



Region F Water Planning Group

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10 PLAN ADOPTION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This section describes the plan approval process for the Region F Water Plan and the efforts made to encourage public participation in the planning process. During the development of the regional water plan special efforts were made to inform the general public, water suppliers, and others with special interest in the planning process and to seek their input.

10.1 Regional Water Planning Group

As part of SB1 regional water planning groups were formed to guide the planning process. These groups were comprised of local representatives of eleven specific interests:

- General public
- Counties
- Municipalities
- Industrial
- Agricultural
- Environmental
- Small businesses
- Electric generating utilities
- River authorities
- Water districts
- Water utilities

Table 10.2-1 lists the voting members of the Region F Water Planning Group, the interests they represent, and their counties. The Region F Water Planning Group also has non-voting members to represent counties that are not otherwise represented by voting members. Table 10.2-2 lists the non-voting members. The Region F Water Planning Group held regular meetings during the development of the plan, receiving information from the region's consultants and making decisions on planning efforts. These meetings were open to the public, and proper notice was made under SB1 guidelines.

Table 10.2-1
Voting Members of the Region F Water Planning Group

Name	Interest	County
Len Wilson	Public	Andrews
Wendell Moody	Public	Concho
Judge Marilyn Egan	Counties	Runnels
Judge Johnny Jones	Counties	Crockett
Will Wilde	Municipalities	Tom Green
Buddy Sipes	Industries	Midland
Kenneth Dierschke	Agricultural	Tom Green
Terry Scott	Agricultural	Coleman
Lowell Woodward	Agricultural	Pecos
Steven C. Hofer	Environmental	Midland
Caroline Runge	Environmental	Menard
Stuart Coleman	Small Business	Brown
Andrew Valencia	Elec. Gen. Util.	Ward
Stephen Brown	River Authorities	Tom Green
John Grant	Water Districts	Howard
Scott Holland	Water Districts	Irion
Cindy Cawley	Water Districts	Schleicher
Larry Turnbough	Water Districts	Reeves
Richard Gist	Water Utilities	Brown

Table 10.2-2
Non-Voting Members of the Region F Water Planning Group

Name	County
Winton Milliff	Coke
Gordon Hooper	Crane
Rick Harston	Glasscock
Billy Hopper	Loving
Ken Carver	Martin
Don Daniel	Mason
Sue Young	Mitchell
Cindy Weatherby	Reagan
Gary Foster	Sterling
Joe David Ross	Sutton
John Shepard	Winkler

10.2 Outreach to Water Suppliers, Water User Groups and Adjacent Regions

The Region F Water Planning Group made special efforts to contact municipalities, water districts, and rural water supply corporations and others in the region and obtain their input in the planning process. Outreach included both questionnaires and meetings with selected water user groups. The questionnaires sought information on population and water use projections, drought planning, water quality issues, financing, and other water supply issues. Particular emphasis was placed on receiving input from water user groups with water supply needs.

The subordination strategy was carried out in conjunction with the Lower Colorado Region (Region K). Included in this effort were presentations at public meetings in Region K on March 9, 2005 and April 13, 2005.

10.3 Outreach to the Public

The public were given opportunities to participate throughout the regional water planning process, including the following:

- Regional water planning group meetings held throughout the planning process presented opportunities for dissemination of information to the public and receiving public comments. Notices for the meetings were posted in accordance with TWDB rules.
- Special Surface and Groundwater Workshops were held in Big Spring on October 27, 2003. These workshops focused on technical issues associated with surface water and groundwater supplies in Region F.
- Scope of Work, meeting minutes and other information were available on the CRMWD and TWDB websites.

10.4 Public Meetings and Public Hearings

As required by Senate Bill 1 rules, the Region F Water Planning Group held initial public hearing to discuss the planning process and the scope of work for the region on March 28, 2002. Presentations were made on the planning process and input was solicited from participants. Public meetings were held approximately every quarter throughout the planning process.

On July 27, 2005 copies of the draft *Initially Prepared Region F Water Plan* were mailed to Region F county courthouses and libraries for public review. Copies of the draft plan were also posted on the TWDB website, and additional hard copies were made available to interested parties. Notices of the upcoming public meetings were sent to the Secretary of State, county clerks, county judges, regional legislators, groundwater and irrigation districts, and regional newspapers along with a description of how to obtain copies of the draft plan for review.

On August 29, 2005, the Region F Water Planning Group held a public hearing in Big Spring to present the draft *Initially Prepared Region F Water Plan* and seek public input. Oral comments were received following the presentation and written comments were accepted through November 7, 2005. Public comments received during the comment period are documented in Appendix 10A. Where appropriate, modifications to the plan were made and incorporated into the adopted *Regional Water Plan*.

10.5 Comments from State and Federal Agencies

Appendix 10B contains comments on the draft *Initially Prepared Region F Water Plan* from the Texas Water Development Board and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. No other comments were received from other state or federal agencies.

10.6 Plan Implementation Issues

Implementation issues identified for the Region F *Regional Water Plan* include: 1) financial issues associated with paying for the proposed capital improvements, 2) additional studies associated with subordination of Colorado Basin water rights, 3) lack of clear options for water users of the Hickory aquifer and 4) implementation of conservation measures that were assumed in this plan.

10.6.1 Financial Issues

It is assumed that the entities for which strategies were developed will utilize existing financial resources, incur debt through bond sales and/or receive state-supported financial assistance. Most likely the funding of identified strategies will increase the cost of water to the customers. The economic feasibility to implement the strategies will

depend on the cost increases the customer base can assume. Some strategies may not be able to be implemented without state assistance.

10.6.2 Additional Water Rights Studies in the Colorado Basin

The subordination strategy described in Section 4.2.3 is intended as an interim solution to water rights issues associated with use of the TCEQ Colorado WAM for regional water planning. The results are for planning purposes only. Additional studies will be required to clarify water rights issues in the Colorado Basin.

10.6.3 Options for Users of the Hickory Aquifer

Many users of the Hickory aquifer are small communities or rural water systems. In these areas the Hickory aquifer is the only significant source of water for municipal, industrial and agricultural use. These users are concerned that the expense of treatment to meet drinking water standards is not justified by the health risk posed by the presence of radionuclides in water from this aquifer. Lack of clear regulations regarding the handling and disposal of waste byproducts of treatment for radionuclides is a concern as well. Many are concerned that the economic impact of compliance will take scarce economic resources away from other, more significant issues in these areas.

10.6.4 Water Conservation

Water conservation practices evaluated in this plan are based on rule-of-thumb information, primarily based on the experience in other states. Data required for a more thorough evaluation of water conservation are not available. Experience during the recent drought has demonstrated that significant savings can be made through water conservation and drought management. However, without specific data, it is difficult to quantify the potential long-term savings for water conservation activities. Additional studies will be needed to quantify savings from water conservation.