

**MINUTES of the
LLANO ESTACADO REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP (“Region O”)
February 21, 2008 regular meeting**

Call To Order and Welcome By Chairman H.P. Brown Jr.

Chairman H.P. Brown Jr. called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. in the A. Wayne Wyatt Board Room of the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District No. 1 office, 2930 Avenue Q, Lubbock, Texas. Notice of the meeting was provided in advance to each member and was also filed/posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act at the following locations: the Office of the Texas Secretary of State, *Lubbock County Courthouse, Administrative Offices of the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District No. 1, the regional water planning group web site at www.llanoplan.org and the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District web site at www.hpwd.com*

Roll Call of Members To Establish Quorum

The following Llano Estacado Regional Water Planning Group members were in attendance:

Tom Adams, Melanie Barnes, Delaine Baucum, Bruce Blalack, H.P. Brown Jr., Jim Conkwright, Delmon Ellison Jr., Don Ethridge, Harvey Everheart, Bill Harbin, Doug Hutcheson, Bob Josserand, Richard Leonard, Terry Lopas, Don McElroy, Gene Montgomery, Ken Rainwater, Kent Satterwhite, and Jim Steiert.

Unable to attend: (Excused Absence): Jim Barron, and Don James (Panhandle-Plains Land Bank meeting).

Absent members: (None had unexcused absences).

Non-voting members in attendance: Kathleen Garrett, Texas Water Development Board; Joan Glass, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; Dr. Herb Grubb, HDR Engineering Inc.; and Steve Jones with Texas Department of Agriculture. Malcolm Laing, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, could not attend due to a meeting in Austin.

A quorum of the Llano Estacado Regional Water Planning Group members was present. There were 20 of 22 voting members present, or 90.9 percent attendance.

Others In Attendance: Elliott Blackburn, *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*; Chris Coffman, Panhandle Regional Planning Commission; Jason Coleman, South Plains Underground Water Conservation District; Sarah Hamm with Senator Robert Duncan’s office; Kevin Hopson with Daniel B. Stephens and Associates; Larry Land, P.E., with HDR Engineering Inc. in Austin; Mike McGregor, Llano Estacado Underground Water Conservation District; Scott Orr, High Plains Water District; Dr. Judy Reeves with Cirrus Associates; Bruce Rigler, High Plains Water District Precinct 5 Director; Stefan Schuster with Daniel B. Stephens and Associates.; Aubrey Spear, City of

Lubbock; Steve Stevens with Mesa Water, Steve Walthour, North Plains Groundwater Conservation District; and Ben Weinheimer, Texas Cattle Feeders Association. *(This was derived from a sign-in sheet provided at the back of meeting room.)* Carmon McCain of the High Plains Water District staff was present to record the minutes.

ACTION ITEMS:

The LERWPG Will Consider Approval of the September 20, 2007 meeting minutes.

The minutes of the September 20, 2007 LERWPG meeting were provided to members by e-mail/hard copy for review prior to today's meeting. There being no additions or corrections, a motion was made by Bob Josserand and seconded by Delmon Ellison to approve the September 20, 2007 meeting minutes as printed.

Dr. Melanie Barnes said the minutes indicated that a listing of various water-related research projects would be compiled. She wondered if progress had been made in this effort and if an update would be provided to the members at this meeting. Since this was not on today's agenda, Chairman Brown said it would not be specifically addressed; however, updated information should be provided during reports later in this meeting.

Chairman Brown asked for other discussion. There being none, **the motion was unanimously approved.**

The LERWPG Will Consider Approval of the Financial Statement.

The Llano Estacado Regional Water Planning Group financial statement was provided to members for review prior to today's meeting. Secretary-Treasurer Doug Hutcheson reported a balance of \$57.41 as of January 31, 2008. A motion to accept the financial statement as printed was made by Bill Harbin and seconded by Jim Conkwright. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

The LERWPG Will Hear A Request From The City of Lubbock To Remove The Proposed Lake 8 Of The Jim Bertram Lake System From The Llano Estacado Regional Water Plan.

