

Meeting Minutes
Region 13. Nueces Regional Flood Planning Group Meeting
October 25, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

LJ Francis called the meeting to order at 11:32am.

A roll call of the planning group members was taken to record attendance. A quorum was established.

Voting Members

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|---------|
| Debra Barrett | Agricultural | absent |
| Shanna K. Owens | Counties | absent |
| Lauren Hutch Williams | Environmental | present |
| Larry Thomas | Flood Districts | absent |
| Jeffrey Pollack | Industries | absent |
| LJ Francis | Municipalities | present |
| Adnan Rajib | Public | absent |
| Sky Lewey | River Authorities (Linda Massmann/proxy) | zoom |
| Andrew Rooke | Small business (Robbie Thomas/proxy) | present |
| J.R. Ramirez | Water Districts (Russell Pulfer/proxy) | present |
| Larry Dovalina | Water Utilities | present |

Non-voting Members

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------|
| Jim Tolan | Texas Parks & Wildlife Department | absent |
| Tim Frere | Texas Division of Emergency Management | absent |
| Nelda Barrera | Texas Department of Agricultural | absent |
| Kendria Ray | Texas State Soil & Water Conservation | absent |
| Morgan White | Texas Water Development Board | zoom |
| Tressa Olsen | Texas Water Development Board | present |
| Richard Bagans | Texas Water Development Board | present |
| Joel Anderson | Texas Commission on Environmental Quality | zoom |
| Travis Pruski | Nueces River Authority | present |
| Kristi Shaw | HDR | present |
| Bryan Martin | HDR | present |
| Dave Mauk | Liaison from San Antonio RFPG | absent |
| Patrick McGinn | Liaison to Region 12 & 15 RFPG | present |

Guests

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Judge Teal | McMullen County |
| Lora Robbins | City of Hondo |
| Margie Gonzalez | Jim Wells County |
| David Baker | City of Hondo – Electric Division |
| Rusell Pulfer | Texas A&M Agrilife Extension |
| Coraggio Maglio | US Coprs of Engineers |
| Sarah West | Freese and Nichols |
| Laura Raun | Laura Raun Public Relations |

2. Prayer

LJ Francis led the prayer.

Travis Pruski asked for everyone to keep Judge Gilbert Saenz's family in their prayers as he unexpectedly passed away. He also asks the group to remember Sky Lewey in their prayers as she was in the hospital.

3. Public Comments

Judge Teal introduced a young girl from McMullen High School who is interested in water. She was unable to be here in person; so, she put together a short video to tell us a little bit about herself and how she came to be interested in water.

Her name is Shelby Slavinsky. She is the current McMullen and Live Oak County 4H State Water Ambassador Representative. She is 16 and a junior attending McMullen County High School. She raises and shows pigs, heifers and rabbits and is active in all sports in school. She stated in the video that a little over two years ago she sent in two different video presentations applying for two different 4H programs. A month later she received emails stating that one application was rejected, and one was accepted. She stated that she was accepted into the program that she didn't really want, the water program. She does not regret making the decision to follow through with that program. She is now in her second year and has learned at great deal. She thought that the water field was boring and all about conservation until she went to camp. She were able to help restore a storm water wetland reservation unit and we planted some plants in a nearby urban subdivision in Houston. She also met with the Galveston Bay Foundation and heard of their plans to restore some oyster reefs. While there, she was given the opportunity to test pH levels of the water to determine what breeds of aquatic animals might live in the area. She was able to visit with so many people and get an inside look at the Sea Center of Texas, where most of the sporting fish are fertilized and harvested to keep the cycle alive. She thanked the group for the opportunity to talk with them and expressed her desire to visit a future meeting in person.

