

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Region 14 Upper Rio Grande Flood Planning Group Meeting**  
**Tuesday, November 2, 2021**

<u>Voting Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present (✓)/Absent (X) / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Omar L. Martinez, Chair	<i>Water districts</i>	✓
Oscar D. "Jay" Ornelas	<i>Agricultural interests</i>	X
Gilberto Saldana Jr.	<i>Counties</i>	✓
Jeff Bennett	<i>Environmental interests</i>	✓
Sal Masoud	<i>Industries</i>	✓
Javier Acosta	<i>Municipalities</i>	✓
David "Dave" Hall	<i>Public</i>	✓
Rene Rodriguez	<i>Small business</i>	✓
Gisela Dagnino	<i>Water utilities</i>	✓
Vacant	<i>Flood districts</i>	
Levi Bryand	<i>Water Utilities</i>	✓
Rick Tate	<i>River authorities</i>	X
Carlos Velarde	<i>Public</i>	✓
<u>Non-voting Member</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Present(x)/Absent( )/ Alternate Present (*)</u>
James Weaver	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	✓
Sarah Douglas	General Land Office/Region 14 Liaison	✓
Richard Bagans	Texas Water Development Board	✓
Anita Keese	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	✓
Vanessa Rosales-Herrera	Region 15 Liaison	X
Delbert Humberson	International Boundary Water Commission	✓
Tim Frere	Texas Division of Emergency Management	X
Larissa Place	Texas Department of Agriculture	✓
Ben Wilde	Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board	X
Others Present:		
Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG	Jeff Irvin - AECOM, PIC	
Morgan White, TWDB	Lily Cartwright - AECOM	
Matt Nelson, TWDB	Susan Roth, P.E.	
James Bronikowski, TWDB	Judy Albus, Texas State Soli and Water Conservation District	
Gilbert Andujo, AECOM	Enrique Ochoa, EPW	
Bryan Blaisdell, AECOM	Lisa McCracken Mairs -USACE SWG	
Chris Wright, AECOM		

**1. Welcome and call to order**

Chairman Martinez welcomed the group and received confirmation that a quorum was present. The meeting started at 9:16 am.

**2. Recognition of guests**

Chairman Martinez asked if there were any guests who would like to be recognized at this time. There were none.

**3. Member updates**

Chairman Martinez asked if there were any updates from the members. Dave Hall mentioned there was a Citizens Forum on October 28<sup>th</sup>, hosted by the International Water Boundary Commission (IBWC). He said there was a lot of discussion about levees and projects, so the work the flood planning group is doing is complementary of what others are talking about. Chairman Martinez mentioned the group said there will be openings if anyone is interested in joining. Delbert Humberson provided a link to the presentations from the event in case anyone wanted to view the information.

**4. Review and approve the minutes for the meeting held on October 15, 2021.**

Dave Hall made a motion to accept the Minutes from October 15, 2021 with the correction of the utilization of the appropriate symbol to indicate what members were present at the meeting. Levi Bryand seconded the motion. Omar L. Martinez called for a vote and the motion was approved. Chairman Martinez abstained from the vote because he was not present at the meeting.

**5. Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)- Updates and Presentation**

Richard Bagans provided the group with some updates. He mentioned the additional funding that was allocated by TWDB, is in draft contract form and Rio Grande Council of Governments (RGCOG) and AECOM should be able to bring the contract amendment to the group at the November 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. He also reminded the group there are several items in the Tech Memo that will not be due until March but through an email that was sent out recently, TWDB provided clarification on which items are due in January for the Tech Memo. Richard also mentioned the AECOM team has brought forward several questions to TWDB about projects that overlap state boundaries, accreditation of levees, and modeling of different dams along with the Rio Grande. Reem Zoun, James Bronikowski, along with Ricard Bagans, are working with them and will provide some responses soon.

**6. Update from Sarah Douglas, Liaison for Region 15 Upper Rio Grande Regional Flood Planning Group.**

Sarah Douglas informed the group Region 15 has a new TDEM representative to the group, Bryan Hertech. The group also reviewed Tasks 1, 3b, and 4. The group also worked towards identifying their goals. They are six of them. They included, education, outreach, flood warning readiness, flood studies and analysis, and structure elevation/flood proofing.

