WATER DIVISION
ALL BRANCH WEEKLY ACTIVITY REPORT
WEEK ENDING 2/12/16

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS BRANCH

EPA AWARDS THE NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 106 FUNDS: On February 1, 2016, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) was awarded an additional $611,480 in grant number I0063512-1 for a total of $995,390 in Federal funds. The Clean Water Act Section 106 grant will support Goal 2, Protecting America's Waters and more specifically to improve water quality on a watershed basis. This funding will be used by the NMED for the management of their Surface and Ground Water Programs. Some of the activities that will be funded will include: Water Quality Monitoring, TMDL Development, integrated assessment and reporting in accordance with Sections 303(d) and 305(b), water quality standard setting, enforcement and compliance activities, and ground water activities. **Arlene Gaines, 655-7163**

THE CADDO TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA SUBMITTED AN APPLICATION FOR TREATMENT AS A STATE (TAS) FOR THE CLEAN WATER ACT 106 PROGRAM: The Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma, submitted an application for Treatment As a State (TAS) for the Clean Water Act (CWA) 106 Program. The Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma is requesting approval of their CWA 106 application authorizing their eligibility to receive CWA Section106 funding. To meet program eligibility, the applicant must have an approved TAS application. The purpose of the CWA Section 106 Program is to collaboratively assist tribes with controlling, preventing, and eliminating pollution of their jurisdictional waters. Using CWA Section 106 funds, eligible tribes can fund activities including information and education, demonstration projects, and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for identifying non-point sources of pollution. **Samuel Reynolds, 665-6682**

SOUTHWEST ENVIRONMENT FINANCE CENTER TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE CAMINO REAL REGIONAL UTILITY AUTHORITY: Region 6 Community Infrastructure Section staff coordinated its efforts with the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to facilitate SWEFC assistance for the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority (CRRUA) in Sunland Park, New Mexico. SWEFC's services will conduct an assessment of CRRUA's drinking water and wastewater systems and will provide both NMED and EPA Region 6 with their assessment during a conference call scheduled for February 25, 2016. The assessment as well as the recommended follow up actions will better inform EPA as to when we will be able to release our $8 million for construction of a new wastewater treatment plant. Additionally, NMED, like EPA is presently withholding CRRUA funds ($3.7 million from the NM State legislature), so EPA and NMED are closely collaborating on this issue. **Gilbert Tellez, (915) 533-5223; Salvador Gandara, 665-3194; Maurice Rawls, 665-8049; Claudia Hosch, 665-6464**

APPROVAL OF DEAL SHEET AUTHORIZING $7 MILLION IN BORDER FUNDING FOR REYNOSA, MEXICO: Region 6 Community Infrastructure Section staff provided the authority to the North American Development Bank (NADB) in commit $7 million in Border Environment Infrastructure Funds (BEIF) to address wastewater collection and treatment in Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico. The Deal Sheet is generated by the NADB and addresses the project' financial structure, expected environmental results, and other terms and conditions to be included in the sub-grant agreement between NADB and the Reynosa utility. The project will expand their existing wastewater treatment plant #2 from 5.7 million gallons per day (MGD) to 17.1 MGD eliminating approximately 9 MGD of untreated or inadequately treated wastewater to the Rio Grande. Mexico's federal, state and

local government will provide the additional $8.5 million to complete the project. **Gilbert Tellez, (915) 533-5223; Salvador Gandara, 665-3194; Maurice Rawls, 665-8049**

FY2015 END OF YEAR REVIEW OF THE TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD CLEAN WATER ACT §319(H) NONPOINT SOURCE PROGRAM: Staff from the Assistance Programs Branch met with the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) Statewide Resource Management department in Temple, Texas, on February 09, 2016. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct an End of Year Review of all open §319(h) cooperative agreements and project status reports. **Mike Bira, 665-6668; Henry Brewer, 665-8146**

