

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

March 20, 2008

**Minutes**

(Changes to 2008 and 2009 Coordinated Monitoring Schedules follow)

The annual meeting of the Clean Rivers Program (CRP) Guadalupe River Basin Steering Committee was held Thursday, March 20, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) River Annex, 905 Nolan St., Seguin. Committee members/representatives attending included Allison Woodall representing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) CRP, Tara Bushnoe representing the Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA), Debbie Magin, Lee Gudgell, Cinde Thomas-Jimenez and Liz Sedlacek representing GBRA, Bill Harrison representing the TCEQ Surface Water Quality Monitoring team, Kerry Niemann of the TCEQ Total Maximum Daily Load team, Corey Burke of TCEQ Region 14, Lynn Lindsay of TCEQ Region 13, Jason Pinchback representing the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association, the Texas Rivers Institute and the Texas Stream Team (formerly Texas Watch), and Adrian Vogl and Julie Tuason representing Texas State University and the Texas Stream Team. Also attending were Cindy Contreras representing Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Tracie Kelly with the DeWitt County Soil and Water Conservation District, Abigail Lindsey with the Gonzales County Soil and Water Conservation District, Shari Johnson and Brian Koch representing Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, Nathan Pence representing the City of New Braunfels, Mike Dussere with the Comal County Water Oriented Recreation District, Barbara Smith representing the Goliad County Groundwater Conservation District, Nikki Dictson with the Texas AgriLife Extension and Roger Biggers with the New Braunfels Utilities. Homeowner associations were represented by Rick Wallace (Citizens United for Lake Placid), Ray Durham and Peggy McKanna (Friends of Lake McQueeney), and Dan Laroe (Lake Dunlap Homeowners Association). Also attending were Dr. Jack Fairchild with the San Marcos River Foundation, Dr. Glenn Longley with the Edwards Aquifer Research and Data Center, Josh Leftwich representing Uranium Energy Corporation, David Boylan with the Lindheimer Master Naturalists from Comal County and Mike Hilger, a landowner along Geronimo Creek.

Debbie Magin, GBRA Clean Rivers Program project manager, briefed the committee on the 2007 program activities in the GBRA ten-county district. The CRP 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, special monitoring sites have been established on Peach Creek and Coletto Creek in Goliad County. The bimonthly monitoring on Peach Creek was established as follow up to the recently completed total maximum daily load project on the creek. The monitoring on the site on Coletto Creek in Goliad County is being done to establish background concentrations of uranium and other

radiologicals and will be collected quarterly through 2009. This systematic monitoring is in response to concerns that the proposed in-situ mining of uranium in Goliad County could impact water quality. The Uranium Energy Corporation has made application with the TCEQ to develop wells for in-situ mining of uranium.

Ms. Magin discussed the public outreach and education project, "Don't Be Clueless" that is still being distributed in the river basin. GBRA, with funds provided by CRP in 2006-07, produced the educational brochure that reminds landowners that their property is part of a larger area of land called a watershed and activities on their property can have an impact on the water quality of that watershed. It is a resource on such topics as hazardous waste disposal, septic tank uses, and fertilizer application. The "Don't Be Clueless" campaign has been expanded. A TCEQ/EPA 604 grant focusing on the Plum Creek watershed has included the development of a "Don't Be Clueless" template that can be tailored for other watersheds across the state.

Ms. Magin's presentation also included discussion on the Basin Summary Report that is being prepared in 2008. The Basin Summary Report will include a review of historical data to look for trends and changes in water quality over the period of historical data available. The document will cover other aspects of the Guadalupe River Basin Clean Rivers Program including historical metals data collection, biological and habitat assessments and other related projects. Because of the size of the document and the cost of its printing and distribution, Dan Laroe, with the Lake Dunlap Property Owners Association, suggested we utilize electronic distribution whenever possible. The document can be put on the website in sections so that steering committee members can download the sections that they are familiar with and interested in. Basin steering committee members will be notified by email when the draft report has been posted on the GBRA website and is ready for their review and comment.

