



Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB) Meeting

**September 16, 2014
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT**

Call-In: 1-866-299-3188; Conference Code: 202-233-0068

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome and Introductions

Ann-Marie Gantner, Acting GNEB Designated Federal Officer (DFO); Diane Austin, Chair, GNEB; Toni Rousey, Acting Associate Director, Office of Diversity, Advisory Committee Management and Outreach (ODACMO), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Mark Joyce, Associate Director, ODACMO

Ms. Ann-Marie Gantner, Acting GNEB DFO, conducted the roll call and thanked the attendees for their participation. She indicated that a member of the press might be joining the meeting, and noted that Dr. Jennifer Lee, a contractor from The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc. (SCG), will be serving as a notetaker and will prepare the meeting summary. Dr. Diane Austin, Chair of the GNEB, welcomed the Board members and expressed her gratitude for their efforts in preparing the draft Report. She noted that Mr. Tim Treviño, Vice-Chair, GNEB, will be unable to participate in this meeting because he is attending the birth of his child.

Ms. Gantner introduced Ms. Toni Rousey, Acting Associate Director, ODACMO. Ms. Rousey welcomed the Board members, thanked them for their attendance, and expressed her appreciation for contributing their time to participate in this meeting.

Mr. Mark Joyce, Associate Director, ODACMO, also thanked the Board members for their efforts and participation at this meeting.

Ms. Gantner indicated that the GNEB had not achieved a quorum for this meeting, but noted that no quorum is necessary because the GNEB will not be voting to approve the Report. Dr. Austin commented that if additional Board members join the meeting while it is in progress and a quorum is achieved, the GNEB could approve the recommendations of the Report.

Overview of the Agenda

Diane Austin, Chair, GNEB

Dr. Austin thanked Ms. Gantner and ODACMO staff for the rapid turnaround of the GNEB's 2014 Advice Letter on the proposed merger of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) and the North American Development Bank (NADB). The final draft of the Advice Letter was distributed to the Board members via email, and it now is in the public domain.

Dr. Austin reviewed the agenda for today's meeting. She indicated that the meeting will begin with a Public Comment period, followed by discussion of the substantive changes to the draft of the 16th GNEB Report. Dr. Austin thanked the reviewers who had contributed comments on the draft Report.

Dr. Austin then reviewed the ground rules for the meeting. The meeting is being conducted via webinar. Those participating in the videoconference should raise their hands if they want to speak. The Board members participating only via teleconference should speak out if they want to comment. Dr. Austin reminded the Board members that the GNEB operates by consensus.

Public Comments

There were no written public comments received by the Acting DFO prior to this meeting, and no oral public comments were offered during the meeting when Dr. Austin called for comments.

Discussion of the Draft Report

Dr. Austin stated that in organizing the Board's raw material to draft the Report, she had summarized a significant amount of information to keep the Report concise, which resulted in some material being omitted. Dr. Austin noted that she had selected a range of case studies to reflect all of the relevant issues. She also had chosen activities reflective of the ecological restoration efforts by different types of entities, including states and tribes. Dr. Austin asked the Board members to review the draft following this meeting to ensure that none of the case studies that need to be included had been omitted during the editorial process.

Substantive Changes

Ms. Gantner stated that she had distributed all of the reviewers' comments via email to the Board members prior to this meeting, with the exception of some comments that she had received immediately before this meeting. Dr. Austin noted that Board members who had additional comments should raise them as the sections to which they referred came up.

Page 6, Line 10

Dr. Austin reported that Mr. Stephen Niemeyer had objected to the statement that degraded systems "have lost their capacity for repair." He thought the Board's intent in this sentence was

to state that these systems had lost some of their capacity for repair. The Board members noted that the language used in the Report was from Whisenant (1999), but the source is being cited rather than quoted directly. The Board members agreed that the language needed to be changed to avoid conveying the impression that all degraded systems cannot be restored. Instead, there is a continuum of ability to self-repair, and only some systems have lost their capacity for self-repair entirely. The Board members changed “have lost their capacity for repair” to “lose some or all of their capacity for repair.”

