



DOUBLE BAYOU WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP

THIRD MEETING

Tuesday, September 17, 2013

5:30 - 7:30 P.M.

Double Bayou Community Building

2211 Eagle Ferry Road

Double Bayou, TX

MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Bubba Abernathy (Chambers County Commissioner Pct. 2), David Boyd (Sierra Club), Linda Broach (TCEQ), Clay Dean (Landowner), Karla Dean (Landowner), Tom Douglas (Houston Sierra Club), Leroy Ezer, Norma Ezer, Tom Fähring (Landowner), Becky Fancher (Landowner/Rancher/Farmer), Clint Fancher (Landowner/Rancher/Farmer), Tyler Fitzgerald (Texas A&M Agrilife), Elga Jackson, Guy R. Jackson (ChaRT/ Landowner), John Jenkins (Landowner), Charles Johnson, Scott Jones (Galveston Bay Foundation/NGO), Kevin Kelley (Landowner), Kim Laird (TCEQ), Travis Lovelace, David Manthei (USDA – NRCS), Tom McNeely, Jerry Shadden (TBCD), Kenneth L. Standley, Mary Beth Stengler (C-LCND), Bill Tinnerman, Otho Turner (Landowner), Gary Weaver, Bertha White (St. Paul Laity), Tracy Woody (Jeri's Seafood)

Contractors: Kristi Alexander (Shead), T.J. Helton (TSSWCB), Stephanie Glenn (HARC), Brian Koch (TSSWCB), Linda Shead (Shead), Danielle Vinette (Shead)

1. Welcome

Guy Robert Jackson, board chair of ChaRT, welcomed the meeting attendees.

2. Introductions and Agenda Review

Linda Shead thanked Mr. Jackson for the welcome and ChaRT for providing the refreshments. She noted the two elected officials present: Hon. Bubba Abernathy, County Commissioner, Precinct 2, and Hon. Tracy Woody, JP, Precinct 3. She then initiated self-introductions.

Stephanie Glenn reported that the Surface Water Quality Monitoring Quality Assurance Project Plan had been approved, and sampling would begin in about two weeks, with results starting to come in a couple of months.

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Double Bayou Watershed Partnership is a project of the following entities:



Linda S. briefly went over the agenda and announced that there are copies of the questions from the last meeting available for people to double check that their question was received and captured correctly. She invited attendees to write additional questions on note cards, or ask during the Q & A portion later in the meeting.

3. Planning for Future Meetings/Events

Kristi Alexander thanked ChaRT again for the food and did a quick poll to see if attendees were interested in continuing to have food at the meetings. Many indicated, by a show of hands, that they could take it or leave it, but a small majority indicated that they appreciated having the food. Kristi then asked about continuing to get food sponsors or organizing a potluck. The majority decided for sponsors.

Kristi announced future workshops and events. A feral hog workshop will be planned, likely jointly with the Cedar Bayou watershed project. Also being planned is a riparian workshop sometime within the next year. Seminars hosted by other entities are also posted on website. Some are convenient webinars, which can be a great resource, and accessed from home. The workshop notices will also be posted on the website.

Kristi noted that one of the best ways to get to know a watershed is by touring it, even by land. The Double Bayou team is talking to the Waterborne Education Center about the use of their boat for a tour, which will depend on sediment build up in the channel from Anahuac, and also checking on a bus for a land tour. There is also a paddle tour in the lower East Fork area on November 16- an outfitter was present at the meeting.

4. Forming the Double Bayou WPP Steering Committee and Work Groups

Brian and TJ talked about how workgroups and a steering committee work together and are independent. They gave brief overviews of workgroups and steering committees across the State. Usually, groups pick a subset of stakeholders to form a steering committee, which is the main decision-making body. From that subset, workgroups are formed, which are groups with a particular focus. Brian and T.J. indicated that they can have as many or as few workgroups as the stakeholders want. The size of the steering committee also is up to stakeholders, and the steering committee members can have back-ups.

