

**Guadalupe River Basin
Clean Rivers Program
Steering Committee
Annual Meeting**

March 30, 2005

Minutes

The annual meeting of the Clean Rivers Program (CRP) Guadalupe River Basin Steering Committee was held Wednesday, March 30, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. at the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) River Annex, 905 Nolan St., Seguin. Thirteen committee members/representatives attended as well as Allison Woodall representing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) CRP, Gretchen Reutzel representing the Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA), Debbie Magin and Lee Gudgell representing GBRA, David Baker representing the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) and Jason Pinchback representing the WVWA and Texas Watch. Also attending the meeting was Paul Jensen with PBS&J.

Debbie Magin, GBRA Clean Rivers Program project manager, briefed the committee on the program activities in the GBRA ten-county district. The program consists of seven tasks, covering project administration, quality assurance, data management, data analysis and reporting, public participation, and special studies. In addition to the existing routine monitoring conducted by the GBRA and the UGRA, a special nutrient monitoring study is being conducted on Lakes Dunlap and McQueeney and a special monitoring site has been established on Peach Creek downstream of a confined animal feeding operation (swine) located in the watershed.

Gretchen Reutzel with UGRA, discussed the CRP activities in Kerr County. The UGRA Volunteer River Monitor program has been established to give citizens the opportunity to contribute to the understanding and stewardship of the Guadalupe River, and will help educate the citizens in Kerr County on the activities of the Clean Rivers Program as well as monitoring conducted by UGRA. The goals of the program are:

- 1) increase the current water quality database through volunteer data collection,
- 2) encourage public participation in UGRA water quality monitoring efforts, and
- 3) education regarding water quality parameters and their significance.

Volunteer opportunities for 2004 include participation in the Springs and Seeps study, evaluating smaller water bodies, springs, and seeps in Kerr County; the "Swimability" study (weekly water collections at swimming sites) between Memorial Day and Labor Day; and a study that evaluates general water quality in the Guadalupe

River. UGRA has initiated two new programs as part of their “Trash Free River Initiative”. The program includes 1) Water Crossing Clean Up-14 water crossings in Kerr County are visited to remove trash twice per month, from May through September, and 2) the Annual River Clean Up-UGRA and 8 other entities co-sponsored a clean up that removed approximately 10 cubic yards of trash, 30% of which was recycled from the upper Guadalupe River.

David Baker and Jason Pinchback with the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association gave a presentation on their monitoring program. Volunteers have been monitoring Jacob’s Well, the Cypress Creek and the Blanco River in Wimberley for a number of years. The Village of Wimberley has funded additional monitoring at six sites that are being monitored under the GBRA CRP Quality Assurance Project Plan and submitted to TCEQ. Jason discussed data collected over the past year and indicated that water quality conditions are good. The efforts of the WVWA will serve as background data and support for maintaining existing water quality conditions during a period of rapid population growth in the watershed. WVWA is reducing the number of sampling events in 2006 in order to add an additional monitoring site on the Cypress Creek at the Blue Hole Campground. Additionally, the organization is working with the USGS to establish a gaging station at Jacob’s Well on the Cypress Creek. This effort will require funding from a number of sources that will include grant funding as well as contributions from other entities.

Paul Jensen, with PBS&J, discussed the draft 2005 Basin Highlights Report and the results of the state’s water quality assessment of the streams in the Guadalupe River Basin. Allison Woodall, with TCEQ, distributed information on the Total Maximum Daily Load studies currently underway in the Guadalupe River Basin.

Copies of the minutes, handouts and presentations are available on the GBRA website, www.gbra.org. The draft Highlights report is available on the website as will the final report when completed.

The following is a recap of the feedback and discussion portion had by the members of the steering committee in attendance:

- Dan Laroe, representing the Protect Lake Dunlap Association (PDLA), brought up the concern of his organization that there are water quality impacts from the recreational use in the upper Guadalupe and Comal Rivers. Dr. Jack Fairchild, representing the San Marcos River Foundation, echoed those concerns for the San Marcos and Blanco Rivers. They both mentioned the problem of trash that comes from recreationists.
- There was discussion on endocrine disruptors, such as pharmaceuticals and personal care products, and agricultural antibiotics and growth hormones and the need to include these emergent contaminants on the list of parameters monitored on the streams in the basin in the future. Due to the lack of available labs and the cost of analyses, as well as the lack of definitive risk assessments, it may be several years before these compounds are monitored.

- There was discussion on the impacts of urban flight into rural areas and the need for education of new landowners in the areas of septic tank operation and maintenance, waste control, and land use and development practices.
- Areas with possible water quality problems were discussed: elevated nitrate concentrations in Geronimo Creek and arsenic concentrations in Peach Creek.
- David Baker, WVWA, pointed out the need for a monitoring location at Blue Hole, an environmentally sensitive area on Cypress Creek, because the Village of Wimberley has obtained the property and is planning on developing a recreational area there.
- There was discussion on the increase in solid waste disposal sites in Gonzales and Dewitt Counties. It was suggested that the land use map that is included in the Basin Highlights Report be expanded to include solid waste sites, both those requiring a permit and those only requiring registration.
- Dan Laroe suggested that those entities that are conducting river clean-ups be contacted and reminded that it would be beneficial to extend the clean-up areas to creeks in the watershed that accumulate and contribute trash to the Guadalupe and San Marcos Rivers.

With no further discussion or comments, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.