

East Texas Regional Water Planning Group
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NACOGDOCHES – (December 9, 2009) - The East Texas Regional Water Planning Group (ETRWPG) met on Wednesday at the Nacogdoches Recreation Center to discuss updates to the 2011 Regional Water Plan.

The group heard reports from standing committees and engineering consultants, and comments from the public.

Engineering consultants Rex Hunt of Alan Plummer Associates, Inc., and Simone Kiel, of Freese and Nichols, Inc., presented changes to population and water demands projections, and discussed updates to Chapters 4, 7, 8, and 9 of the East Texas Regional Water Plan.

“Population and water demands projections through 2060 have been modified since the 2006 Plan for municipal, manufacturing, irrigation, and mining uses,” said Rex Hunt. “Today, the group must consider final proposed changes to water demands developed as a result of public comments received during the 14-day comment period following the October 14th ETRWPG meeting.

The group received comments from four entities during the comment period. These comments and proposed demand changes were presented in a Technical Memorandum dated November 13, 2009.

Comments received from Lufkin Deputy City Manager, Keith Wright, requested Angelina County Manufacturing demands be increased to account for new industrial projects slated for the city. The group voted to approve this request and increased demand for Angelina County.

Based on comments received from Lower Neches Valley Authority General Manager, Scott Hall, the group voted to decrease Irrigation demands in Jefferson County to 140,000 acre-feet per year through 2060.

Angelina & Neches River Authority General Manager, Kelley Holcomb, requested a change to Mining demands for Angelina, Cherokee, Nacogdoches, Shelby and San Augustine Counties. The additional demand reflects a need for water to support increased gas production in these counties. The group approved this request.

In addition, the group voted to retain Irrigation water demands from the 2006 Plan for Orange County. The Executive Committee will prepare a transmittal letter to the TWDB requesting these changes.

Mrs. Kiel gave a status update to Chapter 4 of the Regional Water Plan. “Based on direction given on October 14th by the ETRWPG, we have looked at demand data and no additional shortages have been identified in the region,” said Mrs. Kiel. “We have

coordinated with Wholesale Water Providers and are continuing to update cost estimates and text of this report.

Mr. Hunt presented Draft Chapter 7 to the group for consideration and approval. The chapter outlines how the plan is consistent with the protection of natural resources in the region and demonstrates how the plan complies with current regulations. The group approved Draft Chapter 7.

Mrs. Kiel gave an update to Chapter 8 regarding potential legislative recommendations to be submitted by the ETRWPG. The Executive Committee will develop legislative recommendations to be presented at the February meeting of the ETRWPG.

Mr. Hunt presented a list of proposed reservoirs for consideration of the group to recommend for designation as unique reservoir sites. The group voted to not recommend unique reservoir sites in the 2011 Regional Water Plan. The plan will retain language from the 2006 plan regarding unique reservoir sites.

Mr. Hunt also discussed Chapter 9 of the Regional Water Plan. The chapter includes an infrastructure needs survey developed by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), which will be sent to water user groups with needs. This chapter will be completed after the Initially Prepared Plan (IPP) is submitted.

The IPP is to be submitted to the TWDB prior to March 1, 2010. Following submittal of the IPP, there is a 6-month public comment period where meetings will be held and comments received from the public. Following the comment period, the East Texas Regional Water Plan may be adopted by the group.

ETRWPG member David Alders proposed an amendment to the group's by-laws and the group approved the motion.

The ETRWPG will meet Feb. 17th, 2010, at 10 a.m. at the Nacogdoches Recreation Center at 1112 North Street to discuss further updates and to consider approval of the IPP. The public is encouraged to attend and participate. For more information, visit www.etexwaterplan.org or call Lila Fuller at 936-559-2504.