Texas** - Steven E. Walden (TCEQ), presented the results to date of an ongoing study of the occurrence of perchlorate in the High Plains Ogallala Aquifer conducted by Texas Tech University. The project is under contract with TCEQ and funded through grants from the EPA.

The investigation focused on the potential sources and extent of perchlorate contamination in Midland County and eight surrounding counties, including Andrews, Borden, Dawson, Ector, Gaines, Glasscock, Howard, and Martin Counties. An investigation of the Levelland water tower perchlorate contamination and its relationship to one or more lightning strikes was included in the study.

Samples from two of the Midland well fields taken in the spring of 2002 by the TCEQ ranged from three to 32 parts per billion (ppb). The initial Midland samples were collected as part of a national monitoring program to determine if perchlorate has contaminated drinking water and should be regulated. Based on available research data, the TCEQ set the "interim action level" ( the level above which an investigation is triggered) at four ppb.

Objectives of the investigation were to determine the extent of perchlorate near the Midland well fields, the extent of perchlorate in the southern portion of the High Plains, and the possible source(s) of perchlorate in the region's groundwater. Potential sources for perchlorates are seismic exploration for oil and gas, military training ranges, agricultural fertilizers, and naturally occurring sources.

Phase II of this study will include a total of 39 counties in the High Plains, the original nine plus 30 additional counties. This future work will continue the sampling effort to perform water quality analysis, install nested wells for sediment study, model

groundwater patterns, and expand the electrochemical generation study.

Helpful web sites for tracking perchlorate investigations are listed below.

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(Media Releases)
- \* =["http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/standard/ucmr/updateindex.html"](http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/standard/ucmr/updateindex.html)MACROBUTTONHtmlResAnchor [www.epa.gov/ogwdw/standard/ucmr/updateindex.html](http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/standard/ucmr/updateindex.html)
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#### IV. Business - Discussion & Possible Action

**Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy** - Frank Fuller, TCEQ, presented Recommendations for Action from the *Strategy*.

Strengthen Communication with the State's Water Efforts - The Committee needs to strengthen lines of communication with regional planning groups.

Improve Groundwater Data - The state's ambient groundwater monitoring program needs more funding to sample additional sites and expand testing parameters. The goal is to design a groundwater monitoring system that will meet the needs of all member agencies.

It is important that we recognize that data management is a dynamic process and we need to review and revise the groundwater management standards and guidelines as well as actively participate in the various data management advisory groups.

The Committee needs to insure that it is getting good data that can be incorporated into a relational data base. The location and geometry of contamination plumes should be placed in a GIS format.

The TDLR has a relational database that includes water well driller information. The

Committee hopes that hard-copy water well drillers' reports will be put in a digital format and made accessible through the existing system.

Coordinate Research - There needs to be a formal mechanism to link agencies that need research done with organizations that are conducting research. These needs have partially been addressed by the Committee through the formation of a Research Subcommittee which is considering groundwater research needs of the state, as well as funding of this research. A secondary goal is to incorporate this information into TCEQ's research model which is required by the Legislature.

Increase Public Outreach - The state should undertake a voluntary program targeted at private/domestic well owners, designed to identify problem areas and assist private well owners in understanding these groundwater quality issues.

An increase in public educational materials and outreach programs are needed that target areas of high concentration of naturally occurring groundwater contaminants. Support is needed to develop and deliver educational materials that target potential sources of contamination with emphasis on the state's high growth areas.

Continued support of the On-Site Wastewater Treatment Research Council, TCE, TCEQ's on-site wastewater program, and local governments in their efforts to develop and deliver effective educational material that addresses On-Site Sewage Facility (OSSF) maintenance in order to prevent failures.

State agencies' web pages are not organized around groundwater as a theme, making it difficult for the general public to find information on the state's groundwater protection efforts. TGPC should add links to its web page that key into groundwater information residing at state agencies and educational institutions.

