

**San Jacinto Regional Flood Planning Group
Technical Committee Meeting Minutes
June 28, 2021
1:00 PM
CISCO WebEx Virtual Meeting**

Roll Call:

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present / Alternate Present</u>
Elisa Macia Donovan	<i>Chair, Agricultural</i>	X
Timothy Buscha	<i>Vice Chair, Industries</i>	X
Alisa Max	<i>Secretary, Counties</i>	X
Jenna Armstrong	<i>Small Business</i>	X
Stephen Costello	<i>Municipalities</i>	X

Quorum:

Quorum: yes

Number of voting members or alternates representing voting members present: 5

Number required for quorum per current voting membership of 5:3

Other Meeting Attendees: **

Voting: None

Non-Voting: Megan Ingram

Andrew Moore
Brooke Bacuetes
Cory Stull
Danielle Goshen
Fatima Berrios
Hayes McKibben
Kena Ware

Margaret Puckett
Matt Lopez
Michael Bloom
Rebecca Andrews
Reid Mrsny
Sally Bakko
Usman Mahmood

**Meeting attendee names were gathered from those who entered information for joining the Webex meeting.

All meeting materials are available for the public at: [Flood Planning Group Meeting Schedule | Texas Water Development Board](#)

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Call to Order

Ms. Donovan called the meeting to order.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Welcome and Roll Call

Ms. Max took attendance and a quorum was established.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Registered Public Comments on Agenda Items- limit of 3 minutes per person

Ms. Berrios stated that there were no registered speakers, but there were two written comments from Matthew Berg and Mary Anne Piacentini. All written comments were distributed to the members prior to the meeting.

- Matthew Berg, CEO & Principal Scientist of Simfero Consultants – Agenda Item 9 – Mr. Berg submitted a comment expressing concern over the identification of what would be considered a non-functional natural feature. He also expressed concern stating the RFPG should consider future data trends that included peak flows and sediment transport.
- Mary Anne Piacentini, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Katy Prairie Conservancy – Agenda Item 9 – Ms. Piacentini provided several suggestions for consideration that relate to identifying the criteria or minimum standards for the development of the Regional Flood Plan. In particular, she mentioned properly identifying "green-based" solutions and protecting ranch and agricultural lands.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Announcement of new member to the Technical Committee

Ms. Donovan stated that Mr. Stephen Costello would be the additional member of the Technical Committee. Mr. Costello introduced himself later in the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Discussion and possible recommendations for in-person meeting location and platform

Ms. Max stated that there was a possibility of using Flood Control Conference room, however she was unsure and would need to verify. She suggested that the Technical Committee should continue to meet virtually until the Governor's Order was rescinded. Mr. Buscha stated the Technical Committee should be prepared. Discussion ensued.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Overview of Project Timeline

Mr. Stull highlighted the second milestone – the Technical Memorandum that is due to the TWDB by January 2022. Mr. Stull thanked all the members for being part of the Technical Committee.

Ms. Max stated that Freese and Nichols Inc. (FNI) was working in a concurrent fashion, instead of the linear fashion and asked Mr. Stull to elaborate on this progress. Mr. Stull stated that they had begun identifying Floodplain Management Policies (task 3) and Flood Mitigation Needs Analysis (task 4A), and would soon start looking into Flood Management Evaluations (FMEs), and Flood Management Strategies (FMSs).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Review and Discussion of TWDB Technical Guidelines

Ms. Donovan stated that she wanted to bring forward the concerns, as expressed during the public comment period and allow discussion to address concerns over the Technical Guidelines. Ms. Donovan stated she concurred with the public comments emphasizing she would support protecting agricultural lands within the floodplains instead of removing them as mentioned in the Technical Guidelines. She then

stated that the guidelines need to adequately define nature-based solutions and properly identify minimum standards and scoring metrics.

Mr. Buscha stated he was concerned about FNI developing peak-flows and sediment load analysis information from previous analysis and data. He then stated it may be difficult to incorporate the latest available data into the Regional Flood Plan given its condensed timeline. Ms. Max concurred, and agreed that this was a foundational stage, and due to time and budgetary constraints, the Technical Consultant would need to continuously revisit data analysis especially in the next planning cycle. Ms. Max then stated that finding the proper scoring criteria would be imperative to prioritize projects, and in defining “nature-based” solutions.

Mr. Buscha asked when the scoring criteria would really become important and Mr. Stull responded not until task 5 of the scope of work. Mr. Stull stated there is room for interpretation in the Technical Guidelines, however he believed the evaluation of projects and Flood Management Evaluations (FMEs) would be better suited for another meeting.

