



Agriculture / Wildlife / Feral Hogs Workgroup Meeting

July 21, 2015

Double Bayou Community Building

MEETING SUMMARY

Stakeholders: David Boyd, Hannah Cruce, Clay Dean, Karla Dean, Leroy Ezer, Norma Ezer, Clint Fancher, Brandt Mannchen, David Manthei, Otho Turner, Gary Weaver, Bertha White

Team Members: Abby Ficklin (Shead), Brian Koch (TSSWCB)

1. Introduction

Brian opened the workgroup session with an explanation of the time frame being considered for implementation of the Ag/Wildlife/Feral Hog management measures. The times are proposed in periods of three years or so, which fits the funding cycle for the TSSWCB. The overall time frame being proposed is 10 years, since getting listed didn't happen overnight, and seeing improvement will be a work in progress, and also needs to allow for adaptive management.

2. Technician and Water Quality Management Plans

Brian next addressed management measures of having Water Quality Management Plans (WQMPs) and a technician to assist with those. He noted that the number of plans to be needed in the watershed will be determined once the needed load reductions have been determined. Also, the local SWCD has applied for a position for a person to come and write plans. He described the experience of his Wharton office, regarding the number of plans that have been done in a year, and taking into account hiring a technician and getting them trained.

Through the discussion, several other points about WQMPs were addressed. Brian reiterated that the plans are completely voluntary – that landowners come into the office and request to have a plan. Part of the technician's role will be to go to events and meetings and provide more education, including about WQMPs. Brian also described the relationship between WQMPs and other funding, including EQIP. He noted that the major incentive for having a WQMP is to avoid having a greater regulatory requirement. For the Double Bayou watershed, there are over 20 existing WQMPs. These could potentially use a status review and possible upgrades. Also, conditions have sometimes changed – new owners, new farmers, failing drop structures. Other issues discussed included: funding for ongoing stewardship (perhaps through an NRCS program); how the Double Bayou

4800 Research Forest Drive The Woodlands, Texas 77381 Tel: 281-367-1348 www.doublebayou.org

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HARC

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technician and WQMP recommendations would be related to sharing the technician with Cedar Bayou; specific practices, such as no-till and the difficulty of applying that to rice, or tallow control as a brush management practice; and erosion issues involving loss of land and movement of land uses (perhaps with a GBF program or legal remedies).

3. Lone Star Healthy Streams and Workshops

Since the Lone Star Healthy Streams program is a set of materials, the discussion focused around ways to get the information out, and through the workshops became the recommended mechanism. Workshops were generally recommended at one per year.

4. Summary Ag Recommendations on Timeline for Management Measures

Agriculture Measures					
Management Measure	Lead Entity	Unit Cost	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years
<i>Water Quality Management Plans (WQMP)</i>	SWCD/ Landowners	\$15k/plan	23 (5, 8, 10)	30 (10 / yr)	40 (10 / yr)
<i>WQMP Technician (shared with cedar bayou)</i>	SWCD	\$75k/yr	1	1	1
<i>O&E: Lone Star Healthy Stream Materials</i>	AgriLife Extension	Provide materials with workshops			
<i>O&E: Soil Testing Campaign</i>	AgriLife Extension	Est. \$4,000 ea	3	3	4
<i>O&E: Nutrient Management Campaign</i>	AgriLife Extension	Est. \$120 ea	3	3	4
<i>O&E: Agriculture Field Days</i>	AgriLife Extension	Est. \$100 ea	3	3	4
<i>O&E: Ag Waste and Pesticide Collection Days</i>	TCEQ	Est. \$25,000 ea	1	1	1
<i>O&E Herbicide Targeted Use & Application Education</i>	AgriLife Extension		3	3	4

5. Discussion of Wildlife and Nondomestic Plants & Animals

Wildlife and Nondomestic Plants & Animals was the next topic. Physical removal was clarified to apply to vegetation, such as water hyacinth, Chinese tallow, ligustrum and other invasive plants. Since this could involve public or private land, the group agreed that the

first step would be to determine if there is enough public land in the watershed (which could include rights-of-way) to host one removal day per year at certain parks or areas in the watershed. Beyond that, on private land, physical removal of invasive plants will have to be up to the individual land owner. For invasives in the waterway, discussion at a previous Ag Workgroup meeting had centered on physical removal with tractors and selective use of herbicides, with TBCD as the lead entity. Volunteers were not seen as an effective method for the waterway issue.

On feral hogs, a distinction is made between the AgriLife specialist, who has a master’s degree and does trainings; a County position, who would be a technician and assist landowners; and physical traps. The positions would be for every year. Also discussed was having state and federal partnerships with potential pilot projects.

6. Summary Ag Recommendations for Wildlife and Nondomestic Plants & Animals

Wildlife & Nondomestic Plants & Animals Measures (Ag)					
<i>Management Measure</i>	<i>Lead Entity</i>	<i>Unit Cost</i>	<i>1-3 years</i>	<i>4-6 years</i>	<i>7-10 years</i>
<i>Physical vegetation removal days (private and public land)</i>	Watershed Coordinator				
<i>Feral Hog Specialist (existing)</i>	AgriLife Extension		3	3	4
<i>Feral Hog Management (new)</i>	County position		3	3	4
<i>Feral Hog County Position (new)</i>	Chambers & Liberty counties	Est. \$90,000	3	3	4
<i>Feral Hog Control (equipment)</i>	County	\$500/trap	20	15	20
<i>Feral Hog Bounties</i>	Chambers & Liberty counties		3	3	4
<i>O&E Feral Hog Management Workshop</i>	AgriLife extension	Est. \$8,000 each	2	1	2
<i>O&E Don’t Treat or Feed Wildlife as Pets (signage)</i>	Watershed Coordinator		20	15	20