



REGION E – FAR WEST TEXAS WATER PLANNING GROUP
MEETING MINUTES

April 23, 2024

1:00 P.M. (MDT) / 2:00 P.M. (CDT)

8037 Lockheed, Suite 100

El Paso, TX 79925

<u>Voting Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present (✓)/Absent (X) / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Chairman Scott Reinert	<i>Water Utilities</i>	✓, physically present
Vice-Chairman Dave Hall	<i>Public</i>	✓, physically present
Secretary, Teresa Todd	<i>Counties</i>	X
Summer Webb	<i>Groundwater Districts</i>	✓, virtual
Albert Miller	<i>Water Utilities</i>	✓, virtual
Becky Brewster	<i>Municipalities</i>	✓, physically present
Haley Davis	<i>GMA #4</i>	✓, virtual
David Etzold	<i>Real Estate</i>	✓, virtual
Sterry Butcher	<i>Public</i>	✓, virtual
Rick Tate	<i>Agriculture</i>	X
Rachel Harmon for Randy Barker	<i>Groundwater Districts</i>	✓, virtual
Jeff Bennett	<i>Environment</i>	✓, virtual
Tim Leary	<i>Agriculture</i>	✓, virtual
Sean Woodard	<i>Industries</i>	X
Gerry Grijalva	<i>Water Districts</i>	✓, virtual
Arlina Palacios	<i>Public</i>	X
Avi Nash	<i>Counties</i>	✓, virtual
Omar Martinez	<i>Water Districts</i>	✓, virtual
Dan Dunlap	<i>Small Business</i>	✓, virtual
Jay Ornelas	<i>Water Districts</i>	✓, virtual
<u>Non-voting Member</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Present(✓)/Absent(X)/ Alternate Present (*)</u>
Heather Rose	Texas Water Development Board	✓, physically present
Others Present:		
Jennifer Jackson, Carrollo, virtual	Jon Albright, Freese & Nichols, virtual	

Kristal Williams Frees & Nichols, virtual	Christopher Benjamin, virtual
Michael Flores, Lower Valley Water District, virtual	Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG, physically present
Peggy O'Brien, RGCOG, virtual	

1. **Welcome –Chairman Scott Reinert**

Chairman Reinert, with a quorum present, called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm MDT.

2. **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

3. **Recognition of Guests and Designated Alternates**

Welcome was extended to Rachel Harmon as designated alternate for Randy Barker, Hudspeth Underground Conservation District.

4. **Nomination of Dave Hall as Interregional Appointee and change the alternate for Region E representation on the Interregional Planning Council**

Becky Brewster made the motion to nominate Dave Hall as the Interregional Appointee and change the alternate for Region E representation on the Interregional Planning Council. Summer Webb seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

5. **Review and approve the minutes for the General Meeting held on February 28, 2024**

Dave Eltzold made a motion to approve the Minutes for the general meeting held on February 28, 2024. Summer Webb seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

6. **Discuss and consider action regarding all nominations related to FWTWPG vacancies for voting members**

In 2023 there were applicants for three of the four vacancies: Tourism (Roberto Ransom, EP County); Economic Development, Urban (Jose Landeros, EP County); Electric Generating Utilities (El Paso Electric); Economic Development, Rural (no applicant); River Authorities (no one in our region). Dave Hall made a motion to advertise for all positions. Becky Brewster seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

7. **Report from Carrollo on the schedule of Regional Water Planning**

Jennifer Jackson discussed documents for the deadline for Tech Memo is May 3, 2024. TWDB June 5 deadline for amendments to infeasible water management strategies. Doesn't apply to Region E. The Tech Memo was posted 14 days prior to this meeting. Initially Prepared Plan is due March of 2025.

8. **Report from Carrollo, discussion and take action to approve the list of Major Water Providers (MWP)**

Reviewed list of Major Water Providers (definition from 2021 plan was carried over to 2026 plan). Wholesale water providers that provide greater than 5,000 acre feet of water. Dave Hall made a motion to approve the list of Major Water Providers as presented by Carrollo. Chairman Scott Reinert seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