Additional activities that are an extension of the Clean Rivers Program include participation on the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board's Watershed Advisory Group and classroom water quality monitoring projects. The GBRA and UGRA labs are working toward the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation which is a requirement for data submittal for the CRP program. Ms. Magin pointed out that the funding for the Guadalupe River Basin Clean Rivers Program has not changed for 2008-09, staying at \$286,682 for the two year period, but with the cost of laboratory analyses, special studies and monitoring are becoming limited.

Tara Bushnoe, with the UGRA, discussed the CRP activities in Kerr County. Ms. Bushnoe described the UGRA monitoring activities for CRP that includes quarterly monitoring of 10 sites in Kerr County. She described the outreach programs sponsored by UGRA that include an annual river cleanup, Guadalupe Bass restoration, monthly newspaper articles, and a volunteer summer study. UGRA is continuing their "Swimability" study (weekly water collections at swimming sites) between Memorial Day and Labor Day but the project is no longer being funded by CRP. Ms. Bushnoe explained other special projects that will be started in 2008. UGRA has received funding for an implementation project that follows the recently accepted Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) project completed on the Upper Guadalupe River. The project will include monitoring in the part of the watershed that was the focus of the TMDL. Other projects

are being presented to the UGRA Board for their consideration that include water quality data collection on small tributaries in the county with the goal to establish trigger points that indicate changes in water quality, a spring flow study to establish sources of base flow, and a range improvement plan.

Jason Pinchback with the Wimberley Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) gave an overview of their monitoring program. Volunteers have been monitoring Jacob's Well, the Cypress Creek and the Blanco River in Wimberley for a number of years with funding provided by the Village of Wimberley. The Village has cut their funding for 2008. WVWA is making every attempt to maintain their program as is but if other funding is not found, the monitoring may be reduced.

Allison Woodall directed the committee members to the TCEQ website, [www.texascleanrivers.org](http://www.texascleanrivers.org). It is at this website that committee members can obtain information on the 2008 Water Quality Inventory, new segments that have been listed as impaired or with concerns and for a complete explanation of the assessment process. Additional sites listed in 2008 in the Guadalupe River basin include the Canyon Reservoir with concerns for nutrients and portions of Plum Creek that were listed due to bacterial impairments and concerns for nutrient concentrations. The Basin Summary Report will also include an explanation of the assessment process as well as a list of water bodies in the Guadalupe River Basin with impairments or concerns.

Mr. Pinchback discussed the Texas Stream Team activities in the Guadalupe River Basin. He is now the acting director of the Stream Team, formerly Texas Watch, established in 1991. The goals of the Texas Stream Team are watershed education and community action through hands-on water quality monitoring. The data that active Texas Stream Team groups collect include field data, nutrients and bacteria. The data is non-regulatory and is used to establish screening and baseline information and for problem identification. He described an intensive bacterial study completed on the upper San Marcos River in October 2007. Volunteers collected bacteriological samples along the stream in two days. The data will soon be ready for distribution. He then discussed the active groups that include the San Marcos River Rangers, the Lindheimer Master Naturalists in Comal County, Lockhart and Luling Schools in the Plum Creek watershed and a new group forming in the Lone Man Creek watershed (Hays County/Wimberley area). David Boylan, with the Lindheimer Master Naturalists, was invited up to discuss their monitoring program that includes sites on the Guadalupe River above Canyon Reservoir, on Tom Creek, a tributary to Canyon Reservoir, a site in Canyon Reservoir and several sites downstream on the Guadalupe River below the release. Cinde Thomas-Jimenez discussed the volunteer monitoring on Plum Creek being conducted with community service education grant being coordinated by Jana Harder. An elementary class, a middle school class and a high school class from the Luling Independent School District are monitoring the Plum Creek in their area. Lockhart classes are monitoring a spring located in the city park in Lockhart and the Clear Fork Plum Creek in the Lockhart State Park. Cinde also discussed her classroom project that is teaching the importance of the water quality in the Plum Creek to over 800 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Hays, Luling, and Lockhart Independent School Districts.

