



Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB) Teleconference
Call-in number: 1-866-299-3188; conference code: 2022330068#
July 11, 2017

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome, Introductions and Overview of Agenda

Paul Ganster, Chair, GNEB, and Mark Joyce, Associate Director, Federal Advisory Committee Management Division (FACMD), Office of Administration and Resources Management (OARM), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Mr. Mark Joyce, Associate Director, FACMD, OARM, EPA, welcomed the participants and conducted the roll call. A list of meeting participants is included as Appendix A. The purpose of this teleconference is to discuss the integrated draft of GNEB's 18th report and develop a timeline to finalize the report. A teleconference to approve the report has been scheduled for September 7, 2017; the report must be 95 to 99 percent complete by the time of that call. He explained that any material that was not pertinent to the topic of the 18th report (border security) has been removed.

Dr. Paul Ganster, GNEB Chair, provided an overview of the agenda (Appendix B), explaining that substantive concerns about the central message, balance or focus of the report would be introduced first. Next, the Board will discuss the report by section. Finally, the discussion will conclude with identification of next steps. Copyediting comments are not necessary, as the contractor will take care of this aspect. A central message for the report is needed. Some data and references are needed; GNEB members will need to supply these as appropriate. The case studies must refer to the central focus of the report and will need to be edited for conciseness by those Board members who submitted them. A summary that introduces the recommendations will be needed as well.

The official certification of the minutes by the Chair is included as Appendix C.

Review of the Current Draft

Dr. Keith Pezzoli noted three sections that could be highlighted in the executive summary. The first section is on page 8, lines 16–26, which describe how security is defined. The second section is on page 23, lines 20–25, which speaks to the fact that the decline in apprehensions may not necessarily be completely the result of the border fence but also could be a result of other dynamics. The third section, on page 32, describes examples of innovative ways of thinking about a security apparatus that is not necessarily brick and mortar, which were provided in response to the Trump administration's request for proposals (RFPs).

Dr. Margaret Wilder noted that the report needs to be more clear that the GNEB does not have access to the proposals submitted for the RFP. Dr. Ganster agreed; the report mentions potential alternatives that have been described publicly. The two cited are examples of innovation and creative thinking that have begun to emerge through the process of thinking about a border wall. Dr. Teresa Pohlman agreed that it must be clarified that these are examples that are publicly known. In response to a question from Mr. Joyce, Dr. Pohlman explained that examples of innovations most likely could be found via a Google search or in the *Federal Times* or *Washington Post*.

Dr. Pohlman thought that the definitions were done well. The progress that has been made along the border need to be emphasized more and moved to the forefront of the report.

Dr. David Eaton noted that the current recommendations are insufficient, and it will be important for those who developed each section to also develop recommendations. Dr. Ganster and Dr. Jeff Payne agreed. Dr. Payne added that several important recommendations are missing. Dr. Ganster explained that some recommendations had been removed; important ones may need to be re-added or new recommendations developed.

Mr. Stephen Niemeyer thought that the report focused on negative aspects of a border wall, and the positive aspects should be included to show balance. Dr. Ganster agreed that because the report is meant to be a neutral analysis of the border wall, it should include this balance.

About the Board

The following sentence has been included because it was true for the last report: “The states of Arizona, New Mexico and Texas have recused themselves from this report.” States have until the teleconference on September 7 to recuse themselves.

Mr. Joyce explained that a blanket statement about the recusal of federal agencies is included on the inside cover of the report. A statement can be added to the “About the Board” section if members think it is important. Ms. Sylvia Grijalva stated for the record that the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) always recuses itself.

Introduction

Dr. Pezzolli thought that the introduction could include language about the retrospective aspect of the report. Dr. Ganster agreed, noting that this would help pull the introduction together.

