



Science and Monitoring Workgroup

October 24, 2011 9:30 AM

Workgroup Members Present: Linda Broach (TCEQ), Diane Humes (Public), Chip Morris (TCEQ by phone), and Charlene Bohanon (GBF)

Discussion

Updates: A public meeting will be held on November 15 from 3-5pm at Armand Bayou Nature Center in order to continue making the public aware of the I-Plan and garner their support in the process. Also, the preliminary draft of the I-Plan was submitted on September 30, 2011. It included updates to tables, figures and text based on the segment additions made to the TMDL, the 9 Key Elements Tables were updated, and the Schedule of Implementation and Tasks matrix is in progress, as well calculations for load reductions.

Volunteer Monitoring: A plan for volunteer monitoring in marinas was discussed and the recommendation made was to choose a monitoring location near the marina opening and marina interior. Aside from the basic parameters (DO, temperature, salinity, pH) and bacteria, it was suggested to also test for ammonia. Testing frequency should be once per month and have a team sample on a Thursday and another on Monday of the same week would allow us to look at the changes before and after recreational boaters hit the water on the weekends. The main goals of this monitoring would be to determine if there are detectable environmental improvements as a result of education and outreach efforts. Linda shared some potential concerns we should be aware of when using the Enterolert method in oyster waters due to the required 10x dilution and relatively low bacteria counts that need to be detected. She suggested also looking into testing for fecal coliform. Charlene will setup a meeting at Linda's office to take a look at the Enterolert and fecal coliform equipment. Diane shared that there are around 23 Texas Stream Team monitors in Texas Master Naturalists that may be interested in knowing what we are doing in the project area and how they can contribute by also monitoring for bacteria. She suggested talking to Kristi Corse about getting past data and contact info for monitors who are in our project area.

BMPs: Charlene shared the various BMPs that were suggested by the boater waste group to carry out with the boating community and requested additional suggestions from the Science and Monitoring workgroup. Linda suggested talking to Michelle and Kelly at TCEQ about stormwater BMPs, they suggested looking into installation of restroom facilities at boat ramps, as well as additional signage at ramps.

OSSF Needs: Charlene shared that the OSSF workgroup discussed the need for a study to be carried out in order to understand the degree of OSSF contributions to bacteria loading and to gain stakeholder buy in to it as a problem. She asked the workgroup for suggestions on whom to approach to carry out this study. H-GAC, UHCL and GBEP were mentioned, and whoever is contracted out should be NELAC certified and experienced in this type of study. Charlene will setup a meeting with Linda to look at potential monitoring sites for volunteers to collect data regarding OSSF vs. non-OSSF sites.

Next meeting: TBA