

Meeting of the
Groundwater Management Area 8
On May 23, 2006 in Stephenville, TX

Minutes

The Groundwater Management Area 8 consisting of the Central Texas Groundwater Conservation District (GCD), Clearwater Underground Water Conservation District (UWCD), Fox Crossing Water District(WD), Middle Trinity GCD, Post Oak Savannah GCD and Saratoga UWCD held a meeting on Tuesday, May 23, 2006 in Stephenville, TX Room 131 of the Texas Ag Extension Center, located at 1229 N. U.S Highway 281.

Groundwater Districts:

Central Texas GCD: John Simmons
Fox Crossing WD: Jerry Priddy, Sam Beaumont
Post Oak Savannah GCD: Gary Westbrook
Middle Trinity GCD: Joe B. Cooper, George Bingham, Jerry Hinshaw, Boyd Waggoner, Jerry Fronterhouse, Rodney Stephens, Fred Parker, Sharon Mainord
Saratoga GCD: Lee Hoffpauir, T.P. Wingo, R.A. Wright , Jim Hamilton
Clearwater UWCD: Horace Grace, Cheryl Maxwell, Judy Parker

Others Present:

Robert Bradley, Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
Randy Williams, David Parkhill, & Ted Way, Turner Collie & Braden
Jim B. Paschall, Wise Co. (SWCD)
Lou Bridges, Wise Co. WCID #1
Kevin Burns, Wise Co. Commissioner
Robert Rankin, Wise Co. Commissioner
Tom Goode, Wise Co. Public Works Director
Bob Harden & Kevin Spencer
R.W. Harden & Assoc
James Beach & John Ashworth, LBG – Guyton
Larry French & Steve Young, URS Corporation
Bill Gordon, Erath County
Judge Tab Thompson, Erath Co.
W.D. Freeman, Coryell, Co.
Jack Wall, Coryell, Co.
Allen Standen, DBS & A

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Joe Cooper, District Manager of Middle Trinity GCD. Gary Westbrook gave invocation.

1. Welcome and introductions

Mr. Cooper welcomed all in attendance and called for introductions. Mr. Cooper gave brief explanation as to why all of the counties in Groundwater Management Area (GMA) 8 had been contacted regarding the joint planning meeting, citing HB 1763 and the governing legislation it contains stating that the groundwater districts within a GMA will set the desired future condition (DFC) of the aquifer (s) in that region. The counties were notified to allow them a chance to participate in the planning process. Mr. Cooper pointed out that GMA 8 consists of 46 counties with only 6 water districts participating in the planning process thus far.

2. *Public Comments.*

No public comments were made.

3. *Approve minutes of the February 21, 2006 GMA meeting.*

Mr. Cooper asked if all Board members had reviewed the minutes. All responded with a “yes”. There were no corrections to the minutes.

Horace Grace made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2006 meeting, second by Gary Westbrook. The Board unanimously approved the motion, 6-0.

4. *Groundwater District’s statements of how they seek to manage their aquifers.*

Mr. Cooper asked each District to briefly describe their plan for managing their individual aquifers. Discussion began with the Clearwater UWCD.

Clearwater UWCD: Mr. Grace stated that scientific studies and Groundwater availability figures have been conducted on the Trinity and Edwards (BFZ) aquifers and that the studies resulted in more available groundwater than the previous state numbers. Using this scientific data, Clearwater has chosen to manage the Trinity aquifer by Drawdown and the Edwards aquifer by the Stream-flow method.

Middle Trinity GCD: Mr. Cooper stated that the MTGCD is currently using state figures to manage for perpetuity. The goal of MTGCD is to maintain current aquifer levels until such time as a new scientific study can be conducted to ascertain current availability figures. MTGCD is currently in the process of reviewing hydrological consulting firms for these studies.

Fox Crossing WD: Mr. Priddy explained that while the Trinity Aquifer resides under parts of Eastern Mills County, much of the County does not have a viable source of groundwater. There is an understanding that they are currently using 16% of their available groundwater and are still in the developmental stages of their water district. Due to lack of staff and funding, no management plan is in place at this time.

Saratoga GCD: Mr. Hoffpauir stated that Saratoga GCD is still in the learning process and are working on a monitoring system that they hope to have in place in the near future. Due to lack of staff and funding no management plan is in place at this time.

Central Texas GCD: Mr. Simmons stated that they are in the process of identifying the aquifers in their county. They have currently identified the Trinity, Ellenberger, Hickory, and Marble Falls aquifers and are trying to establish baselines for these aquifers. They hope to have a management plan completed in the next 60 – 90 days.

