**USIBWC Pilot Channel/Floodway Watershed Protection Plan Steering Committee Meeting**

**February 26, 2019 | 2:30 PM | City of Mercedes Public Works**

1. **Welcome and Introductions: Dr. Andrew Ernest**

Participants Role Email Address

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Dr. Andrew Ernest | Chair – UTRGV | [Andrew.ernest@utrgv.edu](mailto:Andrew.ernest@utrgv.edu) |
|  | Juan Uribe | Vice Chair – USIBWC |  |
|  | Marci Oveido | LRGVDC |  |
|  | Augusto Sanchez | Cameron County/UTRGV | [augusto.sanchezgonzalez@utrgv.edu](mailto:augusto.sanchezgonzalez@utrgv.edu) |
|  | Eduardo Gonzalez | Willacy County Commissioner |  |
|  | Saul Garcia | Office of Hidalgo County Commissioner Pct. 1 |  |
|  | Jose Figueroa | City of Mercedes |  |
|  | Dr. Kim Jones | TAMUK |  |
|  | Javier Guerrero | UTRGV | [Javier.guerrero@utrgv.edu](mailto:Javier.guerrero@utrgv.edu) |
|  | Dr. Ahmed Mahmoud | UTRGV |  |
|  | Deanna LeVrier | UTRGV | [Deanna.levrier@utrgv.edu](mailto:Deanna.levrier@utrgv.edu) |
|  | Valerie Ramos | UTRGV |  |
|  | Francisco S. Martinez | USIBWC |  |

**2. NCLRGV Project Overview:**

2.0 Mr. Javier Guerrero

* + 1. This meeting is one (1) of three (3) steering committees that will later transition to three (3) different projects.
    2. Stakeholders will be decision makers for direction and start of a new watershed protection plan.
  1. Workplan: Dr. Ahmed Mahmoud
     1. PowerPoint presentation on grant scope of work overview: This project will identify existing data and identify data gaps for characterization as well as identify a path forward by selecting an analytical method for estimating pollutant loads.
     2. The Raymondville Drain and Hidalgo Main the IBWC Pilot channel (IBWC North Floodway) flow into the Lower Laguna Madre which is impaired for low DO and bacteria.
     3. The IBWC North Floodway pilot channel constantly drains WWTP effluent and during large storm evens, collects excess runoff from urbanized areas of Hidalgo County and agriculture land in Cameron and Willacy Counties.
  2. Dr. Andrew Ernest
     1. Key things committee will address are raising awareness of the need for more water quality data in the Rio Grande Valley. The initiation of these watershed-planning efforts is a monumental step moving forward to understanding the region’s water quality better.

**3. IBWC LRGV Refinement of Project Scope:**

3.1 Stakeholders: Dr. Ahmed Mahmoud

3.1.1. Grant will focus on stakeholder workgroups revolved around 5 tasks. See attached PowerPoint presentation

3.2 Timeline: Dr. Ahmed Mahmoud

3.3 Map: Dr. Ahmed Mahmoud

* 1. EPA 9 Elements

3.4.1. Develop watershed protection plan based off EPA’s 9-Elements (A-E) *See attached PowerPoint presentation*

**4.Identification of Steering Committee Members and SC Charge**

4.1 Mr. Javier Guerrero

4.1.1. Add two more members/organizations and replace himself on steering committee

4.1.2. 11 committee members preferred to break up any ties for future decision making

4.1.3. After consensus from those in attendance, a representative from the City of Weslaco will be added and a R.A.T.E.S. representative will replace Mr. Guerrero’s position

4.2 Dr. Andrew Ernest

4.2.1. Members will make decisions regarding logo, letterheads, grant workshops, etc. and drive the project

**5. Population of Technical Committee**

5.1 Technical committee identified by group:

5.1.1. Paulina Vega – Cameron County

Raul or Jaime – Hidalgo County

Dr. Abdoul Oubedillah – UTRGV

Dr. Jungseok Ho – UTRGV

Dr. Hudson Deyoe – UTRGV

Tushar Sinha - TAMUK

Francisco S. Martinez-USIBWC

\*One representative from each county

5.2 Mr. Javier Guerrero

5.2.1. More will be identified as the technical group begins working

6. Identification of Other Committees

6.1 Agriculture Committee

6.1.1. Jose Figueroa - City of Mercedes

Ronnie Ramirez– Soil Board

John Degrassa – Citrus group ACTION ITEM: Dr. Jones will speak to him

NRCS Corpus (Sonny) ACTION ITEM: Ronnie Ramirez will reach out to them

IBWC ACTION ITEM: Claudio will reach out

6.1.2. ACTION ITEM: Task Jose Figueroa with forming remainder of the committee

6.2 Habitat Group

6.2.1. Boyd

Tina Buford

U.S. Fishing Wildlife

Texas Fishing Wildlife

Land Owners Ass.

Nature Conservancy

ACTION ITEM: Sanchez will share list with Deanna

6.3 Urban Group

6.3.1. Wastewater Treatment Plant

Taskforce

6.4 Augusto Sanchez Gonzalez

6.4.1. Each group/committee will have their own mission statement, will need to identify grants for funding/economic development

6.5 Javier Guerrero

6.5.1. 3-4 chairs will report their work at quarterly meetings

7. Meetings Schedules

7.1 Javier Guerrero

7.1.1. Next meeting will be held in May either between the 13th-24th. Chair, Dr. Andrew Ernest, will confirm date.

7.2 Dr. Andrew Ernest

7.2.1. Meetings will be held at IBWC permanently

8. Agenda for Next Meeting

8.1 Dr. Andrew Ernest

8.1.1. Sub Committees: charge for sub committees will be defined

8.1.2. Logo will be defined

8.1.3. Website: mapping and logistics. ACTION ITEM: IBWC will provide map to Mercedes and UTRGV (defines structures)

8.1.4. Other ACTION ITEM: Dr. Andrew Ernest will send an email out on how to use water wizard

8.1.5. Next meeting’s agenda

8.1.6. Technical detail ready for discussion at next meeting

8.1.7. Schedule a tour of the floodway for all committee members

9. Adjourn