4. Approval of minutes from the September 27th, 2021, Full RFPG meeting

LJ Francis asked for approval of the minutes. Larry Dovalina made the motion and Lauren Williams seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

5. TWBD updates/presentation

Tressa Olsen introduced herself as the new planner from the TWDB for Region 13. Ms. Olsen stated that during the last meeting Morgan White updated the group about proposed contract amendments for additional funding for region 13. TWDB has sent the revised contract to Travis and informed the group that they will likely be voting in their next meeting on the amended contract.

Richard Bagans, TWDB Planner for Region 3 - Trinity Basin, Region 5 - Neches and Region 14-Upper Rio Grande, introduced himself and stated that he was in attendance to assist Tressa Olsen.

Lauren Williams stated that she thought that former TWDB Planner for Region 13 Morgan White stated that you could attend a meeting via zoom in and be counted.

Travis Pruski stated that the issue is that you have to be able to hear everybody in the room and everybody in the room has to be able to hear you. Given the size of the group, hearing everyone and everything would not be a guarantee.

Mr. Bagans stated that it defaults to the sponsor's legal interpretation of the open meetings act, so if you see other regions doing that, it is up to their sponsor and how they are handling that.

6. Discussion and possible action regarding draft results of mitigation needs analysis (Task 4A).

Bryan Martin, HDR, told the group that the first part of the flood plan was focused on data collection. Task 4A is taking that data and looking at where the greatest flood risks are in the basin and where we knowledge gaps may still exist. We use a tool that was developed previously to see a story map to look at all the flood data we gathered which includes data related to loss of life, property damage, historic data and info gathered from the National Weather Service. From this information we developed the exposure and a vulnerability analysis that was presented at the last meeting. It revealed the risk of flooding to all the buildings in the region that are within the flood inundation boundaries. We look at what is vulnerable to all the critical facilities, all the areas that are high on the vulnerability index. Since the last meeting, we have done an analysis based on each HUC 12. HUC 12 is a USGS Watershed Boundary and there are 627 in the region. So, essentially, we broke up the basin into 627 components/watersheds and we looked at the flood risk in each of those watersheds. We investigate to see what the risk is about. Like the first one is life loss. We know low water crossings are inherently dangerous and we experience a lot of life loss, so that's one of the criteria we looked at is where are all our known low water crossings. We look at dams, we know dams are

inherently dangerous also, if we were to experience a dam failure, what watershed(s) would be impacted. Then we look at places where we had fatalities and injuries and the historical life loss. Then we look at property damage and the data obtained from the National Weather Service and FEMA. The vulnerability index is where structures are buildings exposed in the floodplain and are highly vulnerable. We look at critical facilities which are your hospitals, schools, police stations, fire station and all those kinds of facilities. We have data points on where they are located in the flood inundation. Then we review the information we received from the public on flood prone areas where locals have said it flooded.

From this we developed a risk score criteria table for each of those categories, we scored them 1 through 5 and we basically use statistical analysis. If the potential for flood is high risk, we score it a 5 or if it was not a problem, it's a 1. Each of those categories were scored so each HUC has all these criteria's, scored one through five and then we weighted that to get an overall score. This resulted in the Overall Flood Risk per HUC 12 Watershed map. We plotted this on a map, in such a way that data and statistics are transparent. This information will be available online and our hope is to soon make this an interactive GIS map, but for right now it is just a static pdf.

What is also important in Task 4A is the data gap. What we did was overlay three data gaps type areas over the flood risks. The first one is flood plain management where we have flood plain management rules and that are enforced. Flood plain management is a way to reduce future flood risks. Through management we can hope to flatten the risk and not have increased risks.

Kristi Shaw stated that much of this information we received from the National Flood Insurance Program. We also used the information collected from the surveys sent out to flood plain managers in the area. That was used as a basis for this, so there might be areas that Bryan has mentioned where we just don't have input. We may not have reached the right people in those areas to gather information so all feedback we receive is going to be really helpful to us.

Larry Dovalina asks how they would mitigate the areas that are forced to buy flood plain insurance that are not in the flood plain? Because they are using the core of engineer's outdated maps many young people who are buying houses are forced to increase their mortgages by four or five thousand dollars.