Chairman Brown reported that he, Mr. Conkwright, and Dr. Grubb visited with Carolyn Brittin of the Texas Water Development Board about this. Ms. Brittin indicated the TWDB has not yet finalized their rules regarding minor amendments of regional water plans. As a result, Ms. Brittin recommended that no action be taken on this agenda item until the April 17 regular meeting.

TWDB Project Manager Kathleen Garrett distributed a handout, "Amending A Regional Water Plan," to the membership. The Chapter 357 regional water planning guidelines were amended effective Feb. 18, 2008. Regional water planning groups may amend their regional water plans

by providing a copy of the proposed amendment to the TWDB Executive Administrator. The proposed amendment will be reviewed for the following criteria:

- The amendment does not have a significant substantive impact on water planning or previously adopted management strategies;
- It does not delete or change any legal requirements of the plan;
- It does not result in over allocation of an existing or planned water source;
- It does not relate to a new reservoir; and
- It does not have a significant effect on instream flows, environmental flows or freshwater flows to bays and estuaries.

The handout also contains procedures the regional water planning group must follow in order to adopt the proposed amendment.

The City of Lubbock will present their request at the April 17, 2008 regular meeting. Ms. Garrett said she didn't think removing Lake 8 would be a problem; however, adding an item to a plan might be. **No action was taken on this agenda item at today's meeting.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND OTHER INFORMATION:

The LERWPG Will Hear Reports From Its Liaisons To Other Regional Water Planning Groups:

Region A: Kent Satterwhite reported discussion on the setting of desired future conditions (DFCs) for the aquifer by members of Groundwater Management Area # 1 took most of the time during Region A's last meeting. Amy Crowell with the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District is at today's meeting to report on the eastern Panhandle-area recharge study conducted by the Bureau of Economic Geology at Austin.

Chairman Brown asked Mr. Satterwhite to report on the current surface water levels of Lake Meredith and the John C. Williams well field. He reported that the lake depth is now at 49.86 feet and new record lows are being set each day. Booster pumps will be installed to pump water to the bottom gate of the intake tower, which is at 37-42 feet.

In 2007, 30,000 acre-feet of water was allocated from Lake Meredith and 50,000 acre-feet were allocated from the John Williams Well Field. This is a total of 80,000 acre-feet. In 2008, 69,000 acre-feet of water will come from the well field and 11,000 will come from Lake Meredith. The increased reliance on groundwater puts a stress on the well field. He hopes that this trend will not have to be continued.

Region B: Kathleen Garrett said she was not the one who usually attends the meetings, however, the Region B Project Manager told the group that Region B is gearing up for the next round of regional water planning with preparation of their Request For Proposal (RFP).

Region F: Harvey Everheart had no report. He was unable to attend the last Region F meeting due to a conflict with a meeting at Austin.

Region G: Terry Lopas told the group that Region G has had three recent meetings. One involved amending the Region G water plan to increase the steam-electric generation numbers for Somerville County. Other meetings were needed to replace members of the regional water planning group. Region G's next meeting is February 27.

The LERWPG Will Receive An Update On The Groundwater Management Area Representatives' Efforts To Set Desired Future Conditions (DFCs) For Aquifers In Their Area.

Mr. Conkwright reported that the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District conducted a Jan. 25 County Advisory Committee meeting at the United Spirit Arena and is now conducting a series of public information meetings within each of the five directors' precincts in the district. He said the High Plains Water District is the first GCD in Texas to conduct public meetings concerning the setting of DFCs.

GMA # 1 has had several meetings. It is expected that each member district will provide a desired future condition for discussion at their next meeting. As it stands now, the North Plains Groundwater Conservation District board will recommend setting a DFC of 40 percent of the aquifer available in 50 years for the western portion of their water conservation district. The eastern portion, including Hemphill County Water District, would have a DFC of 60 percent of the aquifer available for use in 50 years. H The Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District and the portion of the High Plains Water District in GMA # 1 are expected to set a DFC of 50 percent of the aquifer available for use in 50 years, with declines not exceeding 1.25 or 1.5 percent per year.