ECOSYSTEMS PROTECTION BRANCH

OKLAHOMA 2015 INTERIM WATER QUALITY STANDARDS SUBMITTAL: On January 28, 2016, Region 6 received the 2015 interim revisions to the Oklahoma Water Quality Standards (WQS). The Oklahoma Water Resources Board WQS submittal includes amendments clarifying Oklahoma's dissolved oxygen criteria and implementation provisions; and the addition of site-specific copper and zinc criteria for Yanubbe Creek at the request of Broken Bow Public Work's Authority. The Region is currently in the process of reviewing Oklahoma's WQS submission under Clean Water Act Section 303(c), and has initiated informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the Endangered Species Act. **Shannon Snyder, 665-3134**

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TWO REGIONAL OCEAN DISPOSAL OF DREDGED MATERIAL GUIDES: The Surface Water Team is comparing EPA's Region 6 and Region 2 ocean disposal from dredged material guides. Region 2's was updated in August 2013 and Region 6's was last updated in July 2003. Region 6's is lacking specific sample collection and laboratory procedures on pretesting and testing guidance and reporting. The intent is to update Region's 6 Guide removing some material that is out of date and incorporating some of the material from Region's 2 Guide. The updating of the Guide will require the agreement of EPA and the U.S. Corps of Engineers, Galveston and New Orleans Districts. **Angel Kosfiszer, 665-2187; Jessica Franks, 665-8335**

PRELIMINARY RELEASE OF NEW MAPPING TOOL: The Surface Water Team is happy to announce the availability of a new mapping tool: ArcGIS Earth. The tool is accessible from any user's desktop. A user may display data, sketch placemarks, measure distances and areas, and add annotations. ArcGIS Earth has everything needed to easily map information using local files in shapefile or kml formats, and also remote service access to ArcGIS online services (may require ESRI's ID and password). The current version is a preliminary release (beta) and is intended to replace and in some cases enhance Google Earth. **Angel Kosfiszer, 665-2187**

NPDES PERMITS & TMDL BRANCH

ILLINOIS RIVER WATERSHED TECHNICAL WORKGROUP MEETING: On February 11-12, 2016, the Cherokee Nation hosted the Illinois River Watershed Technical Workgroup. The meeting centered on refinements to the watershed and Lake Tenkiller models. EPA Region 6 led the discussion on comments received from the principals including Arkansas and Oklahoma state agencies. An anticipated outcome of the meeting was a defined path forward with the models which would represent a consensus within the principal group. The discussion also focused on target setting regarding the Oklahoma scenic rivers phosphorus criteria and climate concerns raised by the Cherokee Nation. Additionally, a tentative public meeting in the watershed was discussed that included input from the

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principals. **Taimur Shaikh, 665-7181; Richard Wooster, 665-6473**

PESTICIDE GENERAL PERMIT; REQUEST FOR 401 CERTIFICATION: Representatives of the NPDES Permits & TMDL Branch issued fourteen (14) Request for 401 Certification letters to tribal and state agencies for the 2016 proposed Pesticide General Permit. The permit was published in the Federal Register January 26, 2016, and requires coverage for point source discharges from the application of pesticides into waters of the U.S. As part of the permitting reissuance process and in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, the EPA must obtain 401 certification from tribal and/or state entities to ensure conditions of the proposed permit are protective of state's/tribal water quality standards and laws. **Kilty Baskin, 665-7500; Paul Kaspar, 665-7459**

CHURCHILL DOWNS/FAIR GROUNDS RACE COURSE, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA: The Region 6 (R6) NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch participated in a conference call with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the R6 Water Enforcement Branch on February 10, 2016. Churchill Downs/Fair Grounds (Churchill) has been referred to DOJ to resolve ongoing enforcement concerns at the racetrack. One of the DOJ discussion topics included a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) permit modification request submitted by Churchill to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ). As requested, the permit modification action would not comply with applicable technology standards for containment of process wastewaters. Coordination between NPDES Permits and Water Enforcement will continue as the potential issuance of this permit modification could lead to the need to object to permit issuance during EPA's oversight review. **Paul Kaspar 665-7459**