Brian and TJ indicated that the stakeholders would make a workgroup list, which are the groups that will work on potential sources and potential solutions. They discussed some of the major workgroup categories that are used in other watershed protection partnerships. They also discussed that topics could be combined, such as Rural and Urban being combined to be residential. The group decided on the following workgroups:

- Industry / Oil & Gas
- Septic Systems / Wastewater Plants
- Ag / Wildlife / Feral Hogs

- Recreation / Hunting
- Residential (Urban, Rural, Dumping)

Linda Shead presented the stakeholder categories that were developed from the last meeting. She asked the group, “Is there anyone in this room who doesn’t see themselves in one of these categories, and if not, what category is missing?” One suggestion was that recreation shouldn’t be just fishing, but boating and other types of recreation, and that change was made. The project team wants to make sure that the categories include everyone who is interested.

Linda S. explained the process of signing up on the stakeholder lists and the workgroup lists. She indicated that there is no limit, and that stakeholders can be on as many workgroups as they want to be on. Usually a workgroup will have at least one steering committee person on it. On stakeholder categories for the steering committee, she noted that it’s best to have a nominee and an alternate, for schedule flexibility. There is lots of opportunity, for people who want to, to participate.

The group took a break, and stakeholders went through the process of signing up on the lists. Linda S. then read out names from the lists, checking to make sure that everyone who wanted to be put on the list is on the list. She noted that there was no one on the industry/oil and gas workgroup list, and that she did not see Galveston Bay Foundation or Chambers Recovery Team on the nonprofit category – those latter two groups agreed to be added to the steering committee. Linda S. indicated that she doesn’t personally have oil and gas contacts in the area, but will contact them, if people will give her names. Several suggestions were offered for sources. It might be that some of the stakeholder categories could be combined with others, when there aren’t any identified representatives. (See attached for final list of sign-ups for the steering committee and workgroups.)

5. PCBs and Dioxins in the Galveston Bay System

Linda Broach, from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, presented an overview of PCBs and dioxins in the Galveston Bay System and how these constituents affect the water and fish in the East and West forks of Double Bayou.

In summary, Linda Broach stated that there is a fish-consumption advisory for all of Galveston Bay – and it includes Double Bayou – based on the levels of PCBs and dioxins found in fish tissue. Catfish is included on that advisory. Information is on the Texas Department of State Health Services website. Most of the PCBs and dioxins contamination is coming from the Houston Ship Channel sediments, which then goes up the food chain to the fish. There is a separate project underway to address that sediment contamination, and everyone is invited to participate in that project. PCBs and dioxins are legacy pollutants from industrial processes that occurred many years before we knew the byproducts were unsafe. Individual homeowners do not contribute to this problem in the fish.

She stated that she looked for a record of any pollutants, and there have only been a few samples taken in Double Bayou, but they didn't find anything. She also indicated that Galveston Bay Foundation is getting information about the fish advisory out through their website and signage. She suggested that putting signs in places where folks get fishing licenses would be a good way to do it.

[Note: Questions asked during the presentation will be added to the list of participant questions on water quality from the previous meeting, for which answers are being developed and will be distributed.]

6. Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Kristi Alexander announced to the group that if your name is on the workgroup lists, then you will be meeting separate from the public meeting. She guessed that the workgroups were going to meet in about a month, in October. T.J. suggested that the workgroup coordinate the next meeting date via email.

Kristi then polled the group to see if November 19th was a good time for the next public meeting, and the group agreed.

7. Adjourn

Linda S. noted that the main part of the meeting was complete. With the workgroup members identified, those meetings will be figured out via email. The next Steering Committee/public meeting will be planned for November 19.

There were two announcements:

Scott Jones of the Galveston Bay Foundation invited everyone to help out with a marsh planting/shoreline erosion project on Trinity Bay at Oak Island, on the Saturday after next (9/28).

Linda S. reminded everyone about the paddle trip on Double Bayou on November 16, and to see Tom Douglas about it.

8. Additional Q & A on Water Quality

Linda S. reminded everyone that if she missed your question last meeting, please add it onto index cards, or ask team members who are staying for this purpose.