Mr. Conkwright asked Ms. Crowell and Mr. Walthour if they had any additional comments regarding the DFC process in GMA # 1. They did not.

Mr. Conkwright asked the other water district managers in GMA # 2 to report on this group's efforts.

Mesa UWCD Manager Harvey Everheart told the group about the new GMA # 2 web site at www.gma2.org, and invited them to visit the site for additional information. He said Jason Coleman is the GMA # 2 coordinator and he has requested some GAM runs. Once these results are returned by the TWDB, then the GMA will meet to discuss them.

Llano Estacado UWCD Manager Mike McGregor reported that one GAM run, specifying a decline of 3 feet per year for a 30-year period, has been received. Mr. McGregor said this GAM run has been set aside and they are awaiting the results of a GAM run specifying a decline of two feet per year for 30 years. He told the group that quite a bit of data has been collected for the past 10-15 year period.

Chairman Brown asked Mr. McGregor and Mr. Everheart if they have held public meetings as yet. They replied that they have not; however, Mr. Everheart said discussion of DFCs has been on the agendas of the Mesa UWCD ever since House Bill 1763 was passed.

Mr. Ellison asked about the attendance at the High Plains Water District's public meetings. Mr. Conkwright said there were 63 in attendance at the Feb. 7 meeting in Hereford and 53 in attendance at the Feb. 11 meeting in Lubbock. Dr. Barnes said she attended the Lubbock meeting and was "pleasantly surprised" by the number of persons who were there. She also asked if Mr. Conkwright planned to put the PowerPoint presentation from these meetings on a web site for public access. He said he would consider it.

The LERWPG Will Receive An Update Regarding Joint Planning Efforts Between Regions A & O.

Ms. Amy Crowell, geologist with the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District at White Deer, gave a PowerPoint presentation, "Quantification of Recharge to the Ogallala Aquifer in the Eastern Panhandle of Texas," to the group. The presentation was developed by Bridget Scanlon, Robert Reedy, Sarah Davidson, Gil Straussberg, and Abhijit Mikherjee of the Bureau of Economic Geology, University of Texas at Austin.

In summary, the research indicated:

- Rangeland Recharge of 0.00 to 0.15 inches per year.
- Recharge rates of 0.11 to 0.15 inches per year near the Canadian Breaks.
- Recharge rates of 0.0 inches per year in dryland in Roberts County and 0.41 inches per year in dryland in Hemphill County.
- Recharge rates in irrigated agriculture were 0.59 to 1.89 inches per year at the Bushland ARS Facility.
- Recharge rates in drainage areas in Roberts County were 0.68 inches per year.

(A printed copy of the PowerPoint presentation is included with the file copy of these minutes).

Chairman Brown asked Mr. Satterwhite if he had any comments regarding the research project.

Mr. Satterwhite said it was thought recharge would range from $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch per year to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches per year, which would be 6,000 to 60,000 acre-feet of recharge per year. This is not the case and this shows that groundwater in the eastern Panhandle is a non-renewable resource.

The small amount of recharge that does occur will not make much difference in CRMWA's long-term water planning.

Dr. Ken Rainwater noted that there are arguments in scientific literature questioning chloride "bulges" which suggest no recharge has occurred. Sometimes those bulges are found in the unsaturated zone even when tritium is present in the groundwater below. Tritium is a by-product of atomic weapons testing that occurred in the early 1960s, which significantly increased the atmospheric concentrations of tritium for a brief period. Detection of elevated tritium in groundwater is typically an indication of recharge since the 1960s. He is not saying the work is wrong—but it is part of the question. He just wants the group to be aware that there is considerable discussion in scientific literature about the chloride "bulge" methodology to determine recharge.

