

**Minutes of the South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group  
August 1, 2024**

Chair Andruss called the hybrid meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., held both in person and through WebEx online platform.

**27 of the 32** voting members, or their alternates, were present.

**Voting Members Present:**

Tim Andruss	Gary Middleton
John Byrum	Travis Pruski
Curt Campbell	Donovon Burton for Robert Puente
Andra Wisian	Humberto Ramos
Debbie Farmer	Weldon Riggs
Erin Cavazos for Steve	Roland Ruiz
Metzler Terrell Graham	Darrell Brownlow
Vic Hilderbran	Mitchell Sowards
Thomas Jungman	Jonathan Stinson
Aarin Teague	Thomas Taggart
Jason Ammerman	Mike Short for Ryan Kelso
Scooter Mangold	Dianne Wassenich
Andrew McBride	Adam Yablonski
Daniel Meyer	

**Voting Members Absent:**

Ryan Bayle  
Vanessa Puig-Williams  
Charlie Flatten  
Darren Simmons  
Dan Yoxall

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Carly Rotzler, TX Department of Parks and Wildlife  
Tony Franklin, Texas Soil & Water Cons. Board  
Tom Hegemier, Region K Liaison  
Michele Foss, Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)  
Jami McCool, TX Dept. of Agriculture

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

Iliana Delgado, TCEQ  
Don McGhee, Region M Liaison  
Charles Wiedenfeld, Region J Liaison  
Carl Crull, Region N Liaison

*Beginning with the February 11, 2016, meeting of the South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group, all recordings are available for the public at [www.regionltexas.org](http://www.regionltexas.org).*

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.1: ROLL CALL**

Ms. Castillo took roll call.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.2: PUBLIC COMMENT (LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES)**

No public comments.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.3: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP (SCTRWPG)**

Mr. Andruss motioned to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Brownlow seconded, the motion passed by consensus.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.4: STATUS REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS BY TWDB**

Ms. Foss provided an update from TWDB on 2024 SWIFT Funding for Region L Projects, a reminder on the data that can be found on TWDB's Conservation Dashboard (GPCD Statistics, GPCD Trends and Targets, and BMPs and Projects), as well as an overview on the Texas Water Fund (TWF) Implementation Plan. Her presentation is available online at [www.regionltexas.org](http://www.regionltexas.org).

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.5: STATUS REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS RELATED TO REGIONAL WATER PLANNING INCLUDING REPORTS BY THE CHAIR, REGIONAL LIAISONS, GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA REPRESENTATIVES AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING GROUP**

Mr. Brownlow provided an update on GMA 13 stating that they met on June 14, 2024 and discussed status reports on groundwater availability model updates and recalibrations, action occurring on requests to the TWDB to update the GAM for southern portions of the CWQCS aquifers based on model revisions, and discussion on timeline for 4<sup>th</sup> round of DFCs.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.6: CONSIDERATION AND APPROPRIATE ACTION REGARDING BRIEFINGS ON WORKGROUP ACTIVITIES:**

### **A. CHAPTER 8 POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS WORKGROUP**

Ms. Gonzalez provided an overview of the work the Chapter 8 Policy and Legislative Recommendations Workgroup accomplished during the year of 2024 thus far. Ms. Gonzalez stated that the workgroup has met to discuss new or proposed recommendations to consider including in Chapter 8, as well as reviewing and revising Chapter 8 language.

She included that the workgroup would finalize a draft Chapter 8 for consideration at the November 7 RWPG meeting.

## **B. RURAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH WORKGROUP**

Ms. Gonzalez provided an overview of the work the Rural Community Outreach Workgroup has accomplished during the year of 2024. The workgroup held meetings in-person and virtually since the May RWPG meeting: June 5<sup>th</sup> and July 10<sup>th</sup>. During these meetings, the work group identified and developed water management strategies (WMSs) that could benefit rural entities. They also developed and finalized methodologies for consideration by RWPG for the following WMSs: Irrigation Conservation, Irrigation Drought Management, and Rainwater Harvesting. No additional meetings are currently scheduled.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO.7: CONSIDERATION AND APPROPRIATE ACTION REGARDING PRESENTATION BY TECHNICAL CONSULTANT REGARDING SCHEDULE AND PROGRESS UPDATE**

Ms. Gonzales provided a conceptual schedule for Region L plan development, update on completed, new, and ongoing efforts, and updates on Drought Contingency Plans. Ms. Gonzalez also provided information for consideration and appropriate action on significant identified needs definition, major water provider designations, and water management strategies. Her presentation is available online at [www.regionltexas.org](http://www.regionltexas.org).

Regarding the RWPG defining Significant Identified Needs, Ms. Gonzalez reviewed the TWDB requirement to provide a specific assessment in the plan for the potential for aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) projects to meet “significant identified needs” as defined by the RWPG. She reviewed the definition and identified WUGs used in SCTRWPG 2021 Plan. Discussion ensued by the planning group regarding the significance of being identified as well as the impact of identification. Additionally, the RWPG discussed agricultural references and how any of the options affect the work of the technical consultant. Ms. Wassenich motioned to select Option 2 without the inclusion of County-Other to be Region L’s threshold for Significant Identified Needs. Mr. Ramos seconded, the motion passed by consensus.

