USIBWC Pilot Channel/Floodway Watershed Protection Plan Steering Committee Meeting September 11, 2019 | 12:00 PM | City of Mercedes Public Works

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

	Participants	Role
1	Dr. Andrew Ernest	Chair – UTRGV
2	Juan Uribe	Vice Chair – USIBWC
3	Marci Oveido	LRGVDC
4	David Salinas	City of San Juan
5	Saul Garcia	Office of Hidalgo County Commissioner Pct. 1
6	Jose Figueroa	City of Mercedes
7	Dr. Kim Jones	TAMUK (online)
8	Juan Cesar Bezares-Cruz	TAMUK (online)
9	Tim Cawthon	TCEQ (online)
10	Deanna LeVrier	RATES (online)
11	Dr. Ahmed Mahmoud	UTRGV
12	Joe Hinojosa	Santa Cruz Irrigation District
13	Alejandro Livas	Hidalgo County Pct. 1
14	Carols A. Sanchez	City of Harlingen
15	Francisco S. Martinez	USIBWC
16	Valerie Ramos	LRGVDC
17	Ludy Saenz	LRGVDC

2. **Background of IBWC (Juan Uribe):**
   - 2.0 Lower Rio Grande Valley Control Project
   - 2.1. Operation and of project facilities, levees, and structure
     - 2.1.1. Levee resurfacing and repair
     - 2.1.2. Channel and drain desilting.
     - 2.1.3. Heavy Brush Clearing.
     - 2.1.4. Levee and floodway mowing
     - 2.1.5. Inspection and Rehabilitation of structures
   - 2.2. There are permanent discharges into the lateral that enter the main floodway such as south of Alamo and south of Weslaco
   - 2.3. IBWC Monitoring stations are only measuring flow and no water quality data.
   - 2.4. Juan will share the levee map as a KMZ file with Ahmed to include it in the project.

3. **Project Update (Ahmed Mahmoud):**
   - 3.1 Project description
   - 3.2 Data available online for USIBWC Floodway (flow, bacteria, nitrite, and chlorophyll-a)
   - 3.3 Quality Assurance Project Plan (status)

3.4 Geo-spatial and Non-geospatial data sources

3.5 Organization structure and subcommittees

3.6 Dr. Andrew Ernest: one thing to stress that the main goal for the project is simply to do a data collection and data analysis for the characterization of the watershed, no sample collection is required in this project.

3.7 Dr. Andrew Ernest: we will hire a MS student to do her thesis on this project.

4. Flow Routing (Tim Cawthon)

4.1 One of the main things in developing a 9-element Watershed Protection Plan is to know where the pollutant sources and water flow measured at a point are coming from. Subwatershed delineation and flow routing is necessary to determine this.

4.2 A map was developed using different GIS layers by HCDD and other sources that are available online. It is important to know if wastewater discharges from wastewater outfalls near the North Floodway are flowing to the IBWC Floodway, Arroyo Colorado, or Hidalgo Floodway.

4.3 Some of the wastewater seems to go to Mercedes lateral which is connected to the IBWC Floodway. However, there is also an East lateral connected to the Mercedes lateral that may take some of the same effluent to Hidalgo Floodway.

4.4 Dr. Andrew Ernest: delineation of the watershed should be assigned to the technical subcommittees and set up a meeting with the key players to identify the direction of flow in IIBWC and watershed boundaries. Ahmed and Andrew will convene the technical committee to sit with each jurisdiction to get a qualitative assessment of flow direction for each drain that feeds into the IBWC.

4.5 According to Espey Consultants La Feria Flood Protection Plan from July 5, 2011 (Link), Tio Cano Lake is a natural inland dry lake with no outlet to IBWC Floodway or Arroyo Colorado. . The La Feria subbasins from this engineering report were georeferenced and digitized. Since this area has no outlet it should be handled as a separate subbasin within the IBWC floodway characterization effort.

4.6 Dr. Andrew Ernest: Tio Can Lake should be also discussed with the Technical Committee

4.7 The map includes the 2016 land cover data set for the North Floodway area.

5. Logo Discussion

5.1 The logo is not specific for USIBWC and shows more the region of South Texas, we can't tell where is the floodway located in the logo, here are some suggestions:

5.1.1. Show the North floodway part in the logo

5.1.2. Show the levee system or the watershed boundaries if possible

5.1.3. The font size should increase.

5.2 Ahmed will work on editing the logo based on the members' suggestions.

6. Identification of Other Committees

6.1 Dr. Ernest suggests adding Jose Gonzalez from the Drainage District or Paul Greenhead the district manager to the technical committee.

6.2 Carols Sanchez from the city of Harlingen will be in the technical committee

6.3 David Salinas: The area of North Floodway water in Irrigation District #9, most of the flow from wastewater treatment goes to lateral drain only small portion flow to the main drain

7. Known Data Gaps

7.1 Dr. Ernest: Cameron County Drainage District #5 should be involved in the Tio Cano Lake discussion.

7.2 BMP location can get it from TAMUK but it may need some update.

7.3 Drinking water data from the TCEQ website

7.4 Tim Cawthon: For biological assessment, Texas Parks and Wildlife reported a fish kill in the Laguna Madre near the outlet of the North Floodway; Tim will contact them and try to get some information.

7.5 David Salinas suggested adding Lake Campacuas to our project.

8. Adjourn