The LERWPG Will Hear A Presentation From The Technical Consultant (HDR Engineering, Inc.) Including Preliminary Results Of Work Regarding Changed Conditions Since The 2006 Regional Water Plan Was Adopted, Including Ethanol Production And Dairies. Also, Included In The Report Is Information Relating To Water Availability From The Dockum Aquifer.

Dr. Grubb gave a PowerPoint presentation: "Projections Of Water Demands For Ethanol Plants and Dairies," for Bailey, Castro, Deaf Smith, Hale, Lamb, and Parmer Counties. The increased water demand is in response to changed conditions caused by the location of a large number of dairies and four ethanol plants since the previous regional water plan was adopted.

He reported that there are two ethanol plants in Deaf Smith County (Hereford) that will produce 110 million gallons of ethanol per year; one ethanol plant in Hale County (Plainview) that will produce 110 million gallons per year; and one ethanol plant in Hockley County (Levelland) that will produce 40 million gallons per year. Each of the plants is in varying construction phases.

Most of the grain (corn) used for these plants will be imported to the area by rail car. Rail capacity for this purpose has been reached with these four plants, according to an ethanol industry representative.

Each 110 million gallon per day plant uses 1.0 million gallons per day of water, or 1,120 acre-feet per year) Therefore, the two Deaf Smith County plants, the Hale County plant, and the Hockley County plant will use 3,763 acre-feet of water per year.

Dr. Grubb then presented a series of slides illustrating milk production (2005-2007); projections on the number of head of dairy cattle, quantity of water for dairies, number of dairy workers, population associated with dairy workers, and water for dairy workers and associated population.

The following parameters were used in making the projections:

- Average daily milk production of 75 pounds per cow.
- Dry cows, replacement heifers, and calves of 1 animal unit per 2 milking cows.
- Average daily water use of 70 gallons per head (drinking and milk parlors). This was 65 gallons in the previous plan. This does not include water included in feedstuffs.
- One dairy worker per 100 head of dairy cattle.
- 3.5 persons per dairy worker.

This equates to:

- 160,414 head of dairy cattle in 2007,
- Water use of 12,578 acre-feet per year in 2007,
- 1,069 dairy workers in 2007, and.
- 3,743 in population associated with dairy workers in 2007.

Growth rate of the numbers of head of dairy cattle are expected to increase by 12 percent per year from 2007 to 2010. Afterwards, the number of head of dairy cattle in 2015 equals 75 percent of the number permitted by the TCEQ by Oct. 2007. For 2020, the number of head of cattle is 1.5 times the number for 2015. For 2030, the number is 1.25 times the 2015 number. For 2040, the number is 1.10 times the 2015 number, and for 2050-2060, the number of head is constant at the 2040 level.

The six counties in the study are among the top 10 milk-producing counties in Texas. There were 12-13 dairies in the region in 2005 and now there are 59 in operation.

As of late October 2007, the TCEQ has permitted more than 1.026 million head of dairy cattle in the six counties of the study area. Permits have increased at a rate of 1 percent per month for the past few years.

Dr. Rainwater asked why the number of permits and the number of dairy cattle do not agree. It was explained that permits must be obtained prior to operation, that new dairies are moving into the area and becoming operational, and some persons will apply for a dairy permit for speculation purposes.

Sarah Hamm of Senator Robert Duncan's staff said the Senator is very concerned about the increased growth rate of dairies. He wants to see the dairies manage their growth and not become another Erath County.

Dr. Judy Reeves of Cirrus Associates reiterated that the water use shown is just for the cow's consumption and sanitation purposes. This projection should take into account the amount of water for feedstuff (alfalfa and other high water use crops). It is an important amount of water

that should be considered—unless it is known that it the feed will be brought in from outside the area.

There was considerable discussion among the group concerning the projected number of head of dairy cattle and the projected water demand for dairies.

Mayor Josserand said no new dairies are coming to the area because dairymen in California and Idaho cannot sell their land and move here. He disagreed with the 1.026 million head of dairy cattle used in the water demand.

