

**Development of a Watershed Protection Plan
for Geronimo Creek**

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority
FY09-11 CWA Section 319(h)
Project No. 08-06

Quarterly Report Number 12

Covering work accomplished October through December, 2011

January 13, 2012

I. Abstract

Administrative tasks, meetings and planning activities were performed during the reporting period. A Partnership meeting was held in October in Seguin and a tour of the watershed was conducted in November. The draft Watershed Protection Plan was submitted by Texas AgriLife Extension to GBRA and TSSWCB for review and comment and the draft plan was posted on the project website for review by the steering committee. A meeting was held by GBRA with the City of Seguin to discuss the problems they have encountered on the construction of the sewer line to the Oak Village North Subdivision. A meeting was held between GBRA and Forrest Mims, a citizen living in the Geronimo Creek watershed, to discuss his concerns with Seguin's lift station/sewer line construction problems. The Lower Colorado River Authority is proposing to construct a 138 kv transmission line that will run parallel and in close proximity to Geronimo Creek. The Public Utility Commission (PUC) is considering all routes. AgriLife drafted a letter on behalf of the GC Partnership requesting that the PUC select a proposed route that would have the least amount of impact to Geronimo Creek.

II. Overall Progress and Results by Task

TASK 1: Project Administration and Coordination

Subtask 1.1: The GBRA will prepare electronic quarterly progress reports for submission to TSSWCB. Progress reports shall document all activities performed within a quarter and shall be submitted by the 15th of January, April, July and October. All progress reports will be posted to the project website and provided to all project partners.

- GBRA prepared the progress report for July through September 2011 and submitted the report on October 13, 2011.

92% complete – On-going

Subtask 1.2: GBRA will perform accounting functions for project funds and will submit appropriate reimbursement forms to TSSWCB at least quarterly.

- GBRA submitted the invoice for July through September 2011 on October 26, 2011.

92% complete – On-going

Subtask 1.3: GBRA will host coordination meetings or conference calls with TSSWCB and any subcontractors as appropriate, at least quarterly to discuss project activities, project schedule, communication needs, deliverables, and other requirements.

- Calls and email correspondence were made between GBRA, AgriLife and TSSWCB to discuss steering committee meeting agendas, watershed tour stops, correspondence to the PUC on the route of the proposed electric transmission line and the status of the watershed protection plan.
 - October 18 – discussion on upcoming tour and status of plan review.
 - October 20 – communication between AgriLife, GBRA and TSSWCB began on the actions that should be taken by the partnership concerning the proposed transmission line that could impact Geronimo Creek. Draft letters were reviewed and commented on.
- Correspondence was sent to the steering committee during the quarter.
 - October 4, 2011 – meeting notice, availability of the draft watershed protection plan and notice of the upcoming watershed tour that was going to be held in early November.
 - October 2011 – notice of the tour in November, reminders, press release, invitation to TLU students.
 - December 1, 2011 – explanation of proposed transmission line that may impact the Geronimo Creek and copy of the draft letter addressed to the Public Utility Commission on behalf of the Partnership. Edits received from steering committee members were incorporated.
- The project webpage was maintained in the quarter. Postings included:
 - The draft plan
 - The agenda and presentations from the October 2011 steering committee meeting
 - Notice of tour on November 1
 - The letter submitted by the GC Partnership to the PUC, along with the map of the proposed routes

90% complete – On-going

TASK 2. Quality Assurance

Subtask 2.1: GBRA will develop a quality assurance project plan (QAPP) for activities in tasks 3 and 4, consistent with *EPA Requirements for Quality*

Assurance Project Plans (QA/R-5) (May 2006) and the TSSWCB Environmental Data and Quality Management Plan (August 2007).

Consistency with Title 30, Chapter 25 of the Texas Administrative Code, Environmental Testing Laboratory Accreditation and Certification, which describes Texas' approach to implementing the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference standards, shall be required.

All monitoring procedures and methods prescribed in the QAPP shall be consistent with the guidelines detailed in the TCEQ *Surface Water Quality Monitoring Procedures, Volume 1: Physical and Chemical Monitoring Methods for Water, Sediment, and Tissue (RG-415) December 2003*) and *Volume 2: Methods for Collecting and Analyzing Biological Community and Habitat Data (RG-416) (August 2005)*.

- No work was performed under this task in this quarter.

100% completed

Subtask 2.2: GBRA will submit revisions and necessary amendments to the QAPP as needed.

- No work was performed under this task in this quarter.

100% completed

TASK 3. Water Quality Monitoring

Subtask 3.1: Technical consultant will compile historical and baseline data on the Geronimo Creek watershed, including water quality data, land use, topography, soil types and vegetation.

- No work was performed under this task in this quarter.

100% completed

Subtask 3.2: GBRA, with consultation with the technical consultant, will produce a twelve-month water quality monitoring plan based on information identified in Subtask 3.1, including monthly routine and targeted monitoring of the stream and tributaries, quarterly monitoring of the springs (up to four locations), and the quarterly monitoring of wells (up to four locations) that are in close proximity to be contributing to the stream flow through springs.

- No work was performed under this task in this quarter.

100% completed

Subtask 3.3: GBRA will conduct water quality monitoring of the watershed as described in the plan developed in Subtask 3.2 and under the QAPP developed in Subtask 2.1.

- No work was performed under this task in this quarter.

100% completed

TASK 4. Water Quality Modeling and Data Analysis

Subtask 4.1: The Technical Consultant will perform services that include the selection of a model(s) that facilitate development of the watershed protection plan; produce geographical information including digitizing of land use data to the sub-watershed level; data analysis to rank sources of the impairments; estimation of the fate and transport of bacteria, nutrients and other constituents; and production tools that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of best management practices.

