

Meeting Minutes
Region 14 URFPG-Subcommittee 3 Meeting
Friday, October 22, 2021 at 10:00 am

<u>Subcommittee Member</u>	<u>Interest Category</u>	<u>Present (✓)/Absent (X) / Alternate Present (*)</u>
Omar L. Martinez, Chair	<i>Water districts</i>	✓
Sal Masoud, Subcommittee Chair	<i>Industries</i>	✓
Jeff Bennett	<i>Environmental interests</i>	X
Gisela Dagnino	<i>Water utilities</i>	✓
Levi Bryand	<i>Water Utilities</i>	✓
Delbert Humberson	International Boundary Water Commission	✓
Others Present:		
Annette Gutierrez, RGCOG	Jeff Irvin - AECOM, PIC	
Richard Bagans, TWDB	Dr. Apurba Borah, IBWC	
Gilbert Andujo, AECOM	Gabe Duran, IBWC	
Bryan Blaisdell, AECOM	Gonzaleo Cedillos, IBWC	
Chris Wright, AECOM		

1. Subcommittee 3 Chair Sal Masoud welcomed the group.
2. Recent progress related to issues discussed in previous Subcommittee 3 meeting
3. Discussion of Potential FMEs and FMS
Chris Wright provided the agenda to the group and covered what would be discussed the meeting. These topics included the following:
 - Recent Progress Concerning Previous Subcommittee 3 Meeting
 - Discussion of Potential FMEs and FMSs
 - Communities at risk of flooding with outdated or no FEMA Floodplain Mapping
 - EPCWID1 issues related to flooding
 - FMSs related to Environmental Flows, Floodplain Connectivity, & ASR
 - Discussion of experience in recent historic flood events
 - Other?
 - Tentative future meeting dates for subcommittee

Chris reminded the group the previous meeting covered the Rio Grande but for this meeting, they would not be discussing it. He next covered what the goals of the meeting is. He said they were twofold. The first one is to talk about the process for selecting FMEs and FMS. He said at the next meeting the subcommittee will need to vote on them to recommend to the full group. The agenda needs to be posted by November 15, 2021 and the general membership meeting will be November 30, 2021. These items need to be voted on to allow for the Tech Memo to be completed. The second is to learn more about the important flood issues that have occurred in the region. Today AECOM will focus on some of the storm events that happened in El Paso since it is one of the most populated areas but also will focus on other places as well. The subcommittee will need to think about establishing the process and to be learning about the issues.

Chris Wright of the following:

- Rio Grande H&H modeling FME
- FMS modeling approach related to levees
- Coordination call with Fathom
- Levee modeling assumptions
- Refined “cursory floodplain dataset” expected end of October per TWDB Coordination with TWDB
- Levee modeling criteria
- USIBWC provided hydraulic model downstream of American Dam (under review)USIBWC provided river and upstream reservoir gage data (under review)

Next he discussed the potential of FMEs and FMSs. He reminded the group, an FME is a flood study of a specific, flood-prone area that is needed in order to assess flood risk and/or determine whether there are potentially feasible FMSs or FMPs. A strategy is a plan to reduce flood risk or mitigate flood hazards to life or property but it may or may not require associated FMPs to be implemented.

He suggested the subcommittee may want to consider those counties where they do not have FEMA data; there are four in our region. He walked the subcommittee through the steps that AECOM will use to select where they may need a study out of the four, with the main criteria being heavily populated. Chris asked the group if they want to focus on the 100 or 500-year flood. Chairman Martinez said he would be fine keeping with the 100-year flood for the rural areas with the exception of the City of Presidio. He would prefer for Presidio to utilize the 500-year flood. There was discussion on whether it is financially feasible to construct projects with the 500-year flood. Dr. Borah also mentioned that the project would also trigger IBWC to notify Mexico that they are not deflecting water to Mexico for anything over 25 years. Gabe Duran agreed that Presidio is a unique area due to the two nearby rivers and mentioned how effective the palm method was during the 2008 flooding. The subcommittee agreed that a study should be done on the coincidence analysis. Gisela also asked for AECOM to look at the 100 but also analysis the 500 to see how high the water level gets for bridges, culverts and so on. Chairman Martinez also mentioned TXDOT made recent improvements to the port of entry bridge and rail. Flood capacity may have been addressed. Dr. Borah mentioned the TXDOT bridges were protected for a 100-year flood. Chris asked Dr. Borah if he could provide them the process IBWC uses to define the process for projects along the levee. Dr. Borah stated the participating agency will provide the design document and hydraulic study to IBWC. IBWC will then share it with Mexico. The same process is taken on the Mexican side.