Chairman Brown suggested that this be footnoted in the report and a more realistic number be used in its place. He stated that the plan needs to be as accurate as possible based upon the best available data.

After discussion, it was agreed to footnote the currently permitted numbers as the “worst case scenario.” A committee needs to be formed to come up with a number between the permitted number and perceived growth.

Appointment of Dairy Water Demand Subcommittee

Chairman Brown appointed Melanie Barnes to chair a committee consisting of Don Ethridge, Don McElroy, Sarah Hamm, Bob Josserand, Ben Weinheimer, and one or more dairy representatives. The committee needs to meet, develop data, and provide information to Jim Conkwright by March 15 for e-mailing prior to the April 17 meeting.

Chairman Brown asked Mr. McGregor to briefly discuss his district’s aquifer storage and recovery project. A letter was sent to the LERWPG asking that it be included in the scope of work for the next regional water plan. Dr. Grubb said this would be addressed in a later agenda item.

Dr. Grubb then introduced Larry Lamb, P. E. with HDR Engineering, who gave a PowerPoint presentation, “Evaluation of Water Supplies From The Dockum Aquifer in Bailey, Castro, Deaf Smith, Hale, Lamb, and Parmer Counties.”

The presentation discussed the geology and hydrology of the upper and lower Dockum Aquifer; water quality of the aquifer; location of wells in the Dockum Aquifer; groundwater in storage; evaluation of two potential well fields in Deaf Smith and Parmer, Castro, and Lamb Counties; and cost estimates without water treatment.

In summary, there is about 85 million acre-feet of groundwater in the Dockum aquifer in the six counties. However, much of it is very saline. The lowest unit cost of groundwater from the Dockum would be from well fields in Deaf Smith County. Cost of water ranges from \$300 to \$475 per acre-foot without treatment and disposal of concentrate.

Dr. Judy Reeves commented that Report 359 from the Texas Water Development Board shows 3.92 million acre-feet of groundwater in storage in the six-county area as compared to HDR's estimate of 85 million acre-feet. She realizes that different methodologies were used. Also, she believes the HDR study treats the upper and lower sandstone sections of the Dockum aquifer as the same. In her opinion, the upper portion of the Dockum is less saturated than the lower. HDR is assuming all the aquifer is saturated and this is not the case in her opinion.

Mayor Josserand said the City of Hereford has just completed a Dockum well that will produce 700 gallons of water per minute. They have 8-9 Dockum wells ranging from 500 to 800 gallons per minute. Hereford Feed Yard uses water from the Dockum exclusively because of well production (800 g.p.m. for Dockum as compared to 100-150 g.p.m. for Ogallala). The City of Hereford blends water from the Ogallala and the Dockum.

Dr. Grubb then discussed the draft Section 4, "Regional Coordination of Regions A and O Use of Interactive Video Conferencing To Facilitate Joint Meetings."

He reported that interactive video conferencing facilities are available for use by Regions A and O at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Centers in Amarillo and Lubbock. The meeting rooms where the equipment is present can accommodate 30 to 80 persons and are available at a cost of \$25 to \$50 per four hour session.

The Lubbock facility has three rooms with seating capacities of 30, 50, and 80. However, there is concern about the Amarillo facility that can only accommodate 30 persons. A larger auditorium is nearby within the same building; however, it is not equipped for video conferencing at the present time.

Dr. Barnes asked if Texas Tech Health Sciences Center had been considered. It was explained that the Texas Tech facilities have been considered but use of these facilities may not be feasible due to scheduling of classroom instruction.

Commercial video conferencing providers estimate a cost of \$12,000 to \$25,000 to equip a site for video conferencing. In addition, staff is needed to operate the facilities and services. Mr. Stefan Schuster told the group that the University of Texas charges \$500 per hour for staff to operate the video conferencing equipment. Neither Regional Water Planning Group has staff available at this time to do so. He also added that the time of the video conferencing is important due to demands on bandwidth time.