DRAFT PERMIT PROPOSES INCREASED LOADINGS TO IMPAIRED BAYOU MACON: The NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch is reviewing and coordinating with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality regarding the proposed permit for the Town of Delhi. The proposed permit would significantly increase the current authorized loadings for TSS and BOD due to wastewater received from ConAgra's sweet potato processing facility. The receiving water, Bayou Macon, is currently impaired for several pollutants including dissolved oxygen and turbidity. The TMDL for Turbidity, TSS, and Siltation which was finalized in 2002 chose to pursue reductions in inorganic suspended solids from non-point sources to alleviate the impairment. We would like to determine if organic suspended solids from point sources may be contributing to the continued impairment. **Kay Schwab, 665-6635; Paul Kaspar 665-7459; Taim Shaikh, 665-7181;**
Rich Wooster, 665-6473

NEW MEXICO BLUEWATER LAKE NUTRIENT TMDLs: The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has publicly noticed its first Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for nutrient impairment of a lake. Written to address an impairment caused by total nitrogen, the Bluewater Lake TMDL also establishes a protective target level for total phosphorus. Region 6 has provided NMED written and oral comments on an earlier draft of the TMDL and intends to submit further comments prior to the February 19, 2016, closing of the public comment period. **Miranda Hodgkiss, 665-7538; Richard Wooster, 665-6473**

ARKANSAS 303(d) LIST OUT FOR PUBLIC NOTICE: In January, the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) public noticed the Draft 2016 Impaired Waterbodies List. A public hearing will be held at the ADEQ office March 1, 2016. The public notice will end March 11, 2016 and a staff member plans to attend the public hearing. A comment letter is being drafted and portions of the letter are under review by legal staff. Several staff members are currently reviewing data from the 2016 period of record to determine concurrence with proposed listings. **Laura Hunt, 665-9729; Selena**

Medrano 665-2776

DRAFT JANUARY 2016 WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN (WQMP) UPDATES FOR TECHNICAL REVIEW: On February 5, 2016, the Assessment, Listing, and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Section received the draft January 2016 WQMP from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). The WQMP document contains updates for nine TMDLs, including updated projected effluent limits. It also contains a summary of planning information and designated management agencies. The EPA has 30 days to conduct a technical evaluation and provide comments to TCEQ. TCEQ will then submit a final January 2016 WQMP Update document, including responses to EPA's comments, to the EPA for review and approval. **Linda Adams, 665-6646**

APPROVAL OF UPDATES TO THE OKLAHOMA WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN: NPDES Permits Branch personnel has reviewed the Waste Load Evaluation for the Ottawa County Rural Water and Sewer District #1, (Ottawa County RW&SD #1, Permit #OK0028291) and technically accepted for projected effluent limit update. This update will become part of the WQMP Update after completion of its public participation process, certification by the ODEQ, and approval by the Environmental Protection Agency. **Syed Shahriyar, 665-2783**

NEW MEXICO 303(d) LIST OUT FOR PUBLIC NOTICE: In February, the New Mexico Department of Environment Department (NMED) public noticed the Draft 2016-2018 State of New Mexico Clean Water Act Sections 303(d)/305(b) Integrated List of Assessed Surface Waters. The public notice will end March 18, 2016. A draft was provided and comments were submitted by staff to NMED prior to the public notice. **Laura Hunt, 665-9729**

