

MEETING SUMMARY
WATER AND SEDIMENT QUALITY IMPLEMENTATION TEAM
January 11, 2005

TEAM MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sign up sheet got lost for this meeting....sorry.

The Water and Sediment Quality Implementation Team was called to order at approximately 9:30 am on January 11, 2005, at the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program office at 1305 N. Shoreline Blvd., Suite 205, Corpus Christi, Texas.

Ms. Freund skipped introductions, as members present seem to have a good working knowledge of each other.

Mr. Tom Ballou spoke to the Team about Mercury in Coastal Waters of La. and the EPA response and actions of the TMDL by that state. The publication showed mercury in mostly king mackerel in the coastal waters of La. and their plan to reduce by 57% the mercury concentration in the fish by reductions in the several Parishes adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico. Tom felt that the study was terribly flawed and was concerned that if implemented in La. then they EPA may impose similar actions in Texas Coastal Waters and that this could severely impact industry and municipal discharges. Jim Bowman, CBBEP was asked to contact Ms. Sandra Alvarado, TCEQ about the status of this issue in Texas. Sandra reported that Texas was not doing anything like what was being proposed for La. She reported that there is some Federal Legislation pending and Texas/TCEQ is not planning any action on this issue until after the Federal action is taken. It is possible that Sandra may be able to attend the March 8, 2005 meeting and provide a further update on this issue to the Team.

Ms. Freund then asked the Team to provide any additional project ideas that the Team had. There were no further project ideas submitted by the team.

The Team then further discussed the various projects identified as potential project for FY 06 for the CBBEP. The Team discussed each of the following issues. The following additional notes were taken for each Project.

- I. **Vibrio vulnificus-** Bacteria causing human health issues on the Texas Coast. This would be an expansion of a current FY05 project and would look at sampling and distribution of bacteria and associate it with environmental water quality conditions such as salinity, pH, Nutrients, etc.

Comments: Look at newer methods. Sample at sites in specific locations and sites in our coastal waters. Look at high use areas. Project should look at various water quality data and compare it to bacterial conditions. Coordination with human health- Who is at Risk! Let public know that healthy people are normally not at risk. What are the precautions people can take (shrimpers rinse in bleach). One member wants publicity from the CBBEP to come out on this issue and it may be part of the Outreach Team's work.

II. Oso Creek and Oso Bay Watershed- This would support the local work being done by the Bays Foundation and the TMDL.

Comments: What are the deliverables of this project? Discussion of a meeting on 1-18-05. One Team member discussed this involved City Water Treatment, Agriculture, Non point sources, storm water and runoff as well as historical issues of produced water in the creek. Other members discussed soils, presence of bacteria (E. coli) and tidal waters.

III. Bay and Gulf Debris-What are the sources and what is needed to be done to prevent impact. Implementation of prior studies. What are the action plans that need to be done to stop the problem.

Comments: The City Parks Department has received a grant. Study looks at debris. Tony Amos and debris has been studied on Texas Coastal waters. Get back to the issue of implementation. What can be done? Development of a solution. Capture floatables on storm water runoff.

IV. Continuation of the Regional Coastal Assessment Program (RCAP)-Target areas that are identified as problematic and include sampling outside of past sampling areas. Look at areas that have no ongoing monitoring or inadequate monitoring.

Comments: This is a placeholder for future additional monitoring as necessary.

V. Beach Watch- This would expand the current bacteria monitoring to Klebreg County and other areas, as identified as not previously covered. Need to identify where people swim and utilize area beaches.

Comments: Make sure someone will take action. Look at moving other sampling to other locations. Look at the number of people in the water. The issue of who is going to take action on this when bacteria are found was discussed. A jurisdictional issue needs to be resolved and identified. Beach Act is coming up for renewal and funding was discussed.

VI. Bacteriological Contributions from Sediments-What role does the sediment play in harboring bacteria and pathogens in the estuarine environment?

Comments: I had no further comments on this issue.

VII. Harbors and Marinas- What are the water and sediment quality issues in our local harbors and marinas. Issues could include water and sediment quality, oily bilge water, septic pump-out, or other environmental issues.

Comments: Jim Needam volunteered to contact several of the local marina operators and invite them to our next meeting. Issues such as environmental and other issues these folks have will be the subjects of the meeting.

Bob Trebatoski discussed the Oso Bay and potential impact from the cessation of the discharge from the AEP, or Barney Davis power plant. Bob discussed anti-degradation issues from habitat changes and water quality impacts. Discussion of salinity changes from loss of discharge.

Jim Bowman briefly discussed environmental indicators with the Team and that we will be charged with the development of some for our programmatic area. Some discussion ensued, but as one team member responded, that this has been done on many of the other NEP areas and we do not need to re-invent the wheel.

March 8, 2005 is the next scheduled date for the Water and Sediment Team to meet at the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program office.

The meeting ended.