Because of this, justification for purchase and installation of equipment cannot be made at this time since interactive video conferencing facilities are available at very low costs in both regions. It was suggested that this be tried out to see if it works.

Lunch

Chairman Brown recessed the meeting at 12:15 p.m. for lunch. The meeting reconvened at 12:40 p.m.

The LERWPG Will Consider Development Of A Scope of Work and Budget For Grant Application To The TWDB For Second Biennium Funding For The 2011 Regional Water Plan.

Dr. Grubb and Ms. Garrett reported that the Requests for Proposals information was published in the Feb. 15 *Texas Register*. Guidelines and additional information are to be posted to the TWDB web site shortly. The RFPs are due to the TWDB on June 13, 2008, and will be considered at the August TWDB Board Meeting.

Dr. Grubb then called attention to the one-page summary of the TWDB's proposed funding for the Llano Estacado Regional Water Planning Group's efforts in developing the 2011 plan.

The TWDB has approximately \$9 million in available funding for the present biennium and expected funding for the first year of the next biennium (third year of the five-year planning cycle).

Of the \$9 million, base funding of \$4,206,630.00 has been allocated for statewide regional water planning for disbursement among the regions. Region O has been allocated \$178,010 to conduct the 10 regional water planning tasks as listed below:

Task 0	Scope Development	Up to \$ 10,000 from Task 10
Task 1	Planning Area Description	\$10,000
Task 2	Population and Water Demand Projection	
Task 3	Evaluation of Existing Water Supply	
Task 4	Identification of Water Needs & Selection of Water Management Strategies	
Task 5	Impacts of Water Management Strategies On Water Quality	\$36,260 for Tasks 2-5
Task 6	Conservation and Drought Management	\$10,000
Task 7	Consistency with Long-Term Protection Of Natural Resources	\$10,000
Task 8	Unique Reservoir/Stream Segments & Legislative Recommendations	\$15,000
Task 9	Water Infrastructure Funding	\$ 7,800
Task 10	Adoption of Plan (Administration &	

Public Participation

\$88,950

TOTAL

\$178,010

Dr. Grubb informed the LERWPG members of the following important dates:

Feb. 15, 2008	RFP published in Texas Register.
June 13, 2008	Deadline to submit Scope of Water and Budget for Grant Application to the TWDB.
August 2008	Presentation of Grant Application at TWDB Board Meeting.
Nov. 23, 2008	Contracts with regions executed.
March 1, 2010	Initially Prepared Plan Due to TWDB.
September 1, 2010	Adopted Plan Due to TWDB.
January 5, 2011	Statutory Deadline for Adopted 2011 Region Plan to TWDB..

The Initially Prepared Plan and Adopted Plan deadlines are about 90 days earlier than in previous planning cycles in order to facilitate meeting the deadlines for submission of regional plans to the TWDB. (One region was unable to submit its 2006 plan on time)

The one-page summary shows the TWDB's recommendations for base funding for Region O. The regional water planning group must apply for and develop a scope of work explaining and justifying the use of the funds for each recommendation. The group may also adjust the amounts among the tasks, if desired.

In addition, the TWDB has \$4,793,000 in funding for the regions for additional items to be included in the scope of work and some set-aside money. The base amount is guaranteed, subject to justification, as explained above, and the LERWPG may include in the scope of work and budget, additional work items within the TWDB's list of Tasks for consideration by the TWDB in the competitive funding category.

Dr. Grubb also called attention to the time schedule for public notices relating to the application.

The LERWPG must conduct a public meeting to consider development of the scope of work and receive input on the scope of work. Public notices must be published 30 days prior to the RWPG meeting at which public input will be taken regarding the scope of work. In addition, a public notice must be published 30 days prior to the TWDB meeting in which the TWDB will consider the LERWPG's application and scope of work.