Page 8, Lines 9–11

Mr. Niemeyer had pointed out in his written comments that in this sentence, urban and “brownfield” sites are being discussed, but there is little by way of grazing operations in urban settings. Although this point was well taken, the Board agreed that it is important to include urban areas in the discussion of ecological degradation. Watershed management is a major issue in urban settings for reasons that include loss of permeability, which impairs rainfall infiltration. The Board members deleted “soil loss from grazing operations” and added the example “loss of soil permeability due to impacts of grazing and paving.” The Board members also agreed that “brownfields” should be defined in a footnote.

Page 9, Line 5

It was noted that different sources provide varying estimates of the length of the U.S.-Mexico border. The Board members agreed that the length used in the Report should be from an official source. Commissioner Edward Drusina stated that the official length of the U.S.-Mexico border is 1,954 miles, not 1,933 miles. This correction was made throughout the text.

Page 9, Line 18

Dr. Cyrus Reed questioned the reason for omitting any reference to climate change among the causes of resource restoration challenges in the borderlands, particularly given the effects of climate change on long-term drought and wildfire risk, which can hinder ecological restoration. The Board agreed that the effects of climate change are distinct from the large-scale land use practices that are presented in the Report as a bulleted list (lines 11–16). The following text was added below the bulleted list of restoration challenges in the borderlands: “In addition, changing climatic conditions, such as long-term drought, have added to these challenges.”

Page 9, Line 20

Dr. Austin asked for a reference for the assertion that “overabundant herbivores due to lack of predation pressure” represent a degraded resource condition. The Board members suggested adding border-relevant examples of the overabundance of herbivores. Dr. Greg Eckert volunteered to provide references and border-relevant examples for the assertion.

Page 9, Line 41

Mr. Steven Kameny commented that the official U.S. federal government term to refer to the infrastructure between border ports of entry is “border fence,” not “border wall.” As a representative of the State Department, he emphasized the importance of using official

terminology when referring to the border fence. Dr. Teresa Pohlman, GNEB federal member representing the Department of Homeland Security, concurred. Accordingly, all of the references to “border wall” were corrected throughout the text to use the official term “border fence.”

Page 10, Lines 1–2

Dr. Austin reported that the Commission for Environmental Cooperation’s (CEC) Environmentally Sound Management program, contributed by Dr. Eckert, had been criticized as not providing an apt example of a program promoting green infrastructure design. Dr. Austin suggested that the Board either add additional details to connect improved management of end-of-life products and wastes, the program’s goal, with ecological restoration, or remove the reference to the program. Dr. Pohlman cited Executive Order 13514, which calls for all federal agencies to continue implementation of formal environmental management systems, including maintaining all buildings in accordance with the principles of sustainability. She emphasized the importance of recognizing the activities of the U.S. federal government aimed at achieving responsible environmental management of its infrastructure. Dr. Pohlman will provide a new example of a federal program related to Executive Order 13514 that helps developers, designers and engineers avoid unintended environmental consequences of their activities. The CEC Environmentally Sound Management example was deleted.

Page 15, Lines 14–20

The Board agreed that the National Marine Fisheries Service’s (NMFS) Community-Based Restoration Program was not relevant to the section on public lands in which it appeared, and the text related to the Program was deleted.

Page 16, Map of U.S. Federal Lands in the Border Region

Ms. Edna Mendoza commented that the map of U.S. federal lands in the border region does not delineate the lands of the tribal nations. EPA’s Border 2020 program was proposed as a possible source of such a map. Mr. Evaristo Cruz volunteered to provide a map of U.S. federal lands along the U.S.-Mexico border that designates tribal lands.

Page 18, Line 24

Ms. Erin Ward noted that the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) supports state research focused on ecological restoration. She will provide text about basic and applied science efforts by the state Water Resources Research Institutes Program, which is supported by the USGS.

Page 19, Lines 4–7

Dr. Austin stated that Ms. Sally Spener had questioned the relevance of measures taken to prevent the spread of the cattle fever tick to ecological restoration. Mr. Salvador Salinas explained that the tick infects livestock. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service is using ecological restoration practices (e.g., grazing management, fencing, controlled burning) to restore native ecosystems and minimize the spread of the tick in south Texas. These efforts have met with success in reducing the extent of affected areas. Mr. Salinas

will provide text linking ecological restoration and the prevention of the spread of the cattle fever tick.