Commit to Development of Periodic Updates and Improvements to the Strategy - The TGPC should update the *Strategy* every six years. As part of the updating process the TGPC will establish some type of mechanism to identify and rank threats to groundwater quality and prioritize actions.

**Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy** - Steve Musick, TCEQ, presented Recommendations for Implementation of Project Coordination.

The various subcommittees will be implementing the *Strategy*. TCEQ is trying to find ways to contract this work, particularly in data collection, management, and assessment and outreach areas. Groundwater Research Subcommittee could provide the connection between groups that can do the work that is described in the *Strategy* and use the subcommittee to coordinate that work with the subcontractors.

The Committee is working with the USGS on a design for a statewide groundwater monitoring strategy. They will be coordinating this effort with the Data Management

Subcommittee, which will provide direction according to the *Strategy* recommendations. The BEG is involved in a project addressing nitrates, which will explore some methods to assess groundwater quality data. This effort will also be coordinated through the Data Management Subcommittee.

**Chair indicated that the draft letter with member concurrence to be used by the committee members to provide a short briefing document for upper management, is not finalized. It will be forwarded via e-mail when it is ready.**

The Groundwater Protection Strategy Work Group is no longer needed until the *Strategy* is revised four years from now. The Committee could receive reports from the subcommittee regarding implementation of the *Strategy*.

Chair made a motion to discontinue the Groundwater Protection Strategy Work Group and let the full Committee act in that capacity.

Second, Donna Long, TSSWCB. No discussion. Passed unanimously.

### **Review and Approval of Revised Subcommittee Charges**

Data Management Subcommittee - Representatives from the USGS and TWDB agreed to co-chair this subcommittee, while Cary Betz (TCEQ) will provide technical assistance.

Cary Betz, TCEQ, presented the subcommittee charge as presented and approved in 1995 and revised in 2003. Changes to the subcommittee's Purposes and Goals are significant. First, goals were added to the 1995 document. The assessment function was removed and became the responsibility of the Committee. The feeling was that the tasks outlined in the charge were significant enough that the assessment of data should be handled by the full Committee. Also, the review function of the subcommittee was transferred back to the Committee. (Chair injected that this subcommittee is responsible for the Joint Groundwater Monitoring Contamination Report, Federal Clean Water Act 305(b) Report, and revising the Groundwater Data Dictionary to insure standardized methods for groundwater data entry).

Language was added to Scope and Boundaries to mandate that the subcommittee meet at least quarterly, meet all requirements of open meetings, and maintain written records of all meetings. The recorded minutes will be added to the Committee's web site. The subcommittee will establish time frames to complete these tasks.

Water Well Closure Task Force - Bruce Lesikar, TCE, chairman, is not present and there is no co-chair. This task force is identified to address the public education outreach recommended in the *Strategy* and will be renamed. The subcommittee will work with the TCE, TCEQ, TDLR, and the On-Site Wastewater Research Council to develop educational materials and programs to address the following items:



- Continue water well closure activities,
- Private/domestic well owner drinking water quality impacts from naturally occurring constituents and various treatment options. - Decide what is appropriate, brochures, videos, or curricula for workshops. Another group should be involved in identifying private/domestic well impacts by naturally occurring constituents of concern, including but not limited to arsenic and radionuclides. Educational materials on nitrates, bacteria, and possibly perchlorate, as well as treatment options, should be developed. ,
- OSSF - develop information for operation and maintenance for first users and for older systems,
- Domestic drinking well sampling program. - Work with TAG members to provide educational materials, help identify funding sources, and facilitate voluntary sampling where naturally occurring constituents of concern exceed the MCL, and
- TEX\*A\*Syst groundwater quality protection program - Coordinate outreach and on-site demonstration activities with existing programs. Provide educational materials developed by the subcommittee for use by the county agents.

Scope and Boundaries, and Reporting requirements are the same as the other charges.

Nonpoint Source Subcommittee - This subcommittee will work on providing updated information for the Nonpoint Source Assessment and Management Plans submitted to the EPA under chapter 319 of the Clean Water Act and work with other subcommittees to ensure that activities are fundable in the future.