- Work was performed by Espey Consultants to revise the legend on the septic systems SELECT output to be consistent with the other SELECT output maps.

100% completed

Subtask 4.2: The Technical Consultant will perform all necessary phases of modeling that facilitate development of the watershed protection plan as described in Task 5.

- No work was performed under this task in this quarter.

100% completed

TASK 5. Watershed Partnership and Plan Development

Subtask 5.1: GBRA will subcontract with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service (Extension) to facilitate the development of the Geronimo Creek Watershed Partnership Steering Committee and associated subcommittees for the purpose of plan development, including Texas Watershed Steward training for stakeholders.

- A Steering Committee meeting was held on October 11th. Emails, phone calls, a press release, radio release, and posting on community calendars were made in order to reach a wide audience. Meeting materials were developed and submitted for review prior to the meeting. The agenda included a presentation

by Ward Ling on the newest sections drafted for the watershed protection plan and notification that the complete draft WPP was posted to the project webpage on October 4th. Hardcopies and CD copies were distributed at the meeting. Instead of a partnership meeting in November, the Steering Committee was taken on a tour of the Geronimo and Alligator Creeks watersheds. At the first stop at the New Braunfel's shopping area, the Town Center at Creekside located in the Alligator Creek watershed, the attendees learned about local urban stormwater issues and what New Braunfels is dealing with as they implement their new stormwater program. At The Red Barn, near Seguin, the attendees heard about agricultural best management practices, feral hog control, technical and financial assistance NRCS offers to agricultural producers, and existing conservation easements in the watershed. Ending the tour, City of Seguin staff explained the Oak Village North Project to transition the subdivision from septic systems to sanitary sewer service.

- Coordination of the tour included:
 - Correspondence and phone calls to steering committee members to give notice of the tour, and later to remind them of the tour
 - Correspondence with speakers scheduled for the tour
 - Correspondence and calls held to develop, coordinate aspects and logistics between GBRA, AgriLife, TSSWCB, cities of New Braunfels and Seguin, and NRCS
 - Rental of vans and refreshments provided by GBRA
 - News release issued about the upcoming tour
 - Correspondence with steering committee giving a recap of the tour
- AgriLife and GBRA participated in the first ever Central Texas Environmental Summit on October 19 hosted by TCEQ in Schertz, Texas. AgriLife and GBRA set up table top displays highlighting the Geronimo and Alligator Creek Watershed Protection Plan Project and programs of GBRA. Also, GBRA displayed a newly purchased electronic kiosk that will be housed in the watershed to provide real-time water quality information for Geronimo Creek. It was estimated that over 300 people attended and viewed the displays.

92% completed – On-going

Subtask 5.2: Extension, in collaboration with GBRA, will develop the Geronimo Creek Watershed Protection Plan.

- Extension developed the final chapters of the draft WPP and submitted them to TSSWCB for review. Edited copies of the chapters were submitted to AgriLife from TSSWCB and the edits and comments were incorporated. The complete draft WPP was mailed to each Steering Committee member, posted to the project website October 4, 2011, and presented to the Partnership at the October meeting. The draft WPP will remain posted to the project website in order to let the public review and comment on the document. Comments were

received from Frank Dietz (Steering Committee Member) and Forrest Mims (watershed stakeholder). Comments have been or are being addressed.

80% completed – On-going

III. Related Issues/Current Problems and Favorable or Unusual Developments

The drought continues to be a problem for the watershed.

Forrest Mims has raised concerns with the problems that the City of Seguin has encountered in the construction of the sewer line that goes under Geronimo Creek. The line is being constructed to tie on the homes in the Oak Village North Subdivision, taking them off of failing septic systems. Correspondence from Forrest Mims is included in this report. A meeting between engineers with GBRA and the city was held to discuss the problems and the city's remedies. GBRA engineers felt that the city was handling the problems as they would (meeting notes included with progress report). GBRA met with Forrest Mims to hear his additional concerns. Mr. Mims has contacted the city council, the San Antonio media and TCEQ with his concerns. He was able to get additional information on possible substandard construction from a former employee of the contractor. The city has taken legal action against the contractor. GBRA has requested copies of the information that Mr. Mims has gathered but has not received those photos and notes as of the date of this progress report.

A Texas Healthy Habitats Grant for 2010-2011 was awarded to Navarro High School and teacher, Rissa Springs (steering committee member) (letter included with progress report). In the upcoming semester, the students will be mapping the Geronimo Creek watershed near their school campus, conducting biological and ecological surveys and performing projects to restore and improve the riparian zone along the creek.

Jimmy Harless is no longer with Guadalupe County. A representative for the county has not been named.

A letter to the PUC was sent on behalf of the Partnership commenting on the proposed electrical transmission line that could cross Geronimo Creek (included in report).

IV. Projected Work for Next Quarter

The following will be accomplished during the coming quarter:

- a. The formal comment period for the draft WPP is forecasted to begin March 1.
- b. Two public meetings will be held during March, one in Seguin and one in New Braunfels, in order to answer questions and receive comments in person. During the

public comment period, comments can be sent in through email, postal mail, or at the formal meetings. The comment period will last for 30 days, and after all comments are received, AgriLife will respond to all comments and will submit the amended draft to the TSSWCB.

- c. AgriLife will begin meeting with prospective parties about the potential for funding implementation activities before the draft WPP is completed and sent to EPA.
- d. Modifications to the project webpage have been suggested by AgriLife. Those modifications which include a photo gallery page, a breakdown by tabs of the watershed protection plan and updates to the text, will be made in the next quarter.