Ms. Shaw replied that a house on one side of the road that is no longer in the flood plain and on the other side there may be houses in the flood plain with new mapping, it can be a real quandary.

Mr. Dovalina asks if they are going to be able to incorporate the people who are currently doing flood plain mapping, such as the City of Cotulla currently has projects that are going on. Will this data be incorporated into the overall mapping?

Ms. Shaw stated that local data is very useful to us for identifying the ongoing and existing flood projects. So, what we are doing, and we will be talking about this in the next agenda item is identifying projects to address risk areas. In some cases, there is already great work being done such as Cotulla, Duval, and others to address some of those issues. We want that information to get pulled into the plan.

Mr. Dovalina stated that he knew a group of investors that are trying to buy a piece of land and they are using the outdated maps to determine if they are going to buy it or not. I think they will anyway, but there is already a development that occurred ahead of them that is going to alter that flood plain map. How soon can we expect to get your final results to allow people to use them?

Ms. Shaw stated that in the regional planning effort, we are identifying where projects need to be located. Some of them are on-going; some of them don't have the resources or infrastructure to be able to start projects. So, we are going to be making phone calls and making sure that the regional plan is aligned with the local effort. As far as enforcement is concerned that's really driven by a local government group that would be your local administrators that enforce that kind of information. The tools we are developing and the TWDB continues to develop are going to be helpful in elevating those issues so you can have the resources needed to do that.

Travis Pruski told Mr. Dovalina that he did have a meeting with the engineers doing their plan and obtained the projects planned for your area. We had those meetings in Duval, San Patricio, and La Salle Counties. We talked to the engineers in La Salle, we've talked about what we need to do to make sure we're sharing all that information so that that they've collected on their project and incorporate it into ours. We are also cross sharing some information we found to their projects.

Margie Gonzalez said that they have a project going in Jim Wells County that required a \$9.8 million grant from General Land Office for drainage.

Richard Bagans clarified in response to Mr. Dovalina's insurance comments, that this regional flood planning process is not regulatory and the maps being created are not regulatory. But the studies you have identified, where in the region studies need to be done; those studies can then be used in the FEMA process to go through the firm updates of those regulatory maps through FEMA.

Mr. Dovalina asks that we, ourselves are not waiting for this to finish in order to do our study right? We know that the current maps are inaccurate so whether it's regulatory or not, the fact that you have something makes it easier for you to regulate.

Kristi Shaw told the group that Bryan also has some information in which he is going to be sharing where the models are good and where we recognize right now the mapping is outdated and where support is needed to get better information. This hinges on the fact that we're doing the best with what we have while recognizing that there is a lot of areas where better data is necessary.

Russell Pulfer stated that this is my first time here. He is am the extension agent for Zavala County. Through Agrilife we have an agent called a DAR agent (Disaster Assessment & Recovery). He might be a good contact to get some of that information. LJ Francis stated, Bryan we started to have some discussion about FEMA maps and how outdated they are. Do we know the timeline on those regulatory maps from the FEMA side on when new maps will be published or are they working on new maps? Mr. Martin replied that we know where we have pending FEMA maps and when each one would be updated. There are FEMA pending maps in the region that are already in our data. We want to be careful about using the term flood plain maps which have regulatory implications. A better term is inundation boundaries. Before the flood plan we didn't have a 100 year or 500-year inundation boundaries everywhere. We currently have inundation boundaries for the whole basin. That is pretty powerful data to have even though it's not regulatory, it was data made available from the TWDB. I just want to point out that this is something the basin never had before and now you are seeing inundation boundaries on a map for acres that never has had it before.

Mr. Bagans stated that on a statewide basis. the TWDB are working through this flood planning process to know where the data needs to improve and assist communities in identifying areas that need to be studied. But the FEMA process can be several years and is largely community focused and it is up to the communities to engage in that process over a couple of years period. There is a team at TWDB that can assist communities that need assistance in working through that process.

