

**Colorado River Dissolved Solids TMDL
Stakeholder Meeting Summary
October 13, 2005
Ballinger, TX**

STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT

Bud Johnson	Coke County Soil and Water Conservation District
Allen Belk	Private oil interest in Coke County
Alicia Reinmund	Lower Colorado River Authority
Okla Thornton, Jr.	Colorado River Municipal Water District

STAKEHOLDERS ABSENT

Mike Arrott	Coke County Soil and Water Conservation District
CJ Robinson, Jr.	Runnels County Soil and Water Conservation District
Dennis McBeth	Runnels County Soil and Water Conservation District
Allen Frizzell	Enrich Oil Corp
Jim Studer	Buddy's Plants Plus
Bryan Davenport	Mueller's Supply Co.
Charles Sonnenberg	Bronte City Council Member
Roy Blair	Coke County Judge
Skipper Wheelless	Runnels County Commissioner
Michael Wiede	Farm Bureau
Tommy New	City of Ballinger
Scott King	Elementary Principal, Elm Creek Water Control District
Chuck Brown	Upper Colorado River Authority

SUPPORT TEAM

Kerry Niemann	TX Commission on Environmental Quality
Earlene Lambeth	TX Commission on Environmental Quality
Raed El Farhan	The Louis Berger Group
Alex Johnson	EA Engineering Science and Technology

OTHERS PRESENT

Ben Brooks	Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board
Ronnie Vanicek	USDA – NRCS
Richard W. Strube	Runnels County Commissioner Precinct # 4
David Cowan	Lower Colorado River Authority
Don Horner	Railroad Commission of Texas
Bill Renfro	Railroad Commission of Texas
Patrick Finn	Railroad Commission of Texas
Robert Moore	Runnels County Commissioner Precinct # 1

AGENDA

**Upper Colorado River Stakeholders' Meeting
Council Chambers at City Hall
700 Railroad Avenue
Ballinger**

October 13, 2005

1:00 - 3:00 PM

Objective: To provide a condensed overview of the TMDL project in its entirety, with an emphasis on source load allocation, and to solicit comments and suggestions.

Welcome address, Introductions and Purpose of Meeting

Earlene Lambeth, Public Participation Coordinator, TCEQ & Kerry Niemann, TMDL Project Manager, TCEQ

Final TMDL Report Presentation

Dr. Raed EL-Farhan, Louis Berger, Inc.

A summary of the Final TMDL Report and including summary of the calculated loads and the necessary reductions to meet the water quality standards.

Round Table Discussion with the Railroad Commission

RRC and Stakeholders

Summary, Questions and Comments

TCEQ, EA Engineering, and Louis Berger Group

Earlene Lambeth of the TCEQ opened the well attended fifth meeting with self introductions.

Kerry Niemann thanked the attendees and stakeholders for all the participation and partnering that has taken place during the project. He said that the purpose of the meeting was to present the final modeling results that would be presented by EL-Farhan with the Louis Berger Group. Kerry said that after the TMDL report is finalized that one more meeting will be scheduled to take any comments from the stakeholders on the TMDL, the process, or any other thoughts regarding the project. He encouraged the group to speak up and feel free to ask any questions and bring to light any items that may be a concern.

The meeting was then turned over to Raed who gave a brief review of the work that had been done in the last two years and project to date. He then presented the stakeholder a presentation on the TMDL modeling that was being done on the project. Raed's presentation and can be seen at the following web site:

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/implementation/water/tmdl/32-upcol-model-oct2005.pdf>

Questions & Comments for Raed El-Farhan:

Question: Please define "produced water".

Answer: It is basically water that is coming out of oil and gas operations.

Question: Did you take your sample from the area you are talking about or a particular point or was it an average?

Answer: There were multiple samples taken from the listed segment.

Question: Does Robert Lee/Bronte in Ballinger pump water in the river?

Answer: Yes, they do pump water into the river. However, the concentration of sulphate and chloride is very low – we included it in the system and used the standard averages, which again, is very minimal.

Question: The City of Alger no longer discharges, correct?

Answer: No discharge.

The stakeholder group also inquired about other discharges and permits in small cities in the area, such as Bronte and Ballinger. They agreed that other dischargers in the area did not contribute or was not a factor in the TMDL. No permitted discharges of pollutants were found in the watershed at this time.

Question: Would it be constructive for you to run the model with the change of discharges that are now in place?

Comment: From the lower? Yes, coming out of Spence. Yes, it went from a 10 CFS to more of a natural or normal flow. It is about 1 ½ in the winter time and about an 8 in the summer time. I (CRMWD) could get the numbers for you. In the winter it is a low number – it became effective the first of Oct.