Mr. Buscha stated that in task 2, the Technical Committee needed to identify the right parameters to support recommendations in task 5. Ms. Donovan agreed and asked the Technical Consultant how the RFPG could address these concerns with changes or interpretation of the Technical Guidelines? Mr. Stull replied that the San Jacinto RFPG would be ranking and scoring the projects moving forward. He added, if there is a desire to change the scoring, that discussion can be held with the San Jacinto RFPG. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Donovan recommended to change some of the scoring guideline and shared several examples of where the Technical Guidelines did not adequately reflect appropriate minimum standards/definitions. Ms. Max stated all suggestions or changes to the guidelines needed to be implementable within the given timeframe. Ms. Donovan concurred, but noted that some changes were possible.

Mr. Costello then mentioned that the discussion was pre-mature and suggested another month to thoroughly review the guidelines and scoring criteria. Mr. Costello recognized there was fear by landowners, but suggested the RFPG make apparent all concerns are heard.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Receive Presentation from Technical Consultant and Consider Recommendations to RFPG on approach to Task 1 (Planning Area Description)

Mr. Stull stated that supplemental material had been distributed to the Technical Committee prior to the meeting for discussion as it related to Task 1 and Task 2A. He began by stating that he would be looking for a recommendation to approve the survey. Mr. Stull then asked Ms. Maggie Puckett to give an overview of Task 1.

Ms. Puckett stated that the Technical Consultant would begin to inventory and access current conditions. Mr. Stull added FNI would be heavily relying on stakeholder and agency input. Ms. Puckett then showed the TWDB floodplain quilt or “data hub”. She noted that some areas within the San Jacinto Region did not have the capability to provide high level infrastructure GIS data, and stated the goal was to have an understanding of what exists. She then directed the presentation to the draft website.

Ms. Puckett clarified that the survey was targeted and questions corresponded to the participant, whether that be a governmental entity, or member of the public. She asked if there was any input from the Technical Committee Members. Mr. Costello stated he initially had not realized the survey questions

would change depending on the participant, and suggested clearly indicating these directions to encourage participation from stakeholders and members of the public. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Puckett then provided an overview of the website where stakeholders can upload data to supplement the Floodplain Quilt. Ms. Max expressed she liked the targeted survey approach and asked if FNI would be looking up policies and regulations from entities that do not reply to the survey. Mr. Stull replied with, "yes," and mentioned FNI had reached out to stakeholders, including the Texas General Land Office (GLO) to avoid duplicating efforts. Mr. Stull also stated FNI would be coordinating with GLO to pursue 100% of their stakeholder input. Mr. Stull stated that unless there were any changes to the content, he would recommend the San Jacinto RFPG to publish the survey. Mr. Costello moved to approve and recommend the content of the survey as demonstrated. Ms. Max seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Max moved to recommend allowing FNI to continue their targeted outreach support until the formation of the Public engagement committee is formed. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Receive Presentation from Technical Consultant and Consider Recommendations to RFPG on approach to Task 2A (Existing Conditions Flood Risk Analysis)

Mr. Stull stated the overall goal of Task 2 is to determine the risks for different flood events and to supplement the Floodplain Quilt. Mr. Stull discussed different data sources, displayed as layers on the interactive map, and explained the process of data hierarchy. He mentioned that as they go through the different data layers, for areas with limited GIS data, they would use what was available even if that data was older. However, Mr. Stull added that older data would not be used in the analysis. Mr. Stull further clarified this approach was not perfect, however having this data on the map would be using the best available. Mr. Stull said the Floodplain Quilt will continuously be refined, revisited, and improved.

Mr. Buscha then stated that FNI will need to evaluate the data to determine if it would be useful for the Regional Flood Plan. Ms. Max added that older supplemental data could be placed on the map, however, should not be used for analysis. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Stull then opened the floor for concerns and questions related to how supplemental data should be evaluated. Ms. Max stated that she would like the group to consider including structure repair permits to identify flood prone areas. Mr. Costello stated that information was proprietary. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Buscha moved to recommend allowing FNI to continue using the data hierarchy process as demonstrated and to allow FNI to continue their efforts for task 2A. Mr. Costello seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Stull then mentioned the next Public Engagement meeting and asked the Technical Committee to make that recommendation to the whole San Jacinto RFPG. Mr. Costello motioned to recommend allowing FNI to prepare for the Public Engagement Meeting in August. Ms. Max seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Discuss for Future Agenda Items

- Another review of the technical guidelines to make modifications and recommendations to the San Jacinto RFPG
- Discussion on technical approach used to defining future flood risks (Task 2B)
- Identify floodplain minimum standards and regional management goals

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: Public Comments – limit 3 minutes per person

No comments were given.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: Adjourn

Ms. Max moved to adjourn the Technical Committee meeting. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion , which carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.



Alisa Max, Secretary



Elisa Macia Donovan, Chair