Page 30, Line 1

Dr. Austin noted that Mr. Niemeyer had commented that the term “climate change” had not been mentioned in the Report prior to this discussion of the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs). The Board agreed to retain the term “climate change” because it is part of the mission of the LCCs.

Page 30, Lines 17–20

Dr. Austin observed that no release date is provided in the Report for the National Research Council’s (NRC) evaluation of the LCC Program. Dr. Eckert volunteered to investigate the projected release date of the NRC’s evaluation.

Page 32, Line 37

Dr. Pohlman noted that the appellation “Bureau of Customs and Border Patrol (CBP)” is incorrect. The proper name for the law enforcement agency is the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). This was corrected at this location and throughout the text.

Page 30, Line 22

As a result of the discussion about the importance of urban ecological restoration (see the discussion in the section titled *Page 36, Lines 4–12*), Dr. Austin agreed to develop a case study for the section “Emerging Science for Urban Ecosystems” from material that the Board members in the Urban Ecological Restoration Workgroup had developed. She will send it to Dr. Keith Pezzoli and Ms. Mendoza for review. Dr. Pezzoli offered to send to Dr. Austin another copy of the document that the Urban Ecological Restoration Workgroup had generated. He noted that some of the material from the document had been included in the draft Report, but the document contains additional material that had been omitted. Dr. Austin thanked Dr. Pezzoli for his offer, and assured him that she has the document in question.

Page 33, Line 33

Ms. Camille Mittelholtz noted that the Department of Transportation (DOT) offers funding opportunities for improving environmental conditions at border crossings. She will provide more information about activities sponsored by the DOT related to ecological restoration in the border region.

Page 36, Lines 4–12

Ms. Spener stated that in this paragraph, it is not clear whose goals are being presented. As written, the goals could be interpreted as being those of the GNEB. The Board members did not recall including them in previous GNEB Reports. The Board discussed which federal agencies (e.g., the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service) might be implementing similar goals for their watershed restoration activities. Dr. Jose Francisco Zamora-Arroyo

proposed that the Board develop goals as well as recommendations for ecological restoration. Dr. Reed explained that the framework of the chapter is to present overall goals for ecological restoration of watersheds and examples that support the GNEB's recommendations. Some of those recommendations are directed toward achieving particular restoration goals. The Board agreed to clarify that the goals presented in the paragraph are those of certain agencies and organizations involved in watershed restoration in the border region.

Under the goal to reestablish base flow conditions, Dr. Reed acknowledged that the phrase "by eliminating wells next to river" might be misinterpreted. The intent was to highlight potential environmental consequences of unpermitted wells. Wells located near rivers need to be managed properly, not eliminated. The GNEB decided to delete the phrase "by eliminating wells next to river" in goal 5.

The Board members discussed the wording of the goals and potential additional goals. Dr. Pezzoli proposed adding a goal that would reflect the effects of upland vegetation communities on watershed restoration, which is of particular importance in urban watersheds, where the restoration of tree canopies is a key focus because of the impact of trees on water retention, water purification and heat island effects. Dr. Pezzoli cited the example of San Diego, California, where the creation of offsite urban farms and woodlands has been used to comply with new storm water mitigation regulations. Dr. Pezzoli's example led to a discussion of whether or not the ecological restoration goals for watersheds that are presented in this chapter pertain to urban as well as rural areas. The Board concluded that including ecological restoration of urban watersheds was appropriate for this chapter.

In deciding whether it is necessary to add a separate goal of restoring upland plant communities, the Board members considered whether the term "riparian plant communities" applied to all areas within the floodplain or was specific to the transitional area between aquatic and upland ecosystems. One member commented that woodlands are not always the appropriate restoration target for uplands. The Board decided to add a new goal, using the more inclusive term "upland vegetation communities" rather than "woodland vegetation communities."

After debating the applicability of the terms "reintroduction," "restoration" and "reestablishment," the Board members rephrased the following goals for clarity and parallel structure:

- (ii) "Reintroduction of riparian plant communities" was changed to "Restoration of riparian plant communities."
- (iii) "Reintroduction of wetlands" was changed to "Restoration of wetlands."
- (iv) "Reestablish flow..." was changed to "Reestablishment of flow..."
- (vi) "Reduce or eliminate invasive species" was changed to "Reduction or elimination of invasive species."
- (vii) "Reintroduction of a healthy stream/riparian system" was changed to "Reestablishment of a healthy stream/riparian system."

