

Senate Bill 1
South Central Texas RWPG Staff Workgroup Meeting
January 19, 2017 at 9:30 am
San Antonio River Authority

1. Review and Discuss Latest Efforts on 2021 Plan Enhancement Process
 - a. Guiding Principles Working Document
 - b. Topics to be Discussed at February 2, 2017, Meeting
2. Review and Discuss Consultant's Work and Schedule
 - a. Discuss TWDB's Draft Population Projections for Municipal and Mining
3. Review and Discuss SWCA Potential Environmental Analyses Options
4. Review and Discuss the Region L Agenda for February 2, 2017
5. Discuss Schedule for Future Staff Workgroup Meetings
6. Any Additional Items for Consideration

1. Review and Discuss Latest Efforts on 2021 Plan Enhancement Process
 - a. Guiding Principles Working Document
 - b. Topics to be Discussed at February 2, 2017, Meeting

2021 Plan Enhancement Process Schedule

May 2016	The appropriateness and adequacy of how demand and need are determined.	Discussed: May 5, 2016 Adopted: August 4, 2016
	The role of regional water planning groups in influencing population growth and land use.	Discussed: May 5, 2016 Adopted: August 4, 2016
	Defining conflicts of interests of planning group members	Discussed: May 5, 2016 Adopted: August 4, 2016
August 2016	The role of regional water planning groups in influencing water development plans of water suppliers.	Discussed: August 4, 2016 Adopted: Nov. 3, 2016
	The role of regional water planning groups in influencing permitting entities.	Discussed: August 4, 2016 Adopted: Nov. 3, 2016
November 2016	The adequacy of evaluating the Plan's effects on freshwater inflows to San Antonio Bay.	Discussed: Nov. 3, 2016 Adopted:
	The adequacy of environmental assessments of individual WMS's.	Discussed: Nov. 3, 2016 Adopted:
February 2017	How Water Management Strategies are categorized; e.g. Recommended, Alternate, Needing Further Study.	Discussed: Adopted:
	Establishing Minimum standards for Water Management Strategies included in the Plan	Discussed: Adopted:
	Maintaining management supplies while avoiding "over planning".	Discussed: Adopted:
May 2017	Identifying special studies or evaluations deemed important to enhance the 2021 Plan and identification of outside funding sources.	Discussed: Adopted:
	Address the role of reuse within the regional water plan.	Discussed: Adopted:
	The extent to which innovative strategies should be used.	Discussed: Adopted:

South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group

2021 Regional Water Plan Enhancement Process Guiding Principles

Appropriateness and Adequacy of How Demand and Need are Determined

Guiding Principle:

Discussed at SCTRWPG meeting on May 5, 2016, Adopted on August 4, 2016

The South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group (SCTRWPG) generally defers to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) on matters related to population and water demand projections. However, the SCTRWPG retains the duty to review TWDB projections on a case by case basis. Where the SCTRWPG finds a discrepancy in TWDB's projections, and can adequately justify its findings by verifying one or more of the "criteria for adjustment," TWDB – in consultation with Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department – may adjust population and/or water demand projections accordingly (see generally *General Guidelines for Fifth Cycle of Regional Water Plan Development*, Article 2. *Population and Water Demand Projections*). Consistent with Chapter 8 of the 2016 Regional Water Plan for Region L, the SCTRWPG supports greater TWDB flexibility through relaxation of current methodological assumptions holding regional and state population projection totals fixed (see Chapter 8.9.3 *Population and Water Demand Projections*). Water demand projections used in developing the Regional Water Plan should be consensus figures arrived at by using TWDB data along with local input from the cities, counties, and groundwater districts.

Role of Regional Water Planning Groups in Influencing Population Growth and Land Use

Guiding Principle:

Discussed at SCTRWPG meeting on May 5, 2016, Adopted August 4, 2016

Where the concepts of population growth and land use necessarily interrelate with the Regional Water Plan, the SCTRWPG shall, to the greatest extent possible, develop strategies to meet future projected demands. However, it is neither the role, nor the responsibility of the SCTRWPG to influence population growth or land use. While the SCTRWPG has a duty to remain cognizant of the sensitive relationship between the Regional Water Plan, population growth and land use, decisions concerning permitting and influencing population growth are inherently local, and remain wholly independent from the regional water planning process.

Conflicts of Interests With Respect to Planning Group Members

Guiding Principle:

Discussed at SCTRWPG meeting on May 5, 2016, Adopted August 4, 2016

1. Active Planning Group Members

All disclosures pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the SCTRWPG Bylaws, are the responsibility of the planning group member or designated alternate who has the potential conflict of interest. Therefore, disclosures are the responsibility of the planning group member or designated alternate. If the voting member chooses to abstain from participation in deliberations, decisions, or voting, pursuant to Article V, Section 6 of the SCTRWPG Bylaws, the reason for abstention shall be noted in the minutes.