Nikki Dictson of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service gave an overview of the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership in Caldwell County. The Partnership is a collaboration between local citizens and regional, state and federal agencies with the goal to develop and implement a proactive strategy for protecting and improving the water quality of Plum Creek. According to the 2008 Texas Water Quality Inventory and 303(d) list of impaired water bodies, Plum Creek is impaired due to elevated bacteria concentrations and exhibits elevated nutrient levels. These water quality issues, along with changing land use across the watershed and the potential for non-point source pollution, were considered when Plum Creek was selected by a regional water quality committee as a watershed that would benefit from development and implementation of a watershed protection plan. The steering committee and workgroups, after meeting every month to gather information on possible sources of the bacterial and nutrient concentrations, have completed the watershed protection plan. The plan discusses best management practices (BMPs), their costs and the load reduction that could result from each BMP. At the request of many members of the PC watershed partnership, a monitoring project to collect additional water quality data on the Plum Creek watershed was funded by the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board. Lee Gudgell, water quality field technician for GBRA, explained the monitoring project that includes eight monthly routine sites, stormwater monitoring in the upper watershed, monitoring of springs in and around the Lockhart area and wet and dry weather monitoring at an additional 20 sites. The monitoring is being done under a quality assurance project plan and the data will be submitted to the TCEQ for use for future water quality assessments. Cinde Thomas-Jimenez then discussed another source of funding that has come to the Plum Creek watershed as a result of the WPP process. The Public Education and Outreach project includes clean up of illegal dumping at stream crossings, development of a Plum Creek-specific "Don't be Clueless" brochure, nonpoint education of municipal officials and the development of web-based training modules that cover wastewater treatment and septic tank operations.

Jason Pinchback then switched "hats" and discussed the Cypress Creek Project, funded by the TCEQ, with the goal of enhancement and maintenance of water quality in the Cypress Creek in the Wimberley area. Adrian Vogl, a doctoral student at Texas State University, assisted Mr. Pinchback by discussing the aspects of the project that include the characterization and delineation of subwatersheds; the gathering of historical data; stakeholder participation and guidance; watershed education; and Jacob's Well source water delineation. Another critical outcome of the project will be the development and utilization of a Decision Support System. The Decision Support System will act similar to a watershed protection plan in that it will give the steering committee a formulated plan to use as land use and growth occur in the area.

Kerry Niemann presented information on the TMDL studies wrapping up in the basin. Mr. Niemann discussed the status of the project on Peach Creek in Gonzales County which was listed as impaired due to fecal coliform bacteria counts that exceeded the contact recreation standard. The public comment period begins April 18, 2008 and there will be a public meeting on the TMDL in Waelder on April 15, 2008. TCEQ hopes to have the TMDL approved by the US EPA in the fall of 2008. Implementation efforts to control nonpoint pollution contributions in the watershed are currently underway. Formal development of an implementation plan will follow the adoption and approval of the TMDL.

Also, the TMDL on segment 1806, the Guadalupe River above Canyon Reservoir, has been adopted by TCEQ and approved by the US EPA. Implementation efforts led by the UGRA to identify and control contributions of bacteria to impaired reaches within the City of Kerrville are currently underway. Formal development of an implementation plan will occur in coordination with development of the WPP. Mr. Niemann related that the work is still ongoing on Sandies and Elm Creeks in Gonzales and DeWitt counties. The Texas Institute of Applied Environmental Research (TIAER) continues to develop load duration curves (bacteria) and a QUAL2K model (dissolved oxygen) to address the impairments.

The meeting concluded with an open discussion on the issues that were of concern by the stakeholders present and those that were sent in on the survey distributed to committee members in February. Barbara Smith, with the Goliad County Groundwater Conservation District presented information on a study being proposed by the district and the USGS to look at the interaction between the groundwater and the Coletto Creek in Goliad County. A meeting will be held on April 3, 2008 in Goliad to discuss the project and possible sources of funding.