Pages 40–41, Ecological and Geomorphological Challenges

The Board members discussed the need to rewrite this section because its structure is not logical and it includes material that is discussed elsewhere in the Report. Ms. Spener asked about the technical meaning of the term “overpumping,” which is used in this section and elsewhere in the Report. Dr. Reed responded that it is not a technical term. It was used to convey the challenge to ecological restoration posed by unpermitted wells. Dr. Ivonne Santiago noted that there have been reports that pumping in Mexico has affected aquifers in the United States. Dr. Reed volunteered to rewrite the section on “Ecological and Geomorphological Challenges.” Dr. Austin asked Mr. Kevin Bixby, Ms. Spener, Dr. Zamora-Arroyo and Dr. Santiago to review the section after Dr. Reed revises it.

Page 42, Line 25

Following the discussion of urban ecological restoration activities (see the discussion in the section titled *Page 36, Lines 4–12*), Dr. Pezzoli agreed to develop a case study on urban forestry for the Tijuana River watershed section.

Page 44, Line 28

It was pointed out that “Minute No. 319” should be changed to “Minute 319,” and this change was made.

Page 45, Line 30

Dr. Zamora-Arroyo noted that in this sentence, metric units for area (hectares) are used instead of English units (acres). For consistency, the GNEB agreed to use English units throughout the Report. The contractor, SCG, will ensure that English units are used throughout the Report, with the equivalent measure in metric units provided in parentheses.

Page 45, Lines 34–35

Dr. Zamora-Arroyo noted that he has access to images relevant to the Pulse Flow that he will provide for the Report.

Page 46, Lines 27–29

In the section on the unique challenges faced in the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo watershed, the statement is made that only 20 percent of the river’s natural discharge reaches the Gulf of Mexico. This is attributed to demand from agriculture, urban centers and hydroelectric dams. The Board discussed the accuracy of the estimate for the river’s discharge to the Gulf. Ms. Spener agreed to provide data on the percentage of the Rio Grande’s natural discharge that reaches the Gulf of Mexico. She noted that the ability to perform such accounting depends, however, on data availability from Mexico as well as the United States. In the interim, the Board members rewrote the sentence, including changing “about 20 percent” to “a small percentage.”

The Board also discussed other human uses such as reservoirs that add to the demand on the Rio Grande’s discharge. Ms. Ward suggested using the common umbrella term “human diversions.”

The Board agreed to change “heavy demand from agriculture, urban centers, and hydroelectric dams” to “human diversions.”

Dr. Reed noted that in recent decades, the total volume of water that reaches the Gulf has decreased significantly, mostly as a result of human diversions. The International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) might be a source for historical discharge records. Mr. Bixby made the broader point that human diversions also have changed natural flow patterns, not just total discharge. The Board agreed that volume and timing of flows (e.g., spring flows) are important for the river’s ecosystem as well as human uses of the river. The Board added the sentence “More than a century of water development has changed the river’s flow pattern, and in recent decades, the total amount of water has declined.”

Page 46, The Rio Grande/Rio Bravo Watershed

Mr. Niemeyer stated that the GNEB’s 2013 Advice Letter contained a recommendation on ensuring future compliance with water deliveries from Mexico. In that Letter, the GNEB pointed out that lack of planned deliveries had caused difficulties. Regarding this issue, it was proposed earlier that the Report’s recommendations include a note that Texas does not support a successor agreement to Minute 319 without the recognition that Mexico has not complied with Rio Grande deliveries under the 1944 Treaty. The Board had reached a consensus, however, not to include the note in the Report recommendations (see the discussion in the section titled *Page 59, Lines 5–13*).

The Board discussed adding language on this issue from the 2013 Advice Letter to the Case Study on Minute 319 in the Report, framing it as one of the benefits of Minute 319. Alternatively, it could be included in the text of the Rio Grande section of the Report. The Board members agreed that reliable water deliveries from Mexico would benefit ecological restoration. The GNEB reached a consensus to include language from the Advice Letter in the section of the Report on the Rio Grande. Mr. Niemeyer volunteered to extract text from the 2013 Advice Letter about the issue to be included in this section of the Report.