**7. Discussion and potential action regarding administrative expenses to be submitted to the Texas Water Development Board for reimbursement**

Annette Gutierrez requested to table this agenda item because RGCOG was not prepared to submit the documentation.

## **8. AECOM GENERAL UPDATES**

AECOM provided some general updates to the group. Bryan Blaisdell informed the group that AECOM has been holding several subcommittee meetings, to include Subcommittee 1 –Task 3A/3B - Evaluation and Recommendations on Floodplain Management/Flood Mitigation and Floodplain Measurement Goals and Subcommittee 3 – Task 4B(a-b) - Identification and Evaluation of Potential Flood Management Evaluations and Flood Management Strategies (FMEs and FMSs). AECOM also continues to conduct public/stakeholder outreach that includes the El Paso Open House Meeting on October 27, verifying responses from key stakeholders and reaching out to fill remaining data gaps for Task 1, they have performed existing and future condition flood risk analyses for Task 2. AECOM has been drafting flood mitigation and floodplain management goals/recommendations for vote by Subcommittee 1 for Task 3, as well as identifying/outlining flood mitigation needs by subregion for Needs Analysis Task 4A and identifying/outlining potential flood solutions (FMEs, FMSs, FMPs) (Task 4B). He also a preliminary draft Tech Memo will be available for the November 30<sup>th</sup> meeting and the official draft Tech Memo will be available on December 3<sup>rd</sup> to allow for public comment and discussion on it for a general meeting in the middle of December.

Jeff Bennett asked if the flood management projects, evaluations and strategies will be identified this month. Bryan said they will be identifying them but this is not the only opportunity to identify these items. The group will still be able to identify them after the submittal of the Tech Memo.

Bryan also mentioned there will be upcoming URGFPG General Meetings on Tuesday, at 9am MST/10am CST on November 30. In addition, there will several upcoming Subcommittee meetings for Subcommittee 1 –Task 3A/3B - Evaluation and Recommendations on Floodplain Management/Flood Mitigation and Floodplain Measurement Goals on November 4 and potential 4th meeting between November 10-12. For Subcommittee 2 – Task 4B(c) - Identification and Evaluation of Potential Flood Mitigation Projects (FMPs), there will also be a meeting on November 4 and November 15. Subcommittee 3 – Task 4B(a-b) - Identification and Evaluation of Potential Flood Management Evaluations and Flood Management Strategies (FMEs and FMSs) will be on November 10. He also outlined the actions to vote for the next November 30 URGFPG meeting. He stated what items for review need to be posted for public review by November 15. The items will show the minimum URGFPG standards (Task 3A), flood mitigation, floodplain management goals (Task 3B), and formalize a process for identifying FMEs, FMSs, and FMPs (Task 4B).

Gilbert Andujo from AECOM, provided an update on the budget progress to date. He showed a chart outlining the percentage of completion per task. In total, AECOM will be requesting update to \$364,000 in reimbursement from TWDB.

## **9. AECOM – SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

Bryan provided an update on Subcommittee 1 and Chris Wright updated the group on Subcommittees 3. They both He summarized the presentation slides that were previously presented to the group.

**10. AECOM - EL PASO OPEN HOUSE MEETING UPDATE**

Marina Monsisvais from Barracuda Public Relations provided the update. She summarized the events of the Open House. She sated thirty people attended the event. There was lot of activity on the Roll plots and with people updating their flood information on the laptops. Chairman Martinez provided several interviews to new media outlets. The next round of meetings will be in Presidio and Pecos. Chairman Martinez asked for Barracuda Public Relations to inform the group how they are going to do the outreach for the next two meetings. Marina said she would.

**11. Consider date and agenda items for next meeting**

The next meeting set was for November 30, 2021, at 9:00 am.

**12. Adjourn**

Gisela Dagnino made a motion to adjourn and seconded by Jeff Bennett. Chairman Martinez called for a vote and the motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 10:03 am.

V3V22

Date

Javier Acosta

Javier Acosta, Secretary