Regional Water Planning in Texas

Introduction to the 5th Cycle

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The following presentation is based upon professional research and analysis within the scope of the Texas Water Development Board’s statutory responsibilities and priorities but, unless specifically noted, does not necessarily reflect official Board positions or decisions.
Overview

• Background on regional and state water planning in Texas
• Overview of regional water planning groups
• Fundamentals of water planning
• Foundation of the State Water Plan
1950s – Drought of Record

– 1957: Creation of TWDB
– $200 million in Water Development Fund
Why do we plan?

Surface Area of Texas in Drought by Severity

October 4, 2011
Worst Statewide Texas Droughts

Palmer Drought Severity Index

2010-2014

1950-1957

Months

2011

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Types of Drought

- Meteorological
- Agricultural
- Hydrological*
- Socioeconomic

*regional water planning focuses on drought impacting water supplies
Overview of Regional Water Planning Groups
16 Regional Water Planning Areas
Diverse interest groups represented
Voting Member Categories

**Statutory interests:**
- Public
- Counties
- Municipalities
- Industries
- Agriculture
- Environment
- Small businesses
- Electric-generating utilities
- River authorities
- Water districts
- Water utilities
- Groundwater management areas (varies by region)

There are approximately 370 voting members in the 16 groups.
Key Responsibilities of Planning Group Members

• Represent interest category and region
• Develop a plan that serves region and state
• Consider local water plans
• Ensure adoption of a regional water plan by the statutory deadline that meets all requirements
How do planning groups function?

- Select a host political subdivision
- Select technical consultants
- Self-govern (maintain own bylaws and membership)
- Hold regular public meetings and sub-group meetings as necessary
- Consider stakeholder input and make decisions in accordance with bylaws
Public Notice Requirements

• Subject to Texas Open Meetings Act

• Follow significant public notice requirements (requirements vary depending on activity)

• Must hold initial preplanning public meeting for input on the next plan

• Must present how the planning group will identify potentially feasible water management strategies at a public meeting
Funding the Planning Process

- Legislative appropriations
- RWPGs apply for funding (based on 5-year cycles)
- Funding through TWDB contract with political subdivision
- Political subdivisions subcontract with technical consultants
- RWPGs direct work of consultants
Relevant Documents

- Statute
- Administrative rules
- Contract Scope of Work/Task budget
- Contract Exhibit C – general guidelines for regional water plan development
- Contract Exhibit D – guidelines for data deliverables

Roles

- Public
- 16 Regional Water Planning Groups
  - 16 technical consultants
  - 16 political subdivisions
  - CONTRACTS
- Legislature
- TWDB

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Incentives to Participate

- TWDB funding
- TCEQ permitting
Foundation of the State Water Plan
Bottom Up Approach

2022 State Water Plan

Online state water plan database (DB22)

16 adopted regional water plans
Regional & State Planning Cycles

RWPGs develop 16 plans

5 Years

RWPGs adopt 16 plans

State water plan
Audience

- The State Water Plan is delivered to the Governor, the Legislature, and the public

- Key aspects for their consideration:
  - Long-term projections of water supplies, demands, and needs
  - Project costs and funding needs
  - Policy recommendations
Snapshot of the 2017 State Water Plan

- **5,500** strategies
- **2,500** projects
- Capital cost of **$63** billion

http://texasstatewaterplan.org
Additional TWDB Presentations

- Update on revised 31 TAC Chapter 357 rules
- What's new in the 5th cycle of planning
- Others based on planning group requests
Questions?

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