

LLMBSC WPP Steering Committee Meeting

Habitat Work Group Meeting Notes

March 17th, 2021

11:30-13:21

1. Attendees
 - a) Melissa Gonzalez - City of Alamo
 - b) Andrew Ernest - UTRGV
 - c) David Alanis – City of La Villa
 - d) Commissioner Garza - Cameron County
 - e) Raymond Ramirez - TSSWCB
 - f) Raul Garcia - City of Los Fresnos
 - g) Ahmed Mahmoud - UTRGV
 - h) Samantha Litchke - TCEQ
 - i) Derek Katznelson - LRGVDC
 - j) Abdoul Oubeidillah - UTRGV
 - k) Raul Gomez - Cameron County
 - l) Brian Koch - TSSWCB
 - m) Ivan Santos - UTRGV
 - n) Augusto Sanchez - Cameron County
 - o) Jessica Johnstone - TCEQ
 - p) Kate de Gennaro - Texas Sea Grant
 - q) Rick Carrera - LRGVDC
 - r) Deanna LeVrier - RATES
 - s) Linda Navarro - UTRGV
 - t) Tony Reisinger - CC Extension Agent Coastal and Marine Resources
 - u) Kim Jones - TAMUK
 - v) Chu-Lin Cheng - UTRGV
 - w) Carol Vazquez - City of Brownsville
 - x) Willie Cupit – Texas Park and Wildlife
2. Andrew Ernest – Opened with welcome and introductions
3. Modeling efforts- Andrew Ernest gave an overview of the REON (River and Estuary Observation Network) system, and its implementation in the Rio Grande Valley.
4. Watershed delineation - Linda Navarro presented the methodology and the results obtained to delineate the Brownsville Ship Channel Watershed.
5. Tony Reisinger - What is the definition of burning?
6. Linda Navarro- explains that is name that receives the process of converting a vector file into a raster file.
7. Andrew Ernest – Added that this is just a software process that does not give information in real time in the channels but contributes to improve the delineation process.
8. LLMBSC Existing Data - Ahmed Mahmoud presented the results of data collected in site and using the REON system in the tree monitoring sites:
 - A) Complete profile of each channel using the ADCP.

- B) Nutrients and bacteria like conductivity, D.O., pH, E. Coli, TKN, P, among others were obtained using the YSI or through Ana-Lab.
 - C) Average depth in the channels obtained from the RTHS website.
 - D) Land Cover for each Sub-basin.
 - E) Nonpoint source in the Watershed.
9. Tony Reisinger – The dredging the BSC can have an impact the BSC.
 10. Andrew Ernest – The dredging might have a positive improvement in water quality at the mouth of the BSC
 11. David Alanis – Mentioned that the data that will be gathered will help to solve those questions.
 12. Tony Reisinger – Does the bacteria get diluted in the BSC?
 13. Ahmed Mahmoud- Yes, it does and that is one of the challenges of the project because of the tightly influenced waterway which has all three of the channels.
 14. David Alanis – Suggested that having more monitoring areas further down the BSC it would be easier to have a better understanding of the situation.
 15. Phase I: Grant Status – Ahmed Mahmoud presented the work done so far and the coming activities.
 16. Tony Reisinger – Asked if the South Padre Island point sources will be added today?
 17. Andrew Ernest - Responded that not during that modeling presentation, that would be better to ask the steering committee what to add on this project for which they currently have no funding and then design strategies to secure funding.
 18. FY2022-319 Proposals – Andrew Ernest explained the details of the proposals made to TCEQ.
 - a) LLM-Hydrodynamic Water Quality Study
 - b) North and Central LRGV-Phase II
 - c) Llano Grande Lake Dredging Feasibility Study
 - d) Arroyo Colorado-Tidal: Implementation of Watershed Monitoring and Modeling Estuarine Hydrodynamics.
 - e) LRGV LID Implementation-Harlingen City Hall and Cameron County San Benito Annex
 19. Kate de Gennaro – Asked if it would be possible to use any data from the settlement study?
 20. Andrew Ernest – Yes, it is possible. That information would allow to develop a plan with best available knowledge.
 21. Augusto Sanchez – Mentioned that the Coastal Management Program has expanded the nonpoint source eligibility of projects, another avenue to include South Padre Island in the monitoring efforts.
 22. Tony Reisinger – Asked if monitoring stations at north and south of the LLM would be necessary.
 23. Andrew Ernest – Yes, absolutely. That is the plan as part of the flood infrastructure to have an idea of where the loading is coming from and determine the best practices management.
 24. Acknowledge of the funding agency – Andrew Ernest mentioned that TCEQ and EPA through the section 319 program that funded the study.
 25. RTHS website demonstration – Andrew Ernest made a demonstration of the RTHS website and explained the data that can be consulted.

26. Commissioner Garza – Does anyone disagree that we need to expand what we are doing now to include what we are doing now to include the end of the BSC and SPI?
27. Commissioner Garza – I think everybody's in agreement.
28. Andrew Ernest – We will investigate further and then make a formal proposal to a potential funding source.