Dr. Pohlman noted that the use of the term “climate change” on page 9 might need to be changed. Mr. Joyce pointed out that the 17th report is about climate change and uses the term in the title. Dr. Payne commented that this term is used when citing that report, so specific language could be directly quoted from the previous report. Dr. Wilder stressed the need to be scientifically straightforward when discussing climate change, and she objected to changing the term. Dr. Jose Francisco Zamora-Arroyo reiterated that the Board wrote an entire report on climate change, using that term. Dr. Pezzoli agreed, adding that the term “climate disruption” is being used increasingly. The term “climate change” is established nomenclature. A GNEB member noted that “climate change” is the subject of the current sentence; studies and analysts are the ones who project. Making the study or analysis the subject would correct the issue. Mr. Niemeyer agreed, noting that “climate change” could be changed to “Future climate is projected...”

A GNEB member asked why the report uses the phrase “14.4 million human residents” on page 8 instead of “14.4 million people.” Dr. Ganster noted the change.

Dr. Pohlman noted that the progress that has been made in the border area needs to be described at the beginning of the introduction. She will provide Dr. Ganster with specific language. Dr. Zamora-Arroyo volunteered to send examples of progress in the Baja-California border area.

Chapter 1: Border Context

Mr. Niemeyer compiled county data and has tables for the information on pages 11 and 13. He will send them. The correct reference is the U.S. Census Bureau.

A GNEB member asked why the data mentioned on page 13 in lines 18–25 are from 2007. Dr. Ganster explained that the San Diego Association of Governments is in the process of compiling new data. It may be ready before the report goes to press; Dr. Ganster can investigate this.

Ms. Lisa Schaub thought that Section 1.3.3 needs more robust discussion. She thought that Ms. Grijalva knows of a USDOT report on this topic. Ms. Grijalva explained that a comprehensive study has not been completed; the current reports are location-specific and describe current wait times. One report discusses wait times and air pollution effects; she will send the link to this information to Ms. Schaub, who will develop the additional discussion for this section. Dr. Ganster explained that the 17th report cites an article describing the negative health effects of pollution exposure at the border: Quintana et al. 2015. “Risky Borders: Traffic Pollution and Health Effects at U.S.–Mexican Ports of Entry.” *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 30 (3): 287–307. Ms. Grijalva suggested investigating a possible San Ysidro Port of Entry study by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation.

Chapter 2: Challenges and Opportunities

Ms. Lisa LaRocque asked how the recommendations that were deleted should be re-incorporated. Dr. Ganster explained that the goal is for the text to introduce recommendations that are then summarized in a list. Recommendations must have text in the report that supports them; these recommendations should emerge naturally from the discussion. The Board should not develop too many recommendations. Dr. Eaton recommended each chapter have a “discussion section” at the end that discusses the recommendations. Dr. Payne agreed, noting that such a section would set up the chapter on recommendations. Dr. Wilder agreed that substantive discussion in the chapter followed by a succinct list of recommendations would be helpful. Drs. Wilder and Ganster will work on developing the discussion section.

Dr. Payne explained that the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve case study relates to water management, trash control and sediment management; the case study should be moved to Section 2.6.

Mr. Niemeyer noted that the “nearly 800 miles of fencing” statistic cited in line 21 of page 30 should be 654 miles, which changes the percentage from 40 to 33 percent.

Mr. Joyce thought that the report should note that the goal is to avoid a recurrence of the issues that arose during the completion of the border fence. The ultimate goal is to minimize the environmental effects of any additional infrastructure placed in the border area. Also, timetables to build infrastructure should not be rushed. Dr. Pohlman agreed. Best practices that reduce harm have been implemented. Mr. William Bresnick noted that line 31 on page 31 is an overly broad statement. Dr. Pohlman agreed that several broad statements were made in the report, and she will check them for accuracy and provide revised language as needed.

Dr. Zamora-Arroyo pointed to the discussion on pages 43 to 45. He would like to cite examples of installation of infrastructure that have been counterproductive for the environment and provides only marginal security benefits, such as the trash screens in the Calexico area. He will send Ms. Kristen LeBaron of The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc. information about the specific California Regional Water Quality Control Board reference.

Dr. Wilder suggested that the section titles should reflect the bulleted list at the beginning of the chapter; consistency and explicