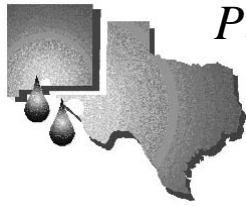


# New Mexico – Texas Water Commission



*Public Entities in Partnership for Sustainable Water Resources*

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## MEETING OF THE NEW MEXICO – TEXAS WATER COMMISSION

**El Paso County Water Improvement District # 1  
294 Candelaria  
El Paso, Texas 79907**

**June 25, 2004  
9:00 A.M.**

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### Welcome

Chuy Reyes welcomed everyone to the meeting at El Paso County Water Improvement District # 1 (EPCWID#1). He introduced himself as the General Manager and Pat Proffer as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of EPCWID#1. Mike Fahy chaired the meeting. A copy of the sign-in sheet is attached as “**Exhibit “A”**”. Those members of the Commission attending were as follows:

Karl Wood – NMSU-WRRI  
Tony Tarquin – UTEP  
Gary Esslinger – EBID  
Mike Fahy – EPWU

Ari Michelsen had previously requested that EPCWID#1 return to the Commission. Chuy mentioned that he had intentions of having EPCWID#1 become a member of the NM-TX Water Commission and stressed how important it was for the District to stay involved. Karl subsequently made a motion to accept EPCWID#1 as a member of the Commission and Gary Esslinger seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **I. Review and Approval of Minutes from May 7, 2004, Commission Meeting**

Mike Fahy asked if anyone had comments on the May 7, 2004 Commission meeting minutes. Karl suggested adding “Tony” to “Tarquin” in the attendance section. The minutes were approved unanimously after this change was mentioned.

## **II. Presentation on the Rio Grande Project 2004 Irrigation Season, Water Supply and Allocation Forecast (Wayne Treers, BuRec).**

Wayne Treers provided his customary update on the water supply situation and runoff forecast. Copies of his handouts are attached as **“Exhibit “B”**.

Mr. Treers reviewed the snowpack and runoff levels at each of the major drainage basins for the project. He presented the spring runoff forecasts for the Rio Grande Basin and the short-term precipitation and seasonal drought outlook. Mr. Treers also discussed the reservoir inflows and storage levels, credit water status, reservoir operating plan, and the current and projected allocations for 2004. He reiterated that the southwest continues to be in a drought, although not as prolonged a drought as in the 1950’s.

## **III. Progress Report by the Paso del Norte Watershed Council (PdNWC) (Nancy Hanks, Watershed Council Coordinator).**

Nancy Hanks updated the Commission on the latest activities of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council (PdNWC). She informed the Commission that the Council met on June 1<sup>st</sup>, revising the Bylaws, the Strategic Plan, and discussing a detailed business or work plan for the Council members for the next several years.

Nancy reported that Council participation was included on two grant proposals. The first one entitled, “Water Conservation through the Reuse of Gray Water” has been awarded to TAMU by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. This grant has \$1400 of funding written into it for Nancy, the Council Coordinator, to perform public outreach and publication of fact sheets and programs. The second proposal entitled, “Water Quality Variation in the Elephant Butte Reservoir and Its Impacts on the Sustainability of Water Supply Downstream” was submitted to the EPA and selection of awards is still pending. This proposal includes approximately \$3,000 for activities to be completed by Nancy.

## **IV. Review of Revisions to PdNWC Bylaws and Strategic Plan (Nancy Hanks, Commission Members)**

Nancy distributed handouts of the proposed revised Bylaws and the Strategic Plan to the audience (copy attached as **“Exhibit “C”**). She advised that the Council met on June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 14th to make the revisions to the Bylaws and the Strategic Plan, and added that the revisions to the Business Plan were still in progress. Mike Fahy requested that she inform the Commission of the changes to the bylaws. Nancy responded that some of the items from the Strategic Plan were to be incorporated into the Business Plan. There was discussion about the bylaws concerning whether the Council needed an executive secretary. It was decided to retain the Executive Secretary as an officer of the Council. Section 4, Article 5 provided for a Program Coordinator to help further goals of the Council and coordinate Council activities. Sue Watts had offered more changes to the Bylaws in Section 4, Article 5, which includes changing the membership from two to three years. The bylaws were modified to allow for a request that members step down if they missed more than four meetings. Sue also commented on Article 6, Section 3, which was revised to state that any recommendations by the Council regarding regional environmental impact statements shall be reviewed by the Executive



Committee and then presented to the NM-TX Water Commission members for their review.