Answer: Yes, we would like those numbers and will run it again.

Question: Is there a difference in the standards for E.V. Spence and 1426 segment?

Answer: No, 1426 is a much lower number. It seems like 610 was for the Colorado. Spence is more stringent.

Question: Does the water that goes into Spence get worse the longer it stays behind the dam?

Answer: It does not get worse because it is setting there – it is because we have evaporation processes going on and more concentration.

Comment: It seems to me as a lay person listening to you, the solution to this is to punch a hole in Spence dam.

Comment (CRMWD): We have artificially kept Spence low and the in-flows we have received in the last couple of years have cleaned that lake up. The reason why Spence has exceeded the water standard was because of an event that occurred in 1996. There was an inordinate amount of rainfall in the natural dam watershed (west of Big Spring). That natural dam spilled and the higher level of dissolved solids came through Big Spring Beals Creek and went into Spence – that is what killed Spence. Spence immediately went on the 303(d) list right after that occurred. We have continually released water and kept it low. It is the best it has been in probably 14 years. Another dilemma in the modeling is that you are going to see that parameter change overnight. You have a load that is not what was anticipated.

At this point, the floor was turned over to Okla Thornton with the CRMWD to talk about the continuous monitors that were deployed. This information can be seen on-line at the following TCEQ web page:

http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/pd/020/05-04/realtimeresults.html#puw

Upper Colorado River - A site on Beals Creek near Big Spring is maintained by the Colorado River Municipal Water District. Salinity is the main concern, especially during low-flow conditions. Based on the data collected, water district officials decide when to divert high salinity waters to off-channel evaporation ponds. This diversion protects downstream reservoirs that supply drinking water for the area.

Raed then answer the following question.

Question: When you say “final”, you are referring to “draft final”?

Answer: Yes, you will get another opportunity to review the TMDL. For more information on the TMDL, its process and other segments, see the following web page:

<http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/implementation/water/tmdl/tmdlstatus03.pdf>

Question: Ground water contribution on this TMDL – is it above or below the standard? What are your thoughts on the ground water contribution?

Answer: We looked at the ground water but there is not very much data available. We got some samples and we looked at the distribution of that. We actually put in (model) the average ground water concentration levels. Those were below the standard.

Question: What will be the impact to mesquite and cedars through this TMDL?

Answer: It will improve your water quality. You will not be losing ground water through the roots and evaporations. Salt cedar draws as much as 70 gallons a day. That is as much as an average person uses in a day. If the trees are eliminated – you are saving a lot of that ground water. You will be helping the base flow and improve the quality of the creek.

Question: What role does the Railroad Commission play in closing these bad wells and brine pits? Is that your responsibility?

Answer: That is something that the Railroad Commission has been very active in here in Runnels County. Over 500 wells have been plugged in Runnels County alone. About 67 wells were plugged in the last year in that county. The TCEQ has provided funding and we hope to do more.

Question: Going back to the Standards, 95% of loading is coming from Spence. Is it appropriate for 1426 to be the same as it is for Spence? Or Lake Ivy?

Comment: The TDS standard above Spence is 20,000.

Comment: I guess the next revision to the standard is next year and that is worthy to comment on. What should the standard really be for this segment? Could that be a recommendation from the TMDL study?

Comment: I believe we could say that through this TMDL, that a Use-Attainability Analysis (UAA) be performed to evaluate the stream segments.

Answer: Kerry reported that he had spoken to various people at the TCEQ about this issue. He said it depends on the criteria of the listed segment.

Kerry reported that Jeff Paine from the Bureau of Economic Geology at UT Austin presented the results of a study performed, “Geophysical Investigations of Salinization along Colorado River (TMDL Segment 1426), Coke and Runnels Counties, Texas” at the last meeting held in June, 2005. He said that Jeff was working more on the report with the bromide sampling. Jeff was re-collecting samples and the laboratory was re-running the results. The report will be updated and appended.

Question: Can you tell me how you arrived at the distribution of the sources?

Answer: Raed reported that they were very complex and extensive. He said the sources were human & natural, looked at the stream segment and its’ tributaries. There were many factors and examples cited.

Kerry closed the meeting again with a genuine thank you for the participation and input. He particularly thanked Okla with CRMWD for his assistance as well as Bud’s with the Coke County Soil and Water Conservation District. He said that the draft TMDL should be ready in approximately one month and then a comment meeting would be scheduled.