After the description of management plans Mr. Cooper explained how the GMA 8 Board would determine the DFC for areas that are not represented. He explained that they would be considered what is called a “White Area” or an area without District representation. The GMA 8 planners will have to use the numbers that regional planners have in place for those counties that do not have water districts.

Mr. Grace elaborated on the issue by stating that the State has available information on how to manage those areas. The State of Texas has data on where the water is, how much is available and how to get it. If the counties do not have their own studies showing their groundwater availability, the State numbers will be used. Mr. Grace asked Robert Bradley from the Texas Water Development Board to explain how other Regions were handling this situation.

Mr. Bradley explained that GMA 8 was in a unique position because of the vast amount of “White Area” that it contained. According to Mr. Bradley, other regions do not have to deal with this problem on such a large scale but are attempting to include these “White Areas” in the planning process in just the same way as GMA 8. They are inviting the County Commissioner, Judges and other interested parties to attend the planning meetings.

Mr. Cooper questioned Mr. Bradley concerning possible funding for the GMA’s by the state. Mr. Bradley said that there are no plans regarding financing at this time. Technical assistance is available but the issue of funding is still being debated and that the chances of receiving funding would be greater if the GMA’s would approach the State on an individual basis such as through requests for grants.

Mr. Westbrook asked if anyone needed clarification on what DFC’s are. There were a few in the audience who needed clarification so Mr. Westbrook explained what DFC’s are and the process used to determine them. He then asked if there were any other questions. Bill Gordon from Erath County proceeded to ask about contamination from Oil and Gas Drillers. A lengthy discussion ensued and Mr. Cooper called time on the discussion. The Board assured Mr. Gordon that this was a concern for all involved but that the problem he was addressing was the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission.

5. *Presentation on transmissivity between GMA 8 aquifers.*

This presentation was postponed until a later date due to time limitations.

6. *Hear Presentations, evaluate proposals and take action on selecting firm to assist GMA 8 in developing DFC’s for the major and minor aquifers within the GMA 8 boundaries.*

Mr. Cooper turned the meeting over to Mr. Grace . Mr. Grace proceeded to explain that the GMA 8 had solicited eight to ten engineering firms throughout the State. Requests for proposals were sent out and four firms responded. After explaining the process of selecting the top firm, Mr. Grace excused the presenters and asked for a brief recess to allow time for the first presentation to be set up.

A brief recess was taken and the meeting resumed at 11:30 a.m., with Harden and Associates presenting first. The presenters continued in alphabetical order with LBG-Guyton next, followed by Turner, Collie and Braden with URS Corporation presenting last. After presentations were complete the Board excused all presenters and began discussion to evaluate qualifications and to determine order of selection.

The discussion resulted in Turner, Collie and Braden being the first choice by a margin of 4-2. All others were decided by unanimous vote as #2 -URS Corporation, #3 LBG-Guyton and #4 R.W. Harden and Associates.

Mr. Cooper delivered the Board's decision to the firms and asked that Turner, Collie and Braden return to the next meeting with a description of work to be done and estimated costs involved. The Board will review the proposal at that time and vote to either accept or refuse the proposal. If the TCB's proposal is refused, then URS Corporation will be contacted to provide a proposal.

7. *Discuss next steps in determining GMA 8 DFCs, i.e. interlocal agreements, fiscal agent etc.*

Discussion centered around funding of studies to be undertaken. Due to lack of available funds in the Saratoga GCD, Fox Crossing WD, and Central Texas GCD, Mr. Grace suggested an investigation into the possibility of a Grant. Mr. Grace offered to have his office write the proposal if the Board chose to pursue that option. No discussion of interlocal agreements or fiscal agent were presented at this time. Discussion called due to time constraints. Board agreed to discuss further at a later date.

8. *Set date, time and place of next meeting.*

The Board discussed the date and time of the next meeting. It was determined that the meeting needed to be held sooner than the normal Quarterly meeting. Districts agreed that the next meeting should be held in Belton, TX and would be hosted by Clearwater UWCD. The date was set for June 20, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. Saratoga and Central Texas GCDs offered to host meetings sometime in the future.

9. *Closing comments*

Mr. Cooper congratulated Turner Collie and Braden on their selection and thanked the audience for their participation.

10. *Adjourn*

Horace Grace made motion to adjourn, second by Lee Hoffpauir. Joe Cooper adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Joe B. Cooper, District Manager of Middle Trinity GCD
Presiding Officer

ATTEST:

Secretary

(Compact discs of this meeting available upon request)