Dr. Grubb also mentioned that since the 2010 Census will not be conducted in time to update population projections for use in the plan, the TWDB does not plan to revise or change population and subsequent water demand projections included in the 2006 plan. However, some of the projections will change due to Region O's study of changed conditions due to the location of dairies and ethanol plants since the previous plan.

If cities or others have changes in their population data, then there is a procedure in which they can request that changes be made to population and water demand projections.

It is Dr. Grubb's suggestion that the April 17 meeting be used as the public meeting for input on the scope of work. He also suggested that a subcommittee be formed to assist the consultant in creation of a draft scope of work for presentation at that meeting. After then, a May meeting would be needed to finalize the scope of work.

Mayor Josserand asked if there was some flexibility in the funding amount. Ms. Garrett said the total amount of funding is fixed; however, there may be some flexibility in amending dollar amounts assigned to each of the 10 tasks.

Dr. Grubb suggested that the 2001 small city water assessment, conducted by the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District staff, be updated. The 2001 data were used in the 2006 plan—but he believes this should be updated for the 2011 plan.

Mr. McElroy asked if this is where the accuracy of the models, rural Bailey County water totals, and the aquifer storage and recovery project of the Llano Estacado Underground Water Conservation District would be addressed. Dr. Grubb said that it was.

Appointment of Scope of Work Subcommittee

Chairman Brown appointed the following members to a Scope of Work subcommittee:

Herb Grubb, Chair.
Jim Conkwright
Don Ethridge
Harvey Everheart
Bill Harbin
Gene Montgomery

Chairman Brown asked the group to consider the small city water assessment, the aquifer storage and recovery project, the problems with the groundwater availability models, and rural water supplies.

There was some discussion about the cost of updating the groundwater availability models. Stefan Schuster observed that the cost would be more than Region O would receive. Most updates run in the \$300,000 to \$500,000 range. He wondered if the expense would be justified since most water industry leaders do not trust the GAM.

Mr. Conkwright said he has heard that some groups plan to ask the legislature for additional TWDB funding next session to address and/or correct problem GAMs across the state.

Dr. Grubb closed by referencing the LERWPG's June 2007 letter to the TWDB asking that a different planning model be used for the 2011 revision to the plan; however, the TWDB stated that they didn't know what the LERWPG meant by that. He said this goes back to the large demands for irrigation water, the shortages shown, and no way to fill the gap between them. The LERWPG reference to a "different" planning model would focus upon water supply available and Dr. Grubb asked the group to consider if this needs to be addressed as well, and if so, this is the time to do so. Ch. Brown directed that this be included in the draft scope of work for consideration by the LERWPG.

The LERWPG will hear a report from LERWPG Project Manager Kathleen Garrett with the TWDB.

Ms. Garrett told the group that Ed Vaughn of Boerne and Joe Crutcher of Palestine are the newest members of the Texas Water Development Board. They replace Rod Pittman and D.V. Guerra, respectively. Mr. Crutcher has been appointed to serve on the Environmental Flows Committee. James Herring is the new TWDB presiding officer.

As mentioned earlier, the rules relating to the Scope of Work were published Feb. 15 in the Texas Register and should be available on the TWDB web site.

The City of Lubbock has made application for funding from the TWDB's Water Infrastructure Fund for the Lake Alan Henry project. Mr. Adams reported that the fund helps "buy down" the interest rates for financing (2%) on projects. The city's first application is for \$21 million (engineering costs) on the \$230 million project.

Other Business

Chairman Brown asked Gene Montgomery to report on the Water Conservation Advisory Council. C. E. Williams and Gary Walker are the chair and vice-chair, respectively, of the 23 member group which was created by House Bill 4 and Senate Bill 3 last session. Comer Tuck is the coordinator for the TWDB. They have had three meetings to date and have identified seven specific issues to be addressed by five work groups.

The groups includes public awareness and public recognition; consideration of recommendations for determination of gallons per capita per day use; monitoring of water planning and implementation of water conservation; establishing a resource library and new technologies; and training.

