

**Petronila Creek Dissolved Solids TMDL
Stakeholder Meeting Summary
December 1, 2004
Robstown, TX**

STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT: Rocky Freund, Nueces River Authority; Edward Jungmann, Nueces County SWCD; Ken Kerrihard, Continental Resources, Inc.; Ramon Fernandez, TX Railroad Commission; Kevin Wagner, TX State Soil and Water Conservation Board; Brandon Hall, Western Gulf, LTD

STAKEHOLDERS ABSENT: Walter Jeffery, Apache Corporation; Noe Ovalle, City of Agua Dulce; Bobby Castellano, City of Driscoll; William J Ordner, Mayor, City of Petronila; Doug Duncan, TX Ecologists, Inc.; Jerry Faske, Nueces County Bishop Driscoll Drainage District 3; Ramiro Carrion, Nueces County Drainage and Conservation District 2; Leon Bernsen, Landowner; Ken Faughn, Robstown Area Development Commission; Beth Payne, Landowner; Scott Anderson, Texas Independent Producers and Royalty Assoc.; William J. Stevens, Texas Alliance of Energy Producers; John Freeman, USDA – NRCS; Michael Weeks, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

SUPPORT TEAM PRESENT: Kerry Niemann, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; Earlene Lambeth, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; Maurice Akech, EA Engineering Science and Technology; Alex Johnson, EA Engineering Science and Technology; Dr. Raed El Farhan, The Louis Berger Group; Dr. Jeff Paine, UT Bureau of Economic Geology

OTHERS PRESENT: Ashley Isaac, ESP; Sineol Contreras, TCEQ-Region 14; Ramon Juarez, TCEQ-Region 14; Laura Peterek, TCEQ-Region 14; Brian Holmes, TCEQ-Region 14; Sherri Serna, TCEQ-Clean Rivers Program; Terry Clenner, Continental Resources, Inc; Rick Hay, TX A&M University-Corpus Christi; Lionel Lopez, South TX Colonia Int.; Jessee Samu, KIII TV 3; Harvey Buchring, TX Cooperative Extension; Gus De Cenu, Landowner; Frank Salinas, US Ecology Texas; Precilla Ramirez, Landowner; Brian Petri, US Geological Survey-San Antonio; Matt Sturdevant, Corpus Christi Caller Times

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Earlene Lambeth of the TCEQ opened the meeting with introductions.

Dr. Jeff Paine: The meeting was turned over to Jeff Paine from the Bureau of Economic Geology at UT Austin who presented the results of a study performed, “Reconnaissance Geophysical Investigations of Salinization Along Petronila Creek (TMDL Segment 2204) Nueces and Kleberg Counties, Texas”. The presentation and results can be viewed at the following web site:

<http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/water/quality/tmdl/32petronilaBEGsaline.pdf>

Previous meeting summaries, presentations and other data results and reports can be found at the following web site:

http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/water/quality/tmdl/petronila_group.html

Comments and Questions:

Soil survey data has not been looked at but will be something the team will need to do. Mr. Paine reported that maps of current conductivity and frequencies would be received and that would be the stage to compare the digital soil data to see correlations such as soil types, patterns, etc. Based on what has been seen from the creek bottom, the bottom looks impermeable – stiff clay.

Will water wells be tested? No, data will be looked at but no actual testing. That could possibly be part of phase II but at this point it is an overview or scoping study. Will you be doing soil sampling? No, probably not. How far will you be testing and going out from the creek? About 3 kilometers or 2 miles. The stakeholder was concerned about colonias in the area and why testing was not being done there where the people lived. Mr. Paine said that salinity was an easy technique to be performed but in terms of the colonias - they did not believe the colonias would be of interest to the geophysical survey study. He said that all the data would be there after the study and anomalies would show up within the area being tested in the project. A question was asked as to what kind of contamination we were looking for? Mr. Paine reported that the study being performed for the TMDL project the Bureau of Economic Geology at UT Austin was conducting was for salinization. Another comment was made that the area was ten feet below sea level. Mr. Paine reminded the group that the study was a survey focused on a TMDL project for Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), chlorides and sulphates and that other issues were for another time. A concern raised was the issue if it would not be cheaper to go ahead and look at other chemicals while we are already there? Mr. Paine said that you really could not perform those kind of test with an airborne survey and the kind of testing he was talking about would need to be on the ground - sampling. He asked why other equipment could not be ordered for the other test? Mr. Paine said that other constituents were not within the scope of work for this TMDL project and this project was focusing on TDS. The stakeholder said the reason he is worried is because a lot of people drink water well water and that there is a lot of illnesses in those places – a lot – and he works for those people and to him he would love to find out if those places are livable. Kerry Niemann reminded the stakeholders that this TMDL project is focusing on the three constituents that exceed the standard – Chloride, Sulphate, and TDS. That is what this TMDL is focusing on and any other constituent is above and beyond the current TMDL project. Mr. Niemann reminded the group that during the first phase of the project was monitoring - data was being gathered and sampling was on going. A stakeholder then asked how deep the drinking water wells were? They seemed to range from 400 – 600'. Mr. Paine reported that based on preliminary data – the constituent being studied would not get to that depth but stay at the surface layer. Mr. Niemann reminded the group of an earlier presentation given to the Steering Committee on ground water and reported that the TCEQ has a ground water section and that wells were monitored under another program. The stakeholder said that he wanted the water wells tested and that he had called the TCEQ and they said they would not go. He was expressing concerns due to a flood that had happened in the area and he wanted to know who to call about the water wells.

Dr. Raed El Farhan: Raed EL-Farhan with the Louis Berger updated the stakeholders on the status of the TMDL modeling.

Comments and Questions:

A stakeholder requested the need for water-well testing on the other side of Hwy. 77. He reported that what testing had been done on the water were not drinkable. Mr. El-Farhan asked how deep the wells were? The stakeholder said he did not know but that the county had told the residents were told the water was no good and to haul their water. Mr. El-Farhan told the group that the standards set for drinking water under the Clean Water Act was chloride – 1500, sulphate – 500 and TDS was 4,000. He explained that the water body gets put on the 303(d) list for TMDL development when it exceeds that concentrations set in the standard. Mr. El-Farhan stated the need to distinguish between what is placed on the 303(d) list and what is drinking water regulations and he reminded the group that the TMDL focus study was for surface water. Another question asked was to clarify that when initial testing was performed – all pollutants were tested but that only these three (chloride, sulphate, and TDS) exceeded the standard and requirements? Mr. Niemann confirmed that was true.

The next meeting for the Petronila Creek TMDL project is expected to be held in March or April 2005.