Lauren Williams asks how the enforcement is being done?

Mr. Bagans said the board sent out surveys and they defined what is low, medium, and high so the communities would know what these kinds of enforcements mean.

Ms. Shaw said that we had received 32 responses. We sent out over 200 surveys.

LJ Francis ask if there are any plans to engage folk in any other ways so we can maybe get a higher response rate?

Ms. Shaw stated that we are always open to ideas on how to go about doing that. We started with the roadshow where we had in-person gatherings. The NRA did a terrific job in communicating that message and we had a pretty good representation in those areas. The biggest challenge is that quite a bit of this region is rural in nature and the communication is hard and, in many cases, they do not have the resources to have a full-time person.

Russell Pulfer stated that these counties do have a full-time extension agent. They don't have any authority to enforce anything, but they do have the ability to get you in contact with someone.

Mr. Martin stated that the Task 4A, flood risk analysis is all about where the greatest needs are and where the knowledge gaps exist. The 3 overlapping maps details where within the basin needs the most help.

Ms. Shaw stated that the risk score was developed to be based on the Nueces RFOG flood management goal. Property and the loss of life goals is what drove the metrics or aspects that went into the bulleted list that rolled up into the risk score.

Mr. Dovalina asks, so all this data is being given to the TWDB, what if the studies being done run longer than the timeline for you to turn in the documents. Will the TWDB then adjust the maps as the studies come in?

Ms. Shaw stated that she believed that would be part of an amendment process or depending on the time frame it would go into the 2028 regional flood plan.

Ms. White stated that she wanted to clarify TWDB's role in mapping. We are the official holders for the maps basically. Our agency does not produce any sort of regulatory flood plain maps. That is really FEMA's role. The RFPPs are producing maps for your planning purposes. But the official keeper of the flood plain maps is really a FEMA role through the flood insurance rate map process.

7. Discussion and possible action regarding potential list of Flood Management Evaluations (FMEs), and potentially feasible Flood Management Strategies (FMSs) and Flood Management Projects (FMPs) (Task 4B).

Kristi Shaw reminded the group of the on-going and existing project or proposed project survey that went out to stakeholders. She told the group that the information gathered from that was included in the materials package that was sent out prior to the meeting. The list includes TWDB's flood insurance funding (FIF) program projects for all those that submitted the initial applications and those that apply even if they didn't pursue funding at a later time, to identify areas where there were flood projects in progress. Then we took another step by adding hazard mitigation projects from local flood plans and worked with Freese & Nichols to gather this information on both the additional projects that were identified and some of which are kind of dated. We are not quite sure if the projects are moving forward but most of them were developed within the last 10 or 15 years. With the new money that is being released for work towards these flood management plans, we'll look more at the FMEs, FMPs, and FMSs list going forward. We are identifying projects that are necessary to mitigate flood and plan to do another outreach to be able to make sure that the areas that are showing risk are generally matching what the local folks are experiencing on the ground and making sure that we know what projects they currently have planned. If no projects are planned, we will bring to light an area that might have problems and identify areas where we focus on identifying projects to help with that process. We sent a draft list out to you last week.

The technical memo will have a preliminary list of identified projects, so between now and mid-November we are gathering that information specific for that deliverable.

Mr. Martin stated that since the initial list that Kristi sent out last week, there have been some updates. This is a list of plans that were reviewed, and project studies and

evaluations were pulled from this. At this point we hope we have all the valuable relevant plans that are recent, but if we don't, please let us know if it is not on the list. There are 58 evaluations listed on our initial list. We will have to eventually filter the projects in Task 4 and if any are found infeasible, they are to be moved to a new list with details why the project is no longer feasible.

8. Discussion and possible action regarding preparation and submission of Technical Memorandum to the TWDB and status of remaining deliverables on the schedule.