ANALYTICAL DATA RECEIVED FOR LOUISIANA OFFSHORE OIL PORT (LOOP): EPA and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) are drafting a joint reissuance permit for LOOP, which discharges into both Federal and State waters. EPA has concerns regarding possible toxicity at Outfall 004 which is proposed to discharge brine from the Brine Storage Reservoir. Biomonitoring is typically used to ensure the state's water quality standard for "no discharge of toxics;" however, the permittee requested that other options be explored. Since the application only provided data on the levels of TDS and chlorides, additional analytical data was requested to determine what other pollutants are being discharged. EPA and LDEQ are currently reviewing the recently received results. **Paul Kaspar, 665-7459; Isaac Chen, 665-7364; Taimur Shaikh, 665-7181; Kay Schwab 665-6635**

URBAN WATERS SMALL GRANT REVIEW: Reviewed proposals received for the Urban Waters Small Grant program. Staff completed reviewing assigned proposals and will attend a review panel meeting March 1, 2016 to discuss assigned proposals. **Selena Medrano, 665-2776**

FEBRUARY 2016 NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM PUBLIC NOTICE: Staff members from the NPDES Management Section have scheduled the next public notice for Saturday, February 27, 2016. NPDES permits will be public noticed and posted to the web page so that the public can review the draft permit package and submit comments, if appropriate. The comments for these notices will be due March 28, 2016. **Evelyn Rosborough, 665-7515; Stacey Abbott; La Gayla Johnson, 665-7517**

NPDES REGIONAL WEBPAGES CONFERENCE CALL: The Permits and TMDLs Branch, along with Bruce Fitch of External Affairs, participated in a nationwide call led by OWM regarding migration

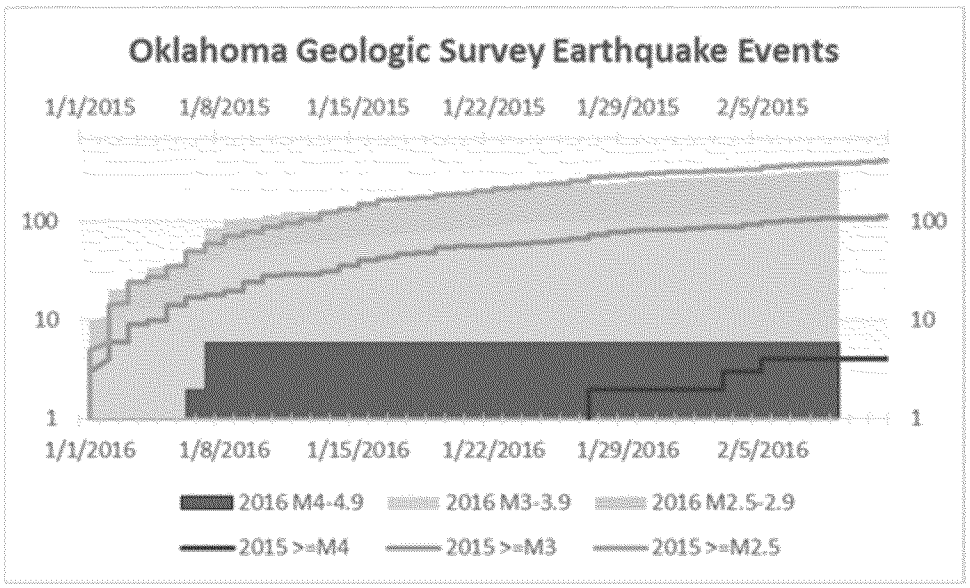
of NPDES web pages to Drupal. OWM-WPD is targeting March 31, 2016, as the final day for content to reside at a temporary home on ww3, requiring Region 6 Permits and TMDLs Branch to expedite our content review. Discussions are ongoing between OWM and OEI about final presentation and future management of regional web content. More information will follow regarding options. **Stacey Dwyer, 665-6729; Paul Kaspar 665-7529; Nelly Smith, 665-7109; Denise Hamilton, 665-2775**

NOTICE TEAM CHARTER: Staff member from the NPDES Management Section have been selected to be a part of the Lean Public Notice Team Charter. This project "Public Notice for Agency Actions/Rulemaking", will examine Region 6's current practices for providing information about our actions and explore more effective and cost efficient means of communicating significate actions to our customers, as well as hear from them about the effectiveness of our communication with them. The chartered team will host its first meeting on Wednesday, February 10, 2016. **Evelyn Rosborough, 665-7515**

