

Summary of Minutes

Water Conservation Advisory Council Workgroup Meeting and Conference Call
Workgroup:

Date: Thursday, January 9, 2020
Time: 1:30 p.m.
Location: Conference Call

<u>Members</u>	<u>Alternates</u>	<u>Interested Parties</u>	<u>TWDB Staff</u>
Wayne Halbert Dan Hunter Charles Ring Dustan Compton Kevin Kluge	David Villareal T.J. Helton John Bender	Isabel Martinez	Kathleen Jackson Jennifer White Cameron Turner Josh Sendejar

Documents located at: <https://savetexaswater.org/meeting/workgroup/agricultural.html>

- I. Introduction of Participants
The conference call began at 1:35 p.m.

Director Kathleen Jackson of TWDB began the call by thanking the participants of the workgroup for their commitment to water conservation, as well as encouraging stakeholders to take advantage of TWDB’s Agricultural Water Conservation Grants.

- II. Discussion on Agricultural BMPs
TWDB staff noted that development of BMPs have lapsed. The Ag Conservation team are currently undergoing interviews to fill a vacancy. Once that vacancy has been filled, the team is hopeful the workgroup can continue developing Agricultural BMPs.

- III. Discussion of Potential Legislative Recommendations
Texas ET Network Recommendation:
Dustan Compton began the discussion by stating that the Wholesale Workgroup is also interested in this topic, and Dustan has been discussing the idea with Dr. Guy Fipps of Texas A&M University who is considering retirement in the near future. Some questions have come up for Dustan, primarily, how is this data used in the Ag sector.

David Villareal identified Dr. Ryan Banta with the US Geological Survey as a resource for this recommendation. Mr. Villareal also noted that Dr. Fipps would be willing to help write language for this recommendation.

There was some discussion as to whether or not the Council might want to consider broadening the recommendation beyond the funding needs of the Texas ET network, to include other networks of weather stations.

Mr. Charles Ring mentioned Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension weather stations in South Texas, as an example. He suggested contacting Dr. Landivar for more information regarding that network and his cotton irrigation research efforts.

Mr. Wayne Halbert also noted Texas Tech's West Texas Mesonet, as another example.

TWDB staff noted that the TexMesonet is currently being developed into a statewide network, and discussions with Texas Tech University regarding West Texas Mesonet are ongoing to bring that data back into TexMesonet. It was then asked if the Council recommendation would be specific to the Texas ET Network or be broader?

It was brought up that it may be worthwhile for the Council to hear a presentation on the TexMesonet from TWDB staff.

W. Halbert noted he would be happy to touch base with people in the field regarding how they do or could use this data.

It was then commented that it would make a stronger case to the legislature if both municipal and agricultural sectors could benefit regarding this recommendation.

Ag Water Efficiency Project:

Josh briefly went over the recommendations from the 2018 WCAC Report, including a recommendation seeking to reestablish funding for the Rio Grande Center for Ag Water Efficiency. It was discussed at the last workgroup meeting that the workgroup would be interested in re-introducing this recommendation. W. Halbert stated that a funding amount would need to be given, rather than a range of funds as given in the last report.

Other recommendations:

Staff mentioned ongoing work regarding the agricultural funding recommendation, to also include more specifics.

There was little to no discussion regarding the data availability recommendation.

Mr. Charles Ring brought up the issue of crop insurance. At the last workgroup meeting and WCAC meeting this issue was brought up regarding current crop insurance policies and the requirements to continue irrigating failed crops during times of drought. It was discussed that a meeting was held with the Risk Management Agency (RMA) where this concern was brought up, however, it may be worth having the Council issue a recommendation for a resolution regarding this issue from the Texas Legislature.

David Villareal noted that Dr. Monte Vandever at Kansas State University recommended making contact with the RMA Oklahoma Regional Office, as well as having Dr. Joe Outlaw with TAMU discuss the issue of water conservation and crop insurance with the Council.

Josh also reminded the workgroup that the draft timeline for the report introduced at a previous WCAC meeting had recommendations being finalized by February to begin the

collaborative process with any potential state agencies' legislative appropriations request processes.

- IV. Discussion of Potential Items for Inclusion in the 2020 Legislative Report
Josh discussed that the workgroup has previously discussed including examples of exemplary success or innovations within the Ag sector for inclusion in the report. Any potential recommendations should also be supported by information within the body of the report.

Mr. Wayne Halbert noted that he would draft information for inclusion regarding the Ag Water Efficiency project and its facility.

- V. Other Discussion
There was no other discussion

- VI. Adjourn
The conference call ended at 2:15 p.m.