



**Residential & Outreach Work Group
Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, February 13, 2013
3:45 pm to 4:30 pm
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor**

*Held in conjunction with a joint meeting of HGAC's Environmental Awareness Roundtable and Clean Water Initiative seminar on stormwater education.
(www.h-gac.com/cwi)*

Attendees

Richard Chapin (City of Houston), Marilyn Christian (Harris County), Ronald Drachenberg (Fort Bend County), Steve Hupp (Bayou Preservation Association), Tom Ivy (Texas Stream Team), Rachel Powers (H-GAC), Adam Wright (Fort Bend County), Jasmin Zambrano (City of Houston)

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions

Rachel called the meeting to order and initiated self-introductions.

Review Notes from Last Year

Rachel provided the notes from last year in case they were needed for reference.

Update on I-Plan Approval Process

The TCEQ unanimously approved the BIG I-Plan on January 30, 2013. The approved version included the changes to the I-Plan that had been discussed at previous BIG meetings. None of the changes were in the references sections.

Review Annual Report format

Rachel explained that the conceptual format for the annual report was developed in collaboration by the BIG and agreed to at the BIG mid-year meeting in October 2012. The report will consist of three main components:

- 1) At-a-Glance: The At-a-Glance section will be one 11x17 paper that includes cover page with a photo; a table of implementation activities, proposed milestones, and an evaluation of progress; and a sheet with background information, a map, and high-level review of progress overall.
- 2) A printed report: In addition to a narrative overview, the printed report will include information about progress and goals for each of the strategies in the plan. Each strategy will be described by a narrative description preceded by a tabular summary sheet, which will include recommendations from the workgroup to the BIG regarding progress, achievements, focus for the coming year, and revisions to the I-Plan.
- 3) Web-based support documents: If additional information, such as lengthy tables, are necessary, these will be provided in an on-line format.

Review Implementation Progress-- The workgroup reviewed progress for each of the implementation activities, as follows.

- 8.1.1: Continue or begin a homeowner education program based on existing models
 - Back the Bay: This initiative of the Galveston Bay Foundation is now underway (www.backthebay.org).
 - Clean Waters Initiative MS4 Series: At least one workshop each year focuses on public engagement, education, participations, and awareness. This year, it preceded the work group meeting. (<http://www.h-gac.com/community/water/cwi/default.aspx>)
 - Environmental Awareness Roundtable: Held quarterly, this roundtable provides tools for public awareness. This year, it preceded the work group meeting, in combination with the CWI. (<http://www.h-gac.com/community/publicawareness/ear.aspx>)
 - Watershed Signs: H-GAC did not place new signs this year, but continues to answer calls made from older signs.
 - Don't Mess with Texas Water: TCEQ has entered into its first agreement with a local government for participation. In this program, approved signs can be placed on state highways at waterway crossings. The signs are rather non-descript. The signs have a phone number that is answered by the TCEQ's SBLGA program. (<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/dont-mess-with-texas-water-a-way-to-report-illegal-dumping>.) On the website is a list of "Other Illegal Dumping Reporting Programs." It includes various cities, counties, and COGs from around the state, but the only programs from our region included in the list are Fort Bend and Walker Counties, despite a large number of other illegal dumping reporting programs in the region. In the past, TxDOT has not been amenable to placing watershed signs in its right-of-way.
 - Kiosks: H-GAC kiosks have been programmed and are almost ready for deployment.
 - Pet Waste:
 - The final bag dispensers from the order of 10,000 dispensers will be distributed at Trash Bash this year. H-GAC hopes to order more, as they were a big hit.
 - Rachel also shared information she obtained from the City of Houston regarding the number of citations and convictions in the City over the past five years. In general, these numbers are increasing. Of the 211 citations issued from 2007 through November 2012, 109 were issued in 2012. Of the 36 convictions during the same period, 12 were in 2012. Richard was very interested in the report.
 - Rachel indicated that she had been adding information to the H-GAC's website www.petwastepollutes.org, including information about ordinances.
 - MS4 Efforts: Rachel has been reviewing annual reports to try to identify common material (such as brochures, posters, or door hangers) or themes (FOG, pet waste, etc.). She hopes to post shared outreach material online.
 - Trash Bash: Last year, 3699 people helped bash trash in the BIG project area (out of a total of 6274 participants. A 319 Grant Application has been preliminarily approved for supporting water quality education at Trash Bash events. Each year for three years, a water-quality education display/activity will be developed and provided to each site for use during the event. These displays/activities will be available for other

- events outside of Trash Bash. Possible themes include pet waste, FOG, and reporting.
- Harris County Regional Watershed Program—Rachel did not have information about this.
- Stream Team—H-GAC and program partners trained 84 new volunteer citizen monitors in the BIG project area in 2012.
- Informal Education Providers
 - Spring Creek Nature Center: Terry MacArthur does a great job working with local MS4 programs to provide water-quality-based educational opportunities to youth.
 - Waterworks Education Center & Water Week: The City of Houston reports attendance at these facilities in their MS4 Annual Report.
- The Bayou Preservation Association has been giving many presentations.
- 8.1.2: Conduct pilot studies to evaluate results of education efforts
 - Westfield Estates: As part of the Westfield Estates Watershed Protection Plan, H-GAC conducted a series of community outreach impact assessments to measure pre- and post-implementation. Questions related to attitudes and knowledge regarding bacteria, with particular focus on OSSF management and pet waste. The results of the assessment indicated that outreach efforts were fairly effective, the implementation activities were well received and that attitudes regarding contributing behaviors were positive. Justin Bower with H-GAC can provide more information.
 - Back the Bay: In 2011, the Galveston Bay Estuary program conducted pilot studies to help refine the Back the Bay campaign, which was subsequently launched.

Identify Activities on Which to Focus Efforts

The group decisively agreed that the focus for the coming year should be on reporting: helping people know to whom to report water quality problems (phone number, email, etc.), and what things should be reported.

Participants in the EAR/CWI were asked to prioritize awareness activities, and came up with the following:

- Education related to Sanitary Sewer Systems:
 - ***Don't put Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) down the drain***
 - Lateral line maintenance & education (these are privately owned connections to municipal sewer lines)
 - Infiltration and overflows
- Yard care
 - Keeping clippings and other yard waste out of the storm drain
 - Use watersmart landscaping & irrigation, including rainwater harvesting and water reuse
 - Overuse of herbicide and fertilizer
- Reporting—who to call and for what
- Back the Bay—tie into campaign

- Pet waste
- Construction site runoff
- Liquid waste haulers – shady operations; knowing about “trip tickets” for OSSF owners and grease generators

Confirm Recommendations to the BIG for Annual Report

The work group reviewed the draft Implementation Strategy Cover Sheets for the residential strategy.

There were 7 attendees including 2 BIG members and 2 alternates.

For the At-a-glance table, the group did not recommend changes.

The wording for Progress was appropriate.

For achievements, the group recommended that education about what to report and to whom should be the primary focus. Additional focus should be on identifying regional opportunities for pet waste, FOG, and working with MS4s.

The workgroup did not recommend revisions to the plan.

Adjourn

BIG Annual Meeting: Tuesday, May 14, 2013