Nancy hopes to have the general Council members review a draft Business Plan and vote on the approval of the Bylaws and Strategic Plan at the July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. Sue noted that a 30 day review period is required before final Executive Council approval of such documents. Compilation of a draft Business Plan is still in progress. The final Council vote on approval of these documents should be held in early September.

#### **V. Description of Federal Watershed Coordination Committee (Jim Stefanov, International Boundary and Water Commission)**

Jim Stefanov provided a brief power point presentation (copy attached as “**Exhibit “D”**”) explaining the purpose of the Rio Grande Federal Watershed Coordination Committee (FWCC) as an effort to develop better communication and coordination between various federal and state agencies. Concern had previously been expressed among representatives of various agencies regarding the lack of communication and duplication of projects being undertaken. Because of this perception, Congressman Reyes formed the FWCC, and Jim and Peter Brock have been developing the committee. The first meeting was conducted in November of 2002 and was intended to be an introductory session to identify the committee’s authorities, and projects that require state and federal collaboration. In 2004, there were two meetings in El Paso.

The Mission Statement of the FWCC is based on a basin-wide perspective and it calls for participation from all the federal agencies along the Rio Grande. The FWCC members plan to share their expertise, communicate their priorities and make the federal agencies collectively more functional. The anticipated outcome will be that the stakeholders will receive a consistent message from the federal agencies that they deal with. Jim stresses that this kind of coordination between state and federal agencies will demonstrate to Congress that they are well coordinated and working together towards a common goal. Mike asked if a local public outreach program had been organized as part of this function. Jim replied that this program could eventually include local agencies, but for now the attendance was by invitation only. The committee currently has no working budget.

#### **VI. Discussion of Carryover Storage for Elephant Butte Reservoir (Commission Members)**

Mike Fahy reported that he has not been able to locate a hard copy of any actual report regarding the topic of Carryover Storage for Elephant Butte reservoir. He discussed this subject with Risher Gilbert, Bert Cortez, Joe Hanson, Gary Esslinger, representatives of IBWC and Bobby Creel. Joe Hanson mentioned that the current versions of the draft operating agreement among BuRec and the two irrigation districts do contain a clause regarding carryover storage. Mr. Hanson did not elaborate on the details. The concept has been discussed by the Rio Grande Compact Commissioners. In general, the conclusions that has been reached include the requirement to calculate evaporation losses for inclusion in the water accounting, and the requirement for the districts to call on the carryover water first at the beginning of the next year.

Chuy had no comment to make on the negotiations, but requested that Bert Cortez remark on this concept. Bert mentioned that the concept has been considered before, and that the problems will include accounting for the water, how the upstream States are going to view the concept, and who will be willing to try to implement the carryover storage process. Bert related that the BuRec is ready and willing to assist the two districts in formulating an agreeable and workable program.

## **VII. Other Business:**

Mike distributed copies of the one page brochure for EPWU's 2004 Desalination Conference entitled, "Managing Concentrate in the Desert". It will take place in El Paso on October 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Airport Marriott Hotel. Copies of the Memorandum of Understanding on Research and Education Related to Water Management and Desalination were also distributed. The following organizations signed the MOU: El Paso Water Utilities-Public Service Board, the City of Alamogordo, University of Texas at El Paso, New Mexico State University, and the Texas A&M University System, Karl announced the Annual New Mexico Water Conference which will be held in Ruidoso on September 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Bobby Creel informed the audience of the upcoming groundbreaking ceremony for the new Tularosa Basin Federal Desalination Research Facility to be held in Alamogordo on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Mike Fahy stated that EPWU is working with EBID on installing electrical conductivity sensors to monitor (in real-time) the TDS levels in the river and in several agricultural drains at the state line.

Valerie announced that the Commission's re-designed web site will be available on July 16<sup>th</sup>. She will have a demonstration prepared for the next meeting.

## **VIII. Schedule Next Meeting/Location – Topics for Discussion**

The next Commission meeting was scheduled to be held at the El Paso Water Utilities on August 20, 2004 at 9am. The following items were suggested for the agenda for the next meeting:

- Demonstration of the Commission's new web page
- Report on the approval of the New Mexico Region 11 Water Plan
- Demonstration of NMWRRI's new web page

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.