Shari Johnson and Tracie Kelly discuss the water quality protection activities in DeWitt and Gonzales counties. Ms. Johnson, with the TSSWCB, explained that all dry-liter poultry operations are required to have a water quality management plan. She helps producers prepare and comply with their plans. The producers are inspected annually to assess compliance with their plans. Ms. Kelly with the DeWitt County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), described similar activities in the Sandies and Elm Creeks watershed. Sandies and Elm Creeks are listed on the 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies due to elevated concentrations of bacteria and low dissolved oxygen. The DeWitt County SWCD is working with cattlemen in the watershed to address bacteria in the runoff from their operations. She is assisting livestock producers developing water quality management plans. These plans include activities such as grazing management practices, production practices and land treatment practices.

Roger Biggers with the New Braunfels Utilities (NBU), after a short history of the permitting process for the Kuehler plants that discharge to Lake Dunlap, discussed the status of the water quality monitoring project. The project that monitored water quality on the Guadalupe River and Lake Dunlap was a result of the permit negotiations between NBU, the public and TCEQ. The data collection portion of the project has been completed and the draft report is expected shortly. After internal review, the report will be available for TCEQ and public review.

One final comment was made by Rick Wallace, representing the Citizens United for Lake Placid. Mr. Wallace related to the steering committee that in the late 1970's the steel mill located on Lake Placid was responsible for contamination of wells in their area and for water quality impacts from a leaking holding basin. CMC, formerly known as Structural Metals, has cleaned up their process but Mr. Wallace wants to make sure that water quality monitoring is still occurring in the vicinity of the facility. Region 13 representative, Lynn Lindsay, related that their office monitors water quality just

downstream of CMC and will be sure to include sediment analyses along with water quality analyses.

Copies of the minutes, handouts and presentations are available on the GBRA website, [www.gbra.org](http://www.gbra.org).

**Coordinated Monitoring Meeting for 2009 followed:**

1. GBRA will attempt to sample sediment in Kerrville-Schreiner Park each year. If no sediment is present, GBRA will sample another location in river basin.
2. UGRA will price doing five diurnal samples on the North Fork in 2009 and will do monitoring if the budget will allow.
3. GBRA will perform five diurnal sampling events in the critical period in 2009 (and 5 times in 2010) at the GBRA routine monitoring location on the Upper Blanco River (#12668). The location was listed on the 2008 305(b) report with a concern for dissolved oxygen that exceeded the grab screening level.
4. Region 13, Lynn Lindsay, will look into doing a sediment sample at the Canyon Reservoir site (#12600), looking at heavy metals, primarily mercury due to the mercury in fish tissue advisory issued for Canyon Reservoir.
5. Wimberley Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) has lost a large portion of its funding from the Village of Wimberley. WVWA may have to drop monitoring on the Blanco sites. GBRA may have to pick up those sites in 2009 (quarterly).
6. Metals will be added to the organics in sediment at the San Marcos IH 35 site and Luling site that will be monitored in 2008.
7. GBRA has made an application for a watershed protection planning grant from the TSSWCB for Geronimo Creek that includes monitoring in the first year of the three year project. If the project is not funded, GBRA will add a monitoring site on the lower Geronimo Creek in 2009.
8. GBRA and Region 14 will continue to look for a site downstream of the Dupont (Invista) industrial site. It will need to be through private property because there are no public crossings in the vicinity. If no site is found, GBRA will replace the site with a site on the main stem in Gonzales County, near the confluence with Black Creek in 2008 and 2009.
9. GBRA will add uranium in sediment at the Coletto Creek at Arnold Road site in 2009.
10. GBRA will continue to monitor the Peach Creek systematic site in 2009 (six times) and four times in 2010.
11. If budgets allow, organics in sediment will be added to metals in sediment samples planned for 2009.