Bryan Martin told the group that the story map is going to be an excellent source for all items that are required for the draft technical memorandum that is due January 7, 2022. The story map has all items linked. You can click on each item the Texas Water Development Board requires us to submit as part of the tech memo. So, the list of flood related authorities within the basin is a link. You click on it, and it will take you to the information and you can see the current list for that. The list of previous flood studies considered to be relevant to the planning process are listed under a link. As we just discussed, there might be some that need to be in here that aren't so this would be a good list to review to see what is missing. The database and map are region wide with 1% and 2% inundation boundaries, so basically the flood inundation risk. The Region 13 Historical Data – Flood Prone Areas map shows the magnitude and location of flooding, and it is an interactive map that can show 100 year and 500-year information for your area of interest.

The next link shows maps of flood prone areas not defined by studies. It shows the local knowledge points we received from folks during our roadshow, and it details historical data collected. The colored areas are gap areas where we lack modeling data. The next one is where H&H models are needed, and it details where we have accurate models. Then there is a goals link and a link of flood related models. This will take you to a map of where all models we have received are included.

We do not have true Hydraulic models for 75% of the basin. The link for potential FMEs, FMSs and FMPs is not a live link as of today, we are still working on the excel worksheet for that link. When it becomes active you will be linked, and you can very view everything in one place.

The last link is a list of projects determined to be infeasible including primary reason. As of now, all projects are listed. We have not pulled any out at this point. This is a good source to go to for the review with the goal to adopt this at our December 6th meeting. Everything is here and we have tried to provide it in a user-friendly format. As stated at the top of the Technical Memorandum, we ask that you review and provide comments to Kristi Shaw and cc: Travis by November 30th.

We will incorporate the comments that are received from this meeting as well as the additional comments we shared on projects. In a couple of weeks, we will be accepting

comments until the week of November 30th. Then we will consider the results at the December 6th meeting.

Lj Francis ask, just to be clear this is available to planning group members, voting and non-voting, not the public. You are going to send us an email as a reminder of this action item? Ms. Shaw replied, yes sir.

9. Update from Planning Group Sponsor – Nueces River Authority regarding administrative matters of the Regional Flood Planning Group.

Mr. Pruski stated that first off after speaking to Kristi with HDR, we are going to be moving our next meeting to December 6th. As far as Lauren's question earlier about meeting in person versus online, we've had a lot of legal discussions about that with our general counsel. The problem is everyone online cannot hear everyone in the room and everyone in the room cannot hear everyone online. There is a lot of gray area in that, but we have to make sure we do our best, so if you have to be online, we will make that work. If you can identify your proxy (we have 3 here today) that will allow us to do our jobs if you cannot make it to a meeting.

Mr. Francis stated that in addition to the proxies there is a matter of policy for this flood planning group, we are trying to transition more to in person as much as we can. We are trying to get everyone to come out to meet here, which kind of middle ground for the region.

Robbie Thomas stated that he was a proxy for Andrew Rooke, so being a proxy would allow me to vote for him?

Mr. Pruski replied, correct you are his proxy and able to vote for him. As long as a voting member notifies me ahead of time of who their proxy is, you are able to vote for them in their stead.

The second item is the payment request. Travis stated that he sent out an email that had the history of payments from April through today. That item is on the agenda today. Last meeting, we talked about the electric generating voting position, Travis stated that he reached out to David Baker, City of Hondo and he is interested in joining us in that position, so December 6th meeting will include an item to approve David for that position.

David Baker told the group hello and that he would appreciate the opportunity. He stated he had about forty years in the electric utilities industry. He resides in the Texas Hill Country, so water is always on his mind. He stated that he would consider it an honor to be part of group.

Mr. Pruski told the group he would send Mr. Baker's resume out to the voting members prior to the December meeting.

Mr. Francis ask Mr. Baker where he currently worked?

Mr. Baker replied he was currently employed by the City of Hondo, Electric Division. He stated that he also worked for AEP for 28 years.

Mr. Pruski stated that was all he had from the river authority.