Long term goals include the following items:

- identify areas where groundwater quality is being impacted by NPS pollution,
- identify appropriate best management practices to address NPS pollution, and
- identify new NPS issues related to groundwater.

None of the Subcommittee Charges were finalized. Each chairman will take their respective charges to the Subcommittees for review. A timetable for completing tasks set forth in the various charges will be established, bearing in mind the six-year time frame for completion. The Subcommittees will report to the Committee at the next meeting.

Call for questions on all Subcommittee Charges. There were none.

**Review and Approval of Draft Table of Contents - *Joint Groundwater Monitoring and Contamination Report, 2002.***

Cary Betz, TCEQ, indicated that this report is essentially the same as last years. One conspicuous change is in the Groundwater Contamination Case Description. An additional heading has been added due to the ongoing investigation of perchlorate by

Texas Tech University. The heading is Perchlorate Detections in Texas. A source of perchlorates has not been determined, but it is felt that their presence should be addressed. The narrative will include associated web sites to enable readers to access the latest information regarding perchlorates.

All data have been received and submission for publication is scheduled for May 1, 2003. The number of contamination cases has declined annually since 1998 and this trend has continued for this report.

Barry Miller, TAGD, made a motion to approve the draft Table of Contents with minor revisions (grammatical, if needed). Allan Jones, TAES, seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

### **Discussion of Future Presentation Topics**

Some potential topics suggested are as follows:

- source water protection program and updates to its database (Chair),
- groundwater resources from Del Rio to Amistad (TWDB), and
- Eco-regions delineation (TSSWCB).

### **Set Future Meeting Dates**

Next meeting date: August 21, 2003, 1:00 p.m. TCEQ Campus.

## **V. Information Exchange for Groundwater Related Activities/Status Update**

### **Development of the State's Nonpoint Source Assessment and Management Plan -**

Donna Long, TSSWCB, indicated that a preliminary draft report is due the first of June 2003, to present to the Committee on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and to the public for review in September.

Steve Musick, TCEQ, indicated that in the past a separate document has identified nonpoint source problem areas in the state. The current assessment on the surface water quality will be derived directly from the water quality sampling that is reported in the 305(b) inventory which will identify impaired and threatened waters. The nonpoint source management plan will be more directly linked to those impairments. There is no equivalent administrative process for determining impaired or threatened conditions in groundwater. Thus, more input than in previous cycles of updating this assessment will be required so that the various kinds of projects in different areas where there are groundwater problems will continue to be funded in order to address those problems. Consequently, this update is more important than previous updates.

## **VI. Announcements (All Members)**

**Rules Update** - TCEQ rule tracking log - Kathy Ramirez, TCEQ. A summary of the rule log was distributed to members identifying four projects of interest to the Committee.

First item - Professional Geoscientist registration, proposal is April 30.  
Second item - Drinking water surface water treatment rules, proposal date is May 29. Third  
item - Repeal of the groundwater management area designations, proposal date is May  
29.  
Forth item - Revision of the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone maps, proposal date is  
August 20.

**No other committee members presented rule updates.**

**New Publications** - Below is a list of TCEQ publications that have been released or  
revised in the past three months.

*TRRP: Groundwater Classification*  
*School Recycling Guide, Texas...*

*A Comparison Between Fecal Coliform, E. Coli, and Enterococci as Bacterial  
Indicators in Southeast Texas Surface Waters*

*How to Develop a Monitoring Plan for a Public Water System*  
*Funding Sources for Utilities*

*Teaching Environmental Sciences*  
*Texas Groundwater Protection Strategy*

TWDB has four new publications out, two of which relate to priority groundwater  
management areas.

### **Upcoming Conferences**

TCEQ - Environmental Trade Fair - May 5 - 7, 2003  
Artificial Recharge - California - April 2003

### **VII. Public Comment**

None

### **VIII. Adjourn**

Chair, Mary Ambrose, adjourned meeting at approximately 3:15 P. M., CDT.