SCTRWPG Bylaw Excerpt

Potential conflicts of interest shall be clearly stated by the voting member or designated alternate prior to any deliberation or action on an agenda item with which the joint member or designated alternate may be in conflict. Where the potential conflict is restricted to a divisible portion of an agenda item, the Chair may divide the agenda item into parts for deliberation and voting purpose. An abstention from participation in deliberations, decisions or voting and the reason therefore shall be noted in the minutes.

(see *SCTRWPG Bylaws*, Article V, Section 6, (b))

2. Nomination Process

Where the SCTRWPG is soliciting nominations to fill vacancies on the planning group, nominators shall provide information regarding the nominee's current employer, and provide a description of the nominee's experience that qualifies him/her for the position in the interest group being sought to represent.

Additionally, nominees shall agree to abide by the Code of Conduct, which is incorporated in the SCTRWPG Bylaws (see *SCTRWPG Bylaws*, Article V, Section 6). As per the Bylaws, the Executive Committee will conduct an interview process whereby nominees will be evaluated. Prior to the interview, nominees will be provided a copy of the Bylaws. During the interview process, nominees will be asked if they are willing to agree to the Bylaws, and specifically, if they are willing to comply with the Code of Conduct.

The Role of the Planning Group in Influencing Water Development Plans of Water Suppliers

Guiding Principle:

Discussed at SCTRWPG meeting on August 4, 2016, Adopted: November 3, 2016

The role of the SCTRWPG is to ensure water needs are met with identified potentially feasible water management strategies. It is not the role of the SCTRWPG to influence or interfere with local water planning decisions. In the absence of a planning group recommended potentially feasible water management strategy to meet an identified need, the SCTRWPG may evaluate and report, as required, the social, environmental and economic impacts of not meeting the identified need.

The Role of the Planning Group in Influencing Permitting Entities

Guiding Principle:

Discussed at SCTRWPG meeting on August 4, 2016, Adopted: November 3, 2016

Decisions made at the planning group level are non-regulatory, and are intended for planning purposes only. While some decisions made by the SCTRWPG could inevitably affect some decisions made by the governing boards of permitting entities, it is neither the responsibility, nor the role of the SCTRWPG to influence or interfere with the regulatory decisions made by the governing boards of permitting entities.

The adequacy of evaluating the Plan's effects on freshwater inflows to San Antonio Bay.

And

The adequacy of environmental assessments of individual WMS's.

Guiding Principle:

Discussed at SCTRWPG meeting on August 4, 2016, Adopted:

The SCTRWPG's evaluation of its plan's effects on the freshwater inflows to the San Antonio Bay, and its environmental assessments of individual water management strategies can be improved. It is the SCTRWPG's intent to improve its evaluation by identifying what improvements are desired, and to implement those improvements to the extent funds are available. The SCTRWPG will create a workgroup to identify what improvements are desired to effect the 2020 Regional Water Plan for subsequent consideration by the SCTRWPG.

2. Review and Discuss Consultant's Work and Schedule

- a. Discuss TWDB's Draft Population Projections for Municipal and Mining

3. Review and Discuss SWCA Potential Environmental Analyses Options

To: Mr. Brian Perkins, Black & Veatch

From: Christine Westerman, SWCA Environmental Consultants

Date: January 18, 2017

Re: **Region L Water Planning – Environmental Analysis for the Regional Water Plan**

The South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group (Region L; planning group) is developing guiding principles for the 2021 regional planning cycle. During its November 2016 meeting, the planning group discussed the adequacy of evaluating the Regional Water Plan's (RWP) effects on freshwater inflows to the San Antonio Bay and the adequacy of environmental assessments for individual water management strategies (WMS) included in the RWP. The planning group members requested that Black & Veatch, together with SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA), prepare a list of environmental review scenarios for consideration by the planning group or workgroup members at a future meeting. SWCA is available to meet with you, or members of the planning group, as appropriate to discuss these items in further detail.

SWCA has reviewed prior RWPs and identified areas where Region L may wish to modify the previously utilized environmental review. SWCA identified three primary areas for consideration: (1) expanding and/or altering the assessment of effects on instream flows and freshwater inflows (estuarine inflow); (2) improving, clarifying, and/or enhancing the cumulative effects analysis included in the RWP; and (3) improving, clarifying, and/or enhancing the assessment of individual WMSs. A discussion on each of these consideration areas and the estimated financial implication for each is included below.