Mr. Francis asked if there needs to be a discussion on the next agenda for financial items, such as funding or paying bills. Does the group need to vote on it?

Mr. Pruski stated that the group did not have to vote on those matters, however he would send an update of where the money has been spent. He also stated that the group will be voting on a contract amendment that the TWDB and John Byrum are working on for the next meeting.

Mr. Francis stated that he had another quick question. He said that he saw that there was an invoice sent by HDR where NRA made a partial payment, less about \$9,000. Is that correct?

Mr. Pruski stated that he believed that was correct, but NRA request has made a request for an additional withdrawal from the water development board so that the bill can be paid in full.

Mr. Francis asked Travis to put something on the next agenda to approve all the payments so the members that are interested in a balance statement can see where we're managing our finances. That will be on the December 6th meeting for the financial section for voting.

10. Update from Patrick McGinn Liaison to Region 12 San Antonio RFPG and Region 15 Lower Rio Grande RFPG.

Patrick McGinn told the group that Region 15 met and discussed a couple of actions that needed approval from the previous meeting and then updates from TWDB. The group also received updates from municipalities, voting members and technical consultants. They are trying to increase community participation by increasing the amount of communication with the public and increase the number of events in the region to improve awareness. The group feel this will lead to increased flood hazard data to help fill the gaps and maintain storm water management.

Region 12's October meeting is actually tomorrow but last month they went over Task 3A. Their designated goals were flood plain management, land use recommendations and development practices and strategies. They also went over Task 3B, and its further purpose was to protect against loss of life and property. They identified items to reduce the risk and impact of life and property that already exist as well as avoid increasing and creating new flood risk by addressing future development in the areas for future flood risks. The group has had three committee meetings. An outreach or subcommittee meeting, a technical subcommittee meeting and an executive committee meeting. The main concepts were talking about maps as well as making a survey questionnaire for the area. Mostly just trying to identify flood risk issues and find potential projects.

Mr. Francis ask Patrick if there was any discussion on data needs or sharing for the boundary areas. He stated that he was curious if they are starting to ask and stated if they think about modeling or if we need to connect them to our technical consultants. I

was just trying to gauge where they're at in the process, so maybe you can ask them if they need to be in contact with our consultant.

Mr. McGinn said that he would let their executive committee know.

11. RFPG members' comments

Chairman Francis asks the group members for any comments or questions?

Coraggio Maglio, Galveston Branch- U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), stated that he was listening in today and he was curious if HDR had obtained the Nueces model that the Corp of Engineers developed.

Ms. Shaw stated that they have not received it, but they had received an email from the USACE stating that their model was in the process of being developed. It's a water supply model using RiverWare.

Mr. Maglio stated that there is that effort as well, but there is an additional model that has been developed as well.

Ms. Shaw stated that No, HDR had not received that, but if you have that model or could put us in contact with somebody to coordinate with, we would really be interested in doing so.

Mr. Maglio recommended a meeting between the groups so that the multiple on-going efforts associated with the Nueces River Model could be discussed. We have an existing model that we use for flood inundation mapping purposes. But we also are going to be spending a lot of money updating it over the next year and we would like to explain what we're doing.

Mr. Francis ask Mr. Maglio if he could give e Ms. Shaw your contact information or who should we contact?

Mr. Maglio replied that you can reach out to him, and he will put you in contact with the team that is going to do the work.

Mr. Bagans stated that he worked with other regions, and he just want to provide a big picture overview of how Region 13 is doing compared to the other groups. You have already identified your process for identifying your strategies and some projects. You have adopted your goals and you are pretty close to having all the deliverables done. So, from my perspective from working with other regions, you are in the middle of the front of the pack of being on time and getting everything done. I want to give you props for keeping on top of it and you are looking to be in good shape for everything.

12. Adjourn

Mr. Francis stated that if there are no more comments, he would entertain a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Larry Dovalina, Lauren Williams seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 1:10pm.