Regarding the options the technical consultants provided to Designate Major Water Providers (MWP), Ms. Gonzalez provided background information to the RWPG on what a Major Water Provider is defined as, as per 31 TAC §357.10(19). She also stated that the RWPG’s designation of MWPs will not change the role of the entity in the RWP. Information about the MWPs will be summarized in ‘snapshots’ in the RWP. Additionally, she provided the planning group with the 2021 RWP’s definition. Discussion ensued by the planning group on the purpose of the RWPG to designate water providers, what options were used in the previous plan, and if this designation will affect funding. Once discussion came to an end, Ms. Wassenich motioned to select Option 3

as the representation of water providers (5 entities) Region L selects to be the Major Water Providers. Mr. Andruss seconded, the motion passed by consensus.

Regarding the Water Management Strategies (WMS) that the technical consultant presented to the RWPG, Ms. Gonzalez provided a timeline for how the WMS would be presented. The timeline and process in terms of presentation would be broken up into two blocks: Block 1 WMSs presented in the August meeting and Block 2 WMSs presented in the November meeting. In the Block 1 WMSs presentation, Ms. Gonzalez requested input from the planning group members under the Drought Management: Municipal Costing Tool WMS. Ms. Gonzalez requested that the RWPG consider four scenarios included in her presentation regarding Drought Management Municipal Yields based on percentage use reduction scenarios. Mr. Taggart motioned to select the 10% use reduction scenario. Mr. Byrum seconded, the motion passed by consensus.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO.8: CONSIDERATION AND APPROPRIATE ACTION FOR THE TECHNICAL CONSULTANT TO EVALUATE WEATHER MODIFICATION AS A NEW WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Mr. Riggs introduced Mr. Raabe to explain Weather Modification as a WMS to the planning group. Mr. Raabe, a board member of the South Texas Weather Modification Association (STWMA), shared with the planning group that the STWMA was formed in 1996 and its members are groundwater conservation districts and county governments that fund the STWMA through a per acre assessment. Mr. Raabe included that Region L has historically determined in the 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021 regional water plans that there were no feasible water management strategies to meet unmet irrigation needs. He stated that weather modification is a strategy that can help meet unmet irrigation needs and provide irrigation water conservation savings to reduce irrigation water demands through precipitation enhancement.

Mr. Raabe requested that the RWPG identify weather modification as a potential water management strategy and authorize the evaluation of weather modification to meet unmet irrigation needs and that weather modification be included in the Advanced Water Conservation strategy for agricultural irrigation.

Discussion ensued by the planning group regarding confirmation that this item is not approval of the strategy, but rather a request for evaluation and more details would be provided during the November 2024 meeting where the members would determine if the strategy is recommended or alternative.

Mr. Byrum motioned to approve the Technical Consultant to use Scope 5B funds to evaluate the Weather Modification Project as a New Water Management Strategy. Mr. Hilderbran seconded, the motion passed by consensus.

#### **AGENDA ITEM NO.9: CONSIDERATION AND APPROPRIATE ACTION REGARDING DESIGNATION OF THE NUECES RIVER AUTHORITY AS A**

## **WHOLESALE WATER PROVIDER (WWP) AS DEFINED IN 31 TAC §357.10(44) FOR REGIONAL WATER PLANNING PURPOSES**

Ms. Gonzales provided background on the agenda item, stating that during the Rural Community outreach Work Group meetings, they found that there were many WMS associated with benefitting rural community and there weren't established sponsors that would be able to implement them. As the Nueces River Authority is not currently listed as a wholesale water provider, they are not able to apply for funding to implement these strategies for rural communities.

Mr. Andruss motioned to approve the Designation of the Nueces River Authority as a Wholesale Water Provider (WWP) for Regional Water Planning Purposes. Mr. Burton seconded, the motion passed by consensus.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.10: DISCUSSION AND APPROPRIATE ACTION REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ADDITIONAL SUBCOMMITTEES**

No additional subcommittees were established.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.11: SCHEDULE AND POTENTIAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE SCTRWPG**

The next SCTRWPG meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2024, at 9:30 AM.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO.14: PUBLIC COMMENT (LIMITED TO 3 MINUTES)**

Ms. Cywinski provided public comment to state that in 2015, several "water captains" and herself appeared before the SCTRWPG as volunteers of Texas Interfaith Center for Public Policy, also known as Interfaith Environmental Network. They presented a white paper response to the 2016 draft plan and each read sections of the Region L IPP whitepaper during one of the meetings. Ms. Cywinski stated that she appreciates that the conservation strategies for which they advocated for are now being included in the 2026 plan. She thanked the planning group for their openness to constituent recommendation.

Ms. Cywinski also provided comment on Agenda Item 8 (Consideration and Appropriate Action for the Technical Consultant to Evaluate Weather Modification as a New Water Management Strategy). Ms. Cywinski stated that she would like to draw attention to the Edwards Aquifer Authority's News Drop article on EAA's Precipitation Enhancement Program (pages 6-7). She stated that weather modification with silver iodide by humans is a poor remedy for ceasing to modify the hydrology by our continued compaction of soil and expansion of impervious surfaces. She asked that members think beyond recent conventional thinking of water supply to solving problems by decreasing the problems created.

**AGENDA ITEM NO.15: ADJOURN**

Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn as there was no further matters left to address.

The meeting adjourned at 12:09pm.