In general, SWCA believes that the environmental review could, at a minimum, be improved through modifying the presentation/organization of environmental review sections in the RWP. For example, some discussions that are currently repeated multiple times for multiple WMSs could be condensed to one section (for example Volume II or Chapter 6 of RWP) that could apply to all the WMSs. Later sections on WMSs could then reference this condensed discussion. Further, the planning group may wish to update the current ranking system used to evaluate environmental impacts to reflect regulatory changes and associated feasibility for each WMS in a way that may provide more useful analysis for project planners. One challenge associated with an updated method of review is how the current RWP compares to previous RWPs and State Water Plans (SWP) prior to Senate Bill 1. While the Texas Water Development Board does not require an analysis of how current versus prior plans affect the environment, per se, Region L has consistently provided this analysis in the past. As such, Region L may consider adapting this comparison in one of five ways described in Table 1.

Table 1. Levels of Environmental Effects Comparison from Previous RWP/SWPs to New RWPs.

Level of Analysis	Comments	Rough Cost (2016 dollars)
No Change	Use the same level of environmental analysis as previous RWPs; consider the same indicators and utilize the same ranking system.	\$8,000
Change; No Environmental Comparison to Prior Years	Update the environmental analysis with more relevant metrics and improve the ranking system to reflect project feasibility; include caveat that the environmental review process has changed and do not provide a comparison to prior RWPs.	\$8,000
Change; Qualitative Comparison to Prior Years	Update the environmental analysis with more relevant metrics and improve the ranking system to show project feasibility; provide a qualitative analysis of how the current RWP varies from prior RWP/SWPs without the quantitative analysis provided in the 2016 RWP.	\$9,000
Change; Update RWP from 2001 to 2016 with New Review Method for Comparison	Update the environmental analysis with more relevant metrics and improve the ranking system to show project feasibility; revise the environmental comparison in RWPs dating back to 2001 with the updated methodology.	\$20,000
Change; Update all prior RWP/SWPs with New Review Method for Comparison	Update the environmental analysis with more relevant metrics and improve the ranking system to show project feasibility; revise the environmental comparison in all prior RWP/SWPs with the updated methodology. Note: this may not be feasible with all prior plans due to uncertainty regarding plan assumptions.	TBD

Instream and Freshwater Flows Analysis

During the November Region L meeting, some planning group members expressed interest in having information on how current conditions would appear in the instream flow model and a discussion on how instream flow levels affect local wildlife species and the overall health of the ecosystem at current and proposed flow conditions. It is our understanding that data is available from 1990-1999 that was previously used to develop a trend line for current conditions in the 2006 RWP. It is unlikely that substantial information is readily available to modify this existing trend line, so re-introducing this prior trend line to the RWP would require little additional effort beyond quality control/quality assurance.

For example, additional modeling that considers effluent discharge would alter the prior trend line, but could also provide additional information for the planning group. This modeling effort and costs analysis would be conducted by Black & Veatch.

To assess the relationship between instream flow levels and biological conditions, the environmental review could be expanded to consider the TCEQ instream flow requirements. Applying information available in the current literature to evaluate trends between flow levels and ecosystem health would allow for a quantitative and qualitative understanding of how to best maintain the health of the bay. This exercise could help evaluate instream flow thresholds based on biological indicators that the planning group could consider as they assess the RWP's effect on instream flows. SWCA estimates that the cost for considering the BBEST flow recommendations and the TCEQ instream flow requirements would be approximately \$5,000. A detailed literature review that considered target species would cost another approximately \$5,000 - \$10,000 depending on the breadth of the review.

Cumulative Effects Analysis and Costs

Previous versions of the RWP/SWP have included a discussion of environmental impacts that considers all of the WMSs implemented collectively. SWCA believes that this section of the RWP could be used to summarize a lot of information that was repeated for each management strategy in prior plans. For example, the list of affected species in each county is the same regardless of the strategy, and the RWP could be streamlined by only including this list one time compared to previous RWP/SWPs that included the list for each WMS and in Appendix G. This section could also be structured to include a discussion on the types of environmental impacts based on different activity types (such as pipeline construction) that can then be used to summarize effects for each WMS without duplicating effort or content.

The level of environmental analysis included for the whole plan could also be expanded to include review of additional human resources closely tied to water such as recreation. There is also an opportunity to include an expanded discussion on climate variability. This could include a qualitative analysis that examines impacts to ecosystems that might result from natural weather events caused by climate variability (such as, more frequent extreme weather events, changes in average temperatures, increased likelihood and duration of drought periods, water quality impacts). A quantitative analysis could also be conducted that would involve adjustments to precipitation values used in the flow models. These additional levels of analysis and estimated costs associated with them is identified in Table 2.