Chris next covered future condition analysis. Chairman Martinez mentioned the EPCWID #1 is experiencing increased flows coming from the northern side of the County to the lower valley. This does have a direct impact on the surrounding communities. It goes beyond what the normal subdivision ponding accounts for. He would consider a future condition analysis for the areas mentioned. Joanna McKenzie mentioned there is increased growth in Ft. Hancock, Hudspeth County. Chris asked if the two could provide a rough map of the general area they are concerned with. Chairman Subcommittee 3 Masoud agrees with comments made from Omar. Gisela states the same is occurring in El Paso in the mountainous areas. Sal suggested perhaps different kinds of Inlets can be considered for the City of El Paso as well. Chris suggested the review of Inlets would be a strategy. Dr. Borah also mentioned the creeks along the river brings a lot of sediment to the river. Chris asked Dr. Borah to provide a map of where sediment is being brought to the river. Chris then covered the rest of the slides that highlighted resources for developing FMSs. Delbert reminded the group that some strategies created along the river may affect the treaty with Mexico, so the group should take that into consideration.

Chairman Masoud asked Chris Wright if the group always shoots for higher standards than Mexico, it will always flood on the Mexican side and not affect the U.S., how do we make that assumption? Chris said they have asked those questions to the TWDB. Chris said the subcommittee could have a separate

meeting to discuss the items presented to TWDB. Chairman Masoud asked Gabe Duran if he recalled if there was a breach of the Mexican side of the levees in 2006 and he confirmed there were but Mexico had to mitigate the situation by setting up a bypass to pump water out of the retaining basins nearby. He said if this would not have occurred, downtown El Paso may have been flooded. Gabe Duran provided several other examples and made referenced to several areas managed by the El Paso County Water Improvement District 1 (EPCWID #1). Chairman Martinez stepped in and agreed with Mr. Duran's listing but also noted that he and Dr. Blair have identified five specific areas and mentioned he would email the subcommittee about them. Delbert Humberson stated the IBWC should be able to provide elevations and coordinates of the high water marks.

Chris mentioned Dr. Blair was going to cover flood issues for EPCWID #1 and Jeff Bennett was going to discuss FMSs as they relate to environmental flows, but because neither was able to attend and for the sake of time, Chris jumped into the discussion of experience in recent historic flood events. He reminded the group of the flooding in El Paso in 2006, the flooding in Presidio and Ojinaja in 2008, and El Paso flooding in 2021.

He provided the group with a list of potential dates that they should all be aware of in terms of recommendations to the group, voting, posting and preparing for the Tech Memo. He inquired if Gonzalo Cedillos was in attendance and he confirmed he was. There were also others from El Paso Water as well as other organizations as well. However, since the meeting was nearly over, the group of presenters would speak at the next meeting. Jeff Irvin presented the list of questions AECOM will be asking at the next meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes from September 30, 2021

Annette Gutierrez requested to table this agenda item because the heading of the Minutes states subcommittee 1. Ms. Gutierrez requested to present these Minutes at the next meeting. Gisela Dagnino made a motion to table this agenda item. Omar Martinez Seconded the motion. Subcommittee 1 Chairman Masoud called for a vote and the motion was approved.

5. Tentative date for next meeting

The group decided to meet again on November 10, 2021 at 10:00 am. Chris Wright explained the meeting would take at least three hours to conduct.

6. Gisela Dagnino made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Omar Martinez seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

1/12/2022

Date

Sal Masoud

Subcommittee 3 Chairman, Sal Masoud