

Summary of Minutes

Water Conservation Advisory Council Workgroup Meeting and Conference Call
Workgroup: Water Loss

Date: March 18, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: TEAMS

<u>Members/Alternates</u>	<u>Interested Parties</u>	<u>TWDB Staff</u>
Jennifer Walker	Sarah Riggins	John Sutton
Jennifer Allis	Patrick Shriver	Daniel Rice
Karen Guz	Christopher Perry	Temple McKinnon
Whitney Milberger	Jennifer Nagorka	Yun Cho
Aubrey Spear	Marshall Elliot	Loren Whitman
	Blaire Parker	Taylor Nickell
	Adam Foster	Mark Mathis
	Monica Polgar	Marla Heger
	Dan Strub	
	Maria Vela	
	Hector Ortiz	
	Brittany Condry	
	Jennifer Nations	

**Documents can be found at: www.savetexaswater.org/meeting/workgroup/ **

Meeting Agenda:

- I. Introduction
- II. Discussion of Legislative Report Content
- III. Discussion on Possible Legislative Recommendations
- IV. Discuss Trends and Water Loss Issues. (TWDB Validation)
- V. Discussion of Drought Related Water Loss Issues (Increase main breaks)
- VI. Adjourn

Jennifer Walker started the meeting at 1:02 pm

Karen gave a summary of the legislative report content. Funding recommendations need to be drafted prior to the April Advisory Council meeting. Currently, the water loss committee is not considering any funding recommendations.

The workgroup also needs to generate a draft summary on water loss issues:

- Follow up on status of past recommendations.
- Summary of TWDB level 1 validation and technical assistance
- Making water loss a stand-alone component apart from conservation in State Water Plan
- Highlight some of the good things that have been happening the past couple of years on water loss mitigation.
- Water loss in the Texas Water Fund

- Can we quantify investment in water loss mitigation from this round of PIFs that were due March 1
- Is there any information we can include from the 5-yr Water Conservation and Water Loss Audits that are due about utility goals/plans around water loss mitigation?

Discussion on drought's impact on utility's water infrastructure due to shifting soils, high water pressures, etc. Specifically, the last two summers have been particularly challenging.

- Causes – extreme weather fluctuations, shifting soils, high water use and water pressure putting stress on infrastructure, aging infrastructure. This all impacts real loss.
- Show “normal” water loss vs water loss in a multi-year drought.
- In addition to aging infrastructure – what BMPs can communities do? Are they doing?
- Recommendation that Water Loss reports include specific information/data to demonstrate success.

Discussion was held regarding the need to include guidance on potential legislation; specifically:

- [HB 4445](#) – was a proposed bill the use water loss percentage (15%) as a trigger to enter into Stage 2 drought measures until such time as system falls below the 15% WL
 - <https://legiscan.com/TX/bill/HB4445/2023>
- Is there something that WCAC could put forward in this section as a more logical suggestion?

Other discussion items:

- Include any potential case studies on systems responding to water loss.
- What are regular water loss mitigation strategies and what are some utilities doing to cope with the higher level of main breaks?
- Require more detail in WCP on addressing water loss

Trends

- GPCD fluctuates a little year to year
- TWDB has hired additional water loss staff. (2 last fall and 2 more coming on board in April and June.
- Volunteer utilities for validation have been identified. The validation process will start this summer.
- Water loss webinars were held, technical assistance is available.
- Discussion held on the challenges of retaining consistency on necessary processes with utility staff changeover and retirement. Need to create guidelines/how to documents.
- Also, inexperienced utility staff, difficulty in hiring qualified candidates, and retiring experience.
- Possible research opportunities for studying soil types and main breaks during drought. And high customer demands
- Good audits will help direct funding needs

Marshal Elliot with SAWS was introduced as the new co-chair of water loss work group.

Meeting ended at 1:58 pm