Table 2. Expanded Cumulative Effects Analysis and Costs

Level of Analysis	Comments	Rough Cost (2016 dollars)
Extended Review of Human Resources	Qualitative analysis including additional resources.	\$10,000
Expanded Climate Variability Analysis	Qualitative analysis.	\$15,000
Quantitative Analysis	Includes adjusting inputs to the flow model.	B&V Cost

Individual Water Management Strategy Analysis

Evaluation of individual WMSs could be addressed along a range of level of effort, exemplified through these four approaches:

- Option 1: Desktop level review consistent with 2016 RWP;
- Option 2: Desktop level review with revised metrics more applicable to actual project feasibility;
- Option 3: Desktop level review with revised metrics more applicable to actual project feasibility *and* additional effort to attempt to geo-locate project impacts for a more quantitative assessment of project impacts (include subsistence and base flow quantification from SB3 process for basins);
- Option 4: Desktop level review with revised metrics more applicable to actual project feasibility *and* additional effort to attempt to geo-locate project impacts for a more quantitative assessment (same as Option 3) of project impacts *and* an expanded analysis of water quality and water quantity impacts to aquatic ecosystems affected by the proposed WMS.

Each of these levels of analysis and the estimated financial impacts are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Individual Water Management Strategy Analysis.

Level of Analysis	Comments	Rough Cost (2016 dollars)
Option 1	Would be consistent with 2016 RWP. Does not include georeferenced T&E species habitat. Has more info on protected species than other resources, including cultural. Cultural resources analysis does not look at archaeological sites or previous surveyed culturally significant sites.	\$2,000 - \$5,000 per WMS
Option 2	Adjust metrics from previous plan. Add archaeology sites and high probability areas where we have location info. Add discussion on significant environmental constraints (such as jeopardy, ad mod, or known cultural site).	\$2,000 - \$5,000 per WMS
Option 3	Same as Option 2 plus additional GIS analysis of impacts to potential T&E species habitat and incorporation of known archaeology sites and high probability areas for significant cultural resources. Include SB3 subsistence and base flow recommendations	\$2,500 - \$6,000 per WMS
Option 4	Same as Option 3 plus additional review of water quality and water quantity implications on aquatic ecosystems relevant to the project.	\$2,500 - \$6,500 per WMS

4. Review and Discuss the Region L Agenda for February 2, 2017

DRAFT

**NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING OF THE
SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL
WATER PLANNING GROUP**

TAKE NOTICE that a meeting of the South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group as established by the Texas Water Development Board will be held on Thursday, February 2, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. at San Antonio Water System (SAWS), Customer Service Building, Room CR 145, 2800 US Highway 281 North, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The following subjects will be considered for discussion and/or action at said meeting. Additionally,

1. New Member Orientation & Training (Planning 101) by Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)—Ron Ellis
2. Roll-Call
3. Public Comment
4. Election of Officers
5. Approval of the Minutes from the November, 2016, Meeting of the South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group (Region L)
6. Status of Edwards Aquifer Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) – Nathan Pence, Executive Director EAHCP
7. Status of Guadalupe, San Antonio, Mission, and Aransas Rivers and Mission, Copano, Aransas, and San Antonio Bays Basin and Bay Stakeholder Committee (BBASC) and Expert Science Team (BBEST)
8. Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Communications
 - a. Goldwater Project Presentation on a Uniform Methodology for Measuring Conservation Across Regions—Stephen Cortes or Kip Averitt
9. Chair's Report
10. 2021 Plan Enhancement Process: Recap of Guiding Principles Previously Discussed and Adopted
11. Discussion and Appropriate Action Adopting Guiding Principles on the Following Issues Identified Through the 2021 Plan Enhancement Process
 - a. The Adequacy of Evaluating the Plan's Effects on Freshwater Inflows to the San Antonio Bay
 - b. The Adequacy of Environmental Assessments of Individual WMS's
 - c. Creation of an Environmental Assessment Workgroup
12. Discussion and Appropriate Action Regarding the Following Components of the 2021 Plan Enhancement Process

- a. How Water Management Strategies are categorized; e.g. Recommended, Alternate, Needing Further Study.
 - b. The extent to which innovative strategies should be used.
 - c. Maintaining management supplies while avoiding "over planning".
- 13. Discussion and Appropriate Action Regarding Consultant's Work and Schedule
 - a. Texas Water Development Board's Draft Population and Water Demand Projections for Municipal and Mining
- 14. Commercial Scale Rainwater Harvesting Presentation from Region K Chair—John Burke
- 15. Possible Agenda Items for the Next Region L Meeting
 - a. Adoption of Guiding Principles
 - b. Discussion on the Following Components of the 2021 Plan Enhancement Process: 1) Identifying special studies or evaluations deemed important to enhance the 2021 Plan and identification of outside funding sources; 2) Address the role of reuse within the regional water plan; and 3) The extent to which innovative strategies should be used.
- 16. Public Comment

5. Discuss Schedule for Future Staff Workgroup Meetings

6. Any Additional Items for Consideration