Page 54, Line 2

Dr. Austin indicated that a reference is needed for the statement that in the border region, fewer than 10 percent of the original riparian areas and wetlands remain. Ms. Mendoza agreed to verify the statistic and provide a reference.

Page 56, Lines 6–22

Dr. Austin stated that a comment had been made that the first sentence of the first paragraph is misleading. The GNEB Report should not convey the impression that it is likely Mexico will reclaim the portion of the effluent that originates in Nogales, Sonora, because this possibility is remote. Therefore, Ms. Spener suggested deleting the first sentence. Dr. Zamora-Arroyo proposed adding a sentence at the end of the second paragraph noting that there are additional opportunities for binational collaboration that might be able to maintain base flow for the Santa Cruz River. Ms. Mendoza agreed to rewrite the text on the Los Alisos Wastewater Treatment Plant. Dr. Austin asked Dr. Zamora-Arroyo and Ms. Spener to review the revised text.

Page 57, Line 37

Ms. Spener indicated that the Mexican Section of the IBWC prefers that all engagement of Mexican partners in transborder watershed management and urban ecological restoration be executed through the IBWC. The Board members noted that other federal agencies (e.g., the IBWC) in addition to EPA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) might be interested in engaging Mexican partners in such efforts. Ms. Spener proposed making the recommendation more general by deleting any reference to specific federal agencies. The GNEB questioned whether it would be appropriate for EPA to receive funding through Border 2020 to create a Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) in the Tijuana River Watershed, or whether it would be more appropriate for funding to be provided to the IBWC. Ms. Spener drafted a proposed revision to the recommendation regarding the creation of a SAMP, using a format that transitioned from a general statement of principle to greater specificity. The Board adopted Ms. Spener's proposed revision to the recommendation on engaging Mexican partners in transborder watershed management and urban ecological restoration.

Page 58, Lines 25–28

Dr. Zamora-Arroyo observed that the recommendation emphasized the Rio Grande to the exclusion of other rivers (e.g., Tijuana River, Colorado River). He will provide examples of restoration projects undertaken by nonfederal entities in addition to those in the Rio Grande watershed to include in the recommendation.

Page 59, Lines 5–13

Ms. Spener reported that Commissioner Drusina is in favor of deleting from the recommendation the proposed note about Texas not supporting a successor agreement to Minute 319 without the recognition that Mexico has not complied with Rio Grande deliveries under the 1944 Treaty. She disagreed with the implication that U.S. approval of extensions to Minute 319 depend on future water deliveries to the Rio Grande. Mr. Kameny agreed that this linkage should not be made in the Report. He pointed out the enormous benefits to the United States of the enactment of Minute 319. He stated that Minute 319 has been very beneficial to both the United States and Mexico. Ms. Spener concurred that the proposed note conveys the impression that Minute 319 does not benefit the United States. She commented that the elements of Minute 319 pertaining to drought management have helped ensure against water shortages.

Mr. Niemeyer drew the attention of the Board members to pending congressional legislation sponsored by Texas establishing conditions that must be met before considering extension of the provisions of Minute 319. The Board debated including a mention of this legislation as a footnote in the Report, noting that the pending legislation,¹ which establishes reporting requirements about the Mexican efforts to deliver water to the Rio Grande, might fail to be enacted by Congress or change substantially before being enacted. Ms. Spener asked for clarification from Mr. Niemeyer as to whether the legislation had been filed as a bill.

¹ Working to Address Treaty Enforcement Rapidly for Texas Act.

Dr. Zamora-Arroyo questioned whether it was appropriate to refer to the issue of the pending legislation in the Report's recommendation section. The GNEB debated whether to include a general recommendation to ensure future compliance with water deliveries from Mexico. The GNEB resolved to delete the proposed note in the recommendation and not to mention the pending legislation in the recommendation.

Dr. Zamora-Arroyo added that the benefits to habitat restoration from the Pulse Flow described in the Report will persist whether or not the provisions of Minute 319 are extended.

Page 59, Line 32

Mr. Michael Migliori questioned whether the recommendation on meeting aquatic restoration needs was sufficiently explicit to include the restoration of intertidal and marine, as well as freshwater, ecosystems. He offered to rewrite the recommendation so that it is inclusive of intertidal and marine ecosystems.