SAFE DRINKING WATER BRANCH

DELIBERATIVE – FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

OKLAHOMA SEISMICITY UPDATE: As of February 9th, there have been 336 recorded earthquakes with greater than or equal to magnitude 2.5 (M2.5+), by the Oklahoma Geologic Survey (OGS). The USGS reports fewer events (253) as their seismometer network is more widely spaced. Alaska had almost twice that number, Puerto Rico half and California about a third. The graph compares the number of earthquakes over the same time range for this year (area) to last year (lines). It shows there were fewer total (M2.5+; 392 in 2015; 336 in 2016) events so far this year, but more events M3+ (108 in 2015; 102 in 2016) and M4+ (4 in 2015; 7 in 2016) events. **Nancy Dorsey, 665-2294**



ADMINISTRATOR'S WELL INTEGRITY CHALLENGE WORKGROUP INDUSTRY OUTREACH EFFORTS: The workgroup has spoken with representatives of ConocoPhillips and Energi (an oilfield insurance firm) to discuss whether they continue to have interest in participating in the Administrator's workgroup on improving tracking of mechanical well integrity on producing wells, and to refine the anticipated benefits from the project. We are awaiting a response from them in the very near future, but Conoco did indicate that the depressed price of oil may limit the available funding for

this type of discretionary project. **Philip Dellinger, 665-8324; Michael Overbay, 665-6482; Rob Lawrence, 665-6580**

MEMBERS OF THE GROUND WATER/UIC SECTION AND THE ENFORCEMENT GROUP DISCUSS THE FINDINGS FROM THE KINGSVILLE DOME URANIUM MINING SITE ANALYSIS: On February 9, representatives of 6EN were presented with details of the operation history of Production Area No. 3 (PA-3) of the Kingsville Dome in-situ uranium mine, focusing on details of the data analysis and preliminary conclusions from Water Division staff. The technical analysis indicates that the area's ground water was of drinking quality before exploratory and mining operations began (baseline conditions). It also indicates that the mining operations have adversely impacted the Goliad Aquifer outside the Monitoring Well Ring. The objective of the meeting was to refer the issue to 6EN for possible EPA enforcement in response to ongoing citizen complaints and inquiries from Kleberg County citizens regarding the impacts from the above mining operations on the Goliad Aquifer. **José Eduardo Torres, 665-8092; Philip Dellinger, 665-8324**

APPOINTED COMMISSIONER FOR LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: Newly elected governor Edwards has appointed Richard Ieyoub, Sr. as Commissioner of Conservation at LDNR. Mr. Ieyoub comes to the position with a varied background as the attorney general of Louisiana from 1992 to 2004. Mr. Ieyoub replaces longtime Commissioner Jim Welsh. **Jana Harvill, 665-8369**

UIC REPORTING SERVICES APPLICATION (URSA) REGIONAL STAFF TRAINING: Members of the Ground Water/UIC Section and others participated in a WebEx meeting on February 11 for training on how to directly access information in the National UIC Database through the URSA website, including well-specific inventory and permit data from all e-reporters. URSA is a new tool that has been developed by the EPA HQ UIC Database Team, alongside the regions and our contractors. EPA Headquarters sponsored the meeting and CGI Federal conducted the training. **Chris Tingey, 665-8364**

SMU RESEARCH DAY 2016: On Wednesday, February 10, 2016, a member of the drinking water section participated in Southern Methodist University's (SMU) Research Day program. The program showcased current graduate student's research work in the areas of engineering, natural sciences, applied physiology, social sciences, and education. Posters that were of interest to the drinking water section are risk assessment of world aquifers, hydrogen bonding in water, and use-life models of an ancestral puebloan water reservoir. **Jatin Mistry, 665-7483**

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