The group will have a future web site at www.savetexaswater.org. This information is currently available on the TWDB web site until it is moved to the new site. Their first report to the legislature is due in November 2008. The focus will be on legislation and funding recommendations going into the Jan. 2009 legislative session. Mr. Montgomery welcomed input from any of the regional water planning group members, should they wish to provide it.

Harvey Everheart said groundwater conservation districts will be establishing desired future conditions for aquifers soon. According to the TWDB original schedule, if the GCDs had the DFCs established by Jan. 2008, then the regional water planning groups could consider the managed available groundwater (MAG) data in the 2011 plans. However, the TWDB has reconsidered its original schedule, and is allowing more flexibility on a deadline for DFCs. Mr. Everheart said the LERWPG might wish to consider giving the groundwater conservation districts a deadline for setting the DFCs so that the MAG could possibly be included in the 2011 plan.

Dr. Grubb said this was a moot point. The groundwater available numbers in the 2006 plan are the ones that must be used in the 2011 plan, unless the groundwater conservation districts develop the DFCs which result in changes to GAM runs from those done for Region O for the 2006 plan. Once calculated, this would reflect new shortages.

For the 2006 plan, the TWDB performed a GAM run for Region O against the projected water demands and came up with the amount of water that can be produced. Unless the TWDB changes the GAM Model, it is expected that the same groundwater availability quantities will be returned for the 2011 plan.

Dr. Barnes asked Mr. Everheart if the RWPG should help push the process along. Mr. Everheart said there were questions as to how many GMAs were working with the RWPGs to have this

TWDB deadline extended into the future. The GCDs did not meet the Jan. 2008 deadline. He is asking the RWPG to say “we will include GMA 2’s MAG in the next plan if you provide it to us by a certain date.”

Dr. Grubb suggested putting the scope of work together first—and then establishing a date.

Mr. Conkwright said most of the GCDs were looking to have DFCs set by the start of the legislative session (Jan. 13, 2009).

Mr. Everheart said this is the first day that he heard Dr. Grubb state that the MAG numbers would be the same as those in the 2006 regional plan. If this is the case, then why is the group going through “this exercise in futility.” He said he thought new data would be used.

Dr. Grubb said the same models are in use and have not been changed since the previous planning effort. So, unless the DFCs reduced pumpage from what the model has indicated the wells will yield—the same numbers will be generated.

Dr. Barnes said although the numbers might be the same, the philosophical approach may be different and should be reflected in the recommendations and strategies. This should not be a carbon copy of the previous plan.

In relation to the setting of the DFCs, Mr. McElroy asked Mr. Conkwright if the High Plains Water District Board of Directors would consider any kind of restrictions on pumping groundwater for irrigation. Mr. Conkwright said this is being discussed at each of the informational meetings being conducted by the district.

Mr. Ellison wondered if there should be a limitation on the number of people who can move into towns and cities. Farmers aren’t buying water from cities, he said.

Chairman Brown asked Steve Stevens of Mesa Water for an update. Mr. Stevens had no comment.

Mr. Everheart said the numbers in the regional plan don’t have any real effect because the RWPGs don’t have any real power. He said the new numbers from GMA # 2 are real numbers that the boards of directors of the groundwater districts have to manage water with. If the numbers come back showing a deficit, then how are the districts going to manage this? The law says districts have to permit up to the managed available groundwater—so this number (DFC) is much more important than the number developed for the 2006 regional water plan.

Mr. Conkwright said he thinks there will have to be some changes in the law because what the aquifer will yield and what can be permitted is not the same thing.

Dr. Reeves asked if the regional water planning group has the authority to challenge the desired future conditions, if unreasonable. She says this is where the power of the regional water planning group lies.

Adjourn

There being no other business, Chairman Brown adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

The above conveys my understanding of the issues discussed and conclusions reached. I assume this understanding is correct until notice of the contrary is received.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Hutcheson
Secretary-Treasurer

These minutes were approved by the LERWPG membership at their May 1, 2008 regular meeting.