Pages 57–59, Chapter 4

The Board members discussed making all of the recommendations more uniform with regard to their degree of specificity. The Board agreed that if the recommendations are too specific, their execution might prove problematic. Sufficient specificity is needed, however, for the recommendations to be executable. Dr. Austin stated that she had grouped the recommendations by topic rather than degree of generality. The Board agreed that the style of Ms. Spener's revised recommendation (see the discussion in the section titled *Page 57, Line 37*) should be used for all of the recommendations.

Dr. Austin requested that all of the Board members review the recommendations and highlight those that were too specific, requiring the addition of a general introduction, as well as those that were too general, requiring additional examples. She volunteered to rewrite all of the recommendations in Chapter 4 using Ms. Spener's revision as a model. Dr. Austin indicated that she will send the revised recommendations to the Board members for their review.

Next Steps

Dr. Austin thanked the Board members for their efforts, noting that it was important that the members discuss all of the issues. She recognized the assistance of Dr. Eckert, who had helped with the final editing of the draft.

Dr. Austin commented that during this meeting, several members of the Board had agreed to focus on rewriting sections or paragraphs of the Report. She asked these Board members to submit revised and additional text to her by Friday, September 19, 2014. Dr. Austin emphasized that a timely response is important so that new material can be inserted in the draft for review by all of the Board members.

Dr. Austin asked the Board members to gather graphical material that needs to be included in the Report. It is important that all graphical material be of good quality and high resolution. Quality graphics will enhance the Report significantly. Dr. Austin asked the Board members to send all

maps, photographs, images and other graphical material to her, Ms. Gantner and Mr. Joyce via email by the next Board meeting. All of the graphical material included in the Report must have proper attribution and if applicable, copyright permission. Ms. Gantner indicated that she would send to the Board members another copy of SCG's guidelines for providing graphical material of adequate resolution for the Report.

Dr. Austin said that the revised draft will be completed as soon as possible. The Board members will receive a copy to circulate within their agencies for review in time for the next Board meeting. She anticipated that she would send the revised draft Report to the Board members by the end of September or beginning of October.

Ms. Gantner announced that the next meeting of the GNEB was scheduled for October 30, 2014, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. She thanked the Board members for participating in the poll to schedule the meeting. Mr. Joyce recognized the efforts of the Board members, noting that the Board had met more frequently than originally anticipated. He emphasized that it is essential for the GNEB to achieve a quorum at the October 30 meeting so that the members can approve the Report. Mr. Joyce and Ms. Gantner will follow up with all of the Board members to ensure that a quorum is achieved.

Dr. Austin asked the Board members to submit comments prior to the October 30 meeting so that she can compile them. The Board will discuss substantive comments during the meeting. Given how much was accomplished at this meeting, Dr. Austin anticipated that there will be only a few substantive comments to discuss in October.

Other Issues

Response to the GNEB's 2014 Advice Letter

Mr. Joyce reported that The White House's Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) was in the process of developing a response to the 2014 Advice Letter. Mr. Thomas Hastings of the U.S. State Department had provided additional information to the CEQ related to the Advice Letter. Mr. Kameny pointed out that although federal representatives are GNEB members and can submit comments, they must recuse themselves from making recommendations. Mr. Joyce expressed his appreciation to the federal members for providing comments. He agreed to send the CEQ's response to the Advice Letter to the Board members.

Membership

A *Federal Register* notice will be issued announcing openings for membership on the GNEB. Ms. Gantner asked all of the current members who are not representatives of federal or state agencies to send her a message via email if they are interested in being reappointed to the GNEB. She will send notification of the *Federal Register* notice to the Board members. In addition, she asked the Board members to provide her with recommendations of individuals who might be interested in serving on the GNEB. Mr. Joyce stressed that candidates should be knowledgeable, able to make valuable contributions, and be willing and able to contribute their time. In the past, current and former Board members have provided excellent nominations.

