



Boater Waste Workgroup Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2011 2:00 PM

Workgroup Members Present: Scott Tuma (City of League City), Paul Fannin (Public), Paul Williams (Maritime Sanitation), Ericka McCauley (GBEP), Jean Wright (H-GAC), Chip Morris (TCEQ, by phone), Julie Mintzer (GBF), and Charlene Bohanon (GBF)

Discussion

Public Meeting: Charlene reminded the workgroup that a public meeting has been scheduled for November 15th from 3-5pm at Armand Bayou Nature Center. They discussed ideas for a BWEC station in order to provide the public with helpful information and a way to receive their feedback. The workgroup suggested creating a Google Earth map that identifies the marinas (# slips and marina name), pump-out stations, mobile pump-outs and # personal docks in order to show the disparity between the numbers of boaters to number of pump-outs based on study findings by the Urban Harbor Institute. They also suggested sharing the different fines that are in existence for violations and the lack of enforcement taking place. Scott suggested getting a figure that shows long term trends in bacteria levels to see if we can see any significant trends up or down and correlate it with increased populations, etc. Charlene also asked for suggestions on which agencies to report various environmental spills/violations/etc. to and the workgroup members provided many possible avenues to find the correct contacts. The goal is to eventually have a postcard size handout or a magnet that can be distributed to the public to aid in increasing enforcement of boater waste issues, as well as all other major environmental concerns. Ericka expressed the desire to eventually partner with cities in order to allow citizens to call 311 for any incidence and that the operators would be setup to direct them to the proper authority.

Implementation Plan: Charlene presented a load reduction calculation example (Gilleland Creek OSSFs) that could be used as a basis to calculate bacteria loading from boater waste. She asked the workgroup for assistance with defining multiple variables, but the consensus at this point is that it is going to be nearly impossible to make an accurate calculation for this source. Chip explained that in these cases the only thing you can do is to write a narrative documenting what you do know and describing why it isn't feasible at this point to calculate load reductions, as well as how you will move forward to try and continue collecting the data you need to calculate them in the future.

BWEC: Charlene shared various BWEC updates with the workgroup including results from the recent Gulf Coast Yacht Broker Association presentation, marina partnership and water quality monitoring updates, plans for the upcoming Texas Yacht Show and Jazz Fest (toilet toss game, bacteria load guessing game, activity sheet), and recent communications with a new mobile pump-out service (Redfish Island Marine).

Next meeting: December 7th, 2:00pm