9. **Report from Carrollo, discuss and review Region E groundwater sources, groundwater supply analysis, availability and methodology**
Jennifer Jackson presented and summarized information that will comprise the Tech Memo. Region E has fresh water, brackish, local supply and re-use and different aquifer types. Region E has the most amount of aquifers, and brackish resources; and has 6 groundwater conservation districts and 3 groundwater management areas. Jennifer presented Groundwater Supply Analysis Process and Source Availability.
10. **Report from FNI, discuss and review Region E surface water sources, surface water supply analysis, availability and methodology**
Jon Albright presented surface water terminology terms, planning for drought of record conditions, evaluating source availability, characterizing water supply, and infrastructure capacity.
11. **Report from Carrollo on the results on the analysis of Infeasible Water Management Strategies and/or Projects**
The group will need to approve the list of infeasible water management strategies. The analysis that was new to this cycle of planning is the proposed project that has not taken an affirmative vote or other action or expenditure, such as construction or a permit. This method sifted out projects so only those that come online in 2020 or 2030 will be included.
12. **Public comment on the results of the analysis of Infeasible Water Management Strategies and/or Projects**
There were no public comments or written comments received.
13. **Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve the results of the identification of Infeasible Water Management Strategies and/or Projects and authorize submittal by Carrollo to the TWDB on behalf of Region E**
Dave Hall made a motion to approve the results of the identification of Infeasible Water Management Strategies and/or projects and to allow Carrollo to submit the information to the TWDB. Summer Webb seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.
14. **Report from Carrollo on the proposed process for identifying potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies**
Region E process is unique for identifying these infeasible strategies to meet the needs of each provider. This process will look at all recommendations from the 2021 plan (2020-2070) (what was defined as infeasible) and use it as a starting point to help identify feasible studies. The 2026 planning horizon is 2030-2080. Carrollo will also look at 2030 and 2040 and see if the strategy is serious enough to be made a reality.
15. **Public comment on the proposed process for identifying potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies**
There were no public comments at the meeting or received in writing.
16. **Discuss and take action to approve the proposed process for identifying potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies**
Albert Miller made a motion to approve the proposed process for identifying potentially feasible water management strategies. Jeff Bennett seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.
17. **Report from Carrollo on the proposed Technical Memorandum for the 2026 Far West Texas Water Plan**

Jennifer Jackson provided what will be submitted as our mid-point/check-in deliverable. Tech Memo (in a nutshell, will include population projections, water demand, water availability, non-relevant aquifer data, surface water volumes, existing water supply = need & surplus by entity, hydrologic variance analysis, process for identifying feasible strategies), so we can stay ahead of the water demands. There will be 87% groundwater; 7% surface; and 6% reuse. The document will need to be submitted by the RGCOG on behalf of Region E.

18. Public comment on the proposed Technical Memorandum for the 2026 Far West Texas Water Plan

No public comments were received.

19. Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve the Technical Memorandum as required by TWDB rule

Jennifer Jackson ran through all the documents that will comprise of the Tech Memo. Summer Webb made a motion to approve the Technical Memorandum as presented. Tim Leary seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

20. Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve authorizing Carollo to work with TWDB on clarifications for the Technical Memorandum

Summer Webb made a motion to authorize Carollo to work with TWDB on any clarifications needed for the Technical Memorandum. Jay Ornelas seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

21. Report from Carollo, discuss and possible action to approve the Task 5B consultant Scope of Work and Budget for evaluation of Potentially Feasible Water Management Strategies

Jennifer Jackson explained this work is contingent on a written Notice to Proceed, which enables Carollo to break out sub-tasks within the Scope of Work and budget that assures sufficient funds to complete the work. Jennifer Jackson showed the SOW and Budget Summary to the group, so the allotment is not exceeded. Becky Brewster made a motion to approve the Task 5B consultant scope of work and budget for the evaluation of potentially feasible water management strategies for \$168,662. Dave Hall seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

22. Consider, discuss and take appropriate action to approve authorizing the RGCOG to submit the Far West Texas Water Planning Group's request notice-to-proceed from the TWDB to begin work on Task 5B: Evaluation and Recommendation of Water Management Strategies and Projects

Jay Ornelas made a motion approve authorizing the RGCOG to submit the FWTWPG's request notice-to-proceed from the TWDB to begin work on Task 5B. Becky Brewster seconded the motion. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved.

23. TWDB General Updates, by Heather Rose

Heather Rose requested suggestions for Prop6/Texas Water Fund through April 30, 2024. (Five Year) Water Conservation Plans, Annual Reports and Water Loss Audits are due May 1, 2024 for each utility. Suggested anyone knowledgeable of their boundaries to submit edits to the Texas Water Service Boundary Viewer, which is open for editing until July 1, 2024. Texas Rain Catcher Award (schools, library, residence – open till June 30, 2024.

Upcoming resources for each count – for water supply planning; also data and resources.

Interregional Planning Council Report to TWDB – a recommendation to legislation to appropriate funds to facilitate interregional coordination, labor cost/administration, financial incentives for local sponsorship, water loss, unaccounted water use, and long-range and visionary planning. Scott Reinert and Dave Hall are our appointed representatives, but anyone is welcome to attend or send comments for Scott and Dave to share. The cycle is closed now but will be open again in 2025. Elephant in the room: what can we do to get funding appropriated? TWDB keeps recommending more funding.

24. Consider and Discuss a date for the next regular meeting

The week of July 22-26, 2024, was discussed for the next regular meeting in El Paso. Annette will send out a Doodle Poll to select a date and will get back to the group.

25. Adjourn

Albert Miller made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Dave Hall. Chairman Reinert called for a vote and the motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 3:46 pm MDT.

Date

Teresa Todd, Secretary