Ms. Gantner stated that for federal and state agencies, the process by which Board members are selected is different. The EPA Administrator will send a letter to all of the applicable federal and state agencies asking them to nominate representatives to serve on the GNEB. For the states, the letter is sent to the Governor. After the letter from the EPA Administrator requesting nominations is sent, Ms. Gantner will provide a copy to all of the federal and state GNEB members. Those who are interested in serving another term on the GNEB can follow up with their agencies. Mr. Joyce anticipated that the letter will be sent within several weeks of this meeting. He reminded the Board members that service on federal advisory committees managed by EPA under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) is limited to 6 years unless there are extraordinary extenuating circumstances.

The deadline for applicants to submit their resumes to serve on the new GNEB is October 31, 2014. EPA requires 3 to 4 months to process applications and obtain approvals. Appointments will be announced in March 2015. The new term will be 2 years (March 2015– March 2017). Current Board members' terms will enable them to finish the 2014 Report.

Mr. Joyce anticipated that the duties and time demands for the new Board members will be similar to those of the current GNEB. The topics of the Board's reports are determined in consultation with the CEQ and subject to CEQ approval.

Adjournment

Dr. Austin thanked the participants for their efforts, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Action Items

- ✧ Dr. Eckert will provide references and border-relevant examples for the assertion that “overabundant herbivores due to lack of predation pressure” represent a degraded resource condition.
- ✧ Dr. Pohlman will provide a new example of a federal program to help developers, designers and engineers avoid unintended environmental consequences of their activities.
- ✧ Mr. Cruz will provide a map of U.S. federal lands along the U.S.-Mexico border that designates tribal lands.
- ✧ Ms. Ward will provide text about basic and applied science efforts by the state Water Resources Research Institutes Program.
- ✧ Mr. Salinas will provide text linking ecological restoration and the prevention of the spread of the cattle fever tick.
- ✧ Dr. Eckert will try to obtain the projected release date of the NRC’s evaluation of the LCC Program.
- ✧ Dr. Austin will develop a case study for the “Emerging Science for Urban Ecosystems” section.
- ✧ Ms. Mittelholtz will provide more information about DOT activities related to ecological restoration in the border region.
- ✧ Dr. Reed will rewrite the section on “Ecological and Geomorphological Challenges.”
- ✧ Dr. Pezzoli will develop a case study on urban forestry for the Tijuana River watershed section.
- ✧ SCG will ensure that English units are used throughout the Report, with the value in metric units provided in parentheses.
- ✧ Dr. Zamora-Arroyo will provide images relevant to the Pulse Flow for the Report.
- ✧ Ms. Spener will provide data on the percentage of the Rio Grande’s natural discharge that reaches the Gulf of Mexico.
- ✧ Mr. Niemeyer will provide language from the Board’s 2013 Advice Letter regarding the effects of the lack of planned water deliveries from Mexican reservoirs to the Rio Grande.
- ✧ Ms. Mendoza will verify the percentage and provide a reference for the fraction of the original riparian areas and wetlands that remain in the border region.
- ✧ Ms. Mendoza will rewrite the text on the Los Alisos Wastewater Treatment Plant.

- ✧ Dr. Zamora-Arroyo will provide examples of restoration projects undertaken by nonfederal entities in addition to those in the Rio Grande watershed to include under the recommendation titled “Improve governance and funding mechanisms to reflect landscape scale restoration need.”
- ✧ Mr. Migliori will reword the recommendation on meeting aquatic restoration needs so that it is inclusive of intertidal and marine ecosystems.
- ✧ Dr. Austin will rewrite the recommendations in Chapter 4 using Ms. Spener’s revision as a model.
- ✧ Ms. Gantner will send guidelines for providing graphical material of adequate resolution for the Report to the Board members.
- ✧ Dr. Austin will send the revised draft Report to the Board members to circulate within their agencies for review by the end of September or beginning of October.
- ✧ Mr. Joyce will send CEQ’s response to the GNEB’s 2014 Advice Letter to the Board members.
- ✧ Current GNEB members who are not representatives of federal or state agencies should send a message via email to Ms. Gantner if they are interested in being reappointed to the GNEB.
- ✧ Ms. Gantner will send a copy of the EPA Administrator’s letter to all of the applicable federal and state agencies asking them to nominate representatives to serve on the GNEB to the federal and state GNEB members.
- ✧ Current federal and state GNEB members who are interested in serving another term on the Board should follow up with their agencies.
- ✧ Ms. Gantner will notify Board members of the *Federal Register* notice announcing openings for membership on the GNEB.
- ✧ GNEB members should provide Ms. Gantner recommendations of individuals who might be interested in serving on the GNEB.

**Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB)
Meeting Participants**

**Nonfederal State, Local and Tribal
Members**

Diane Austin, Ph.D. (Chair)

Associate Research Anthropologist
Bureau of Applied Research in
Anthropology
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ

Kevin Bixby

Executive Director
Southwest Environmental Center
Las Cruces, NM

Evaristo Cruz

Director
Environmental Management Office
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
El Paso, TX

Edna A. Mendoza

Director
Office of Border Environmental Protection
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Keith Pezzoli, Ph.D.

Director of Field Research, Continuing
Lecturer
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Engagement
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Cyrus B.H. Reed, Ph.D.

Conservation Director
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Ivonne Santiago, Ph.D.

Lecturer
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Erin Ward

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Jose Francisco Zamora-Arroyo, Ph.D.

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Acting Regional Conservationist, West
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Agriculture
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Department of Homeland Security

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Department of the Interior

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Restoration Ecologist
National Park Service
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***International Boundary and Water
Commission***

Edward Drusina
Commissioner
U.S. Section
International Boundary and Water
Commission
El Paso, TX

Acting Designated Federal Officer

Ann-Marie Gantner
Acting Designated Federal Officer
Good Neighbor Environmental Board
Office of Diversity, Advisory Committee
Management and Outreach
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, D.C.

**Nonfederal State, Local and Tribal
Alternates**

***Texas Commission on Environmental
Quality***

Stephen M. Niemeyer, P.E.
Border Affairs Manager and Colonias
Coordinator
Intergovernmental Relations Division
Texas Commission on Environmental
Quality
Austin, TX

Federal Alternates

Department of Commerce
Michael Migliori
Estuarine Reserves Division
Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource
Management
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
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Department of Commerce
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***Department of Health and Human
Services***

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Binational Operations Coordinator
U.S. Section
U.S.-México Border Health Commission
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El Paso, TX

Department of State

Steven Kameny
International Relations Officer
U.S.-Mexico Border Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Department of State

Sally Spener
Foreign Affairs Officer
U.S. Section
International Boundary and Water
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Department of Transportation

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EPA Participants

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Associate Director
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Contractor Support

Jennifer Lee, Ph.D.

Science Writer/Editor
The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.
Gaithersburg, MD



Good Neighbor Environmental Board

Agenda

Tuesday, September 16, 2014

11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (EDT)

Call-in: 866-299-3188, conference code: 2022330068

11:00 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions

- **Ann-Marie Gantner**
Acting Designated Federal Officer
Office of Diversity, Advisory Committee Management and Outreach
- **Diane Austin**
Chair
Good Neighbor Environmental Board
- **Tim Treviño**
Vice-Chair
Good Neighbor Environmental Board
- **Denise Benjamin-Sirmons**
Director
Office of Diversity, Advisory Committee Management and Outreach
- **Board Introductions**

11:15 a.m.

Overview of Agenda

- **Diane Austin**
Chair
Good Neighbor Environmental Board
- **Tim Treviño**
Vice-Chair
Good Neighbor Environmental Board

11:25 a.m.

Public Comments

11:45 a.m.

Discussion of Draft Report

2:30 p.m.

Next Steps

2:45 p.m.

Other Issues

- **Membership**

3:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Gantner, Ann-Marie

From: Austin, Diane E - (daustin) <daustin@email.arizona.edu>
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 8:52 PM
To: Gantner, Ann-Marie
Subject: GNEB September 16 Meeting Summary - Approval

Dear AnnMarie,

I approve the September 16 meeting summary.

Sincerely,

Diane

Diane Austin
Chair
Good Neighbor Environmental Board

These minutes are an accurate description of the matters discussed during this meeting.



Diane Austin
Chair
Good Neighbor Environmental Board

11/24/2014
Date

The Good Neighbor Environmental Board was created by the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative Act of 1992. The board is responsible for providing advice to the President and Congress on environmental and infrastructure issues and needs within the states contiguous to Mexico. The findings and recommendations of the Board do not represent the views of the Agency, and this document does not represent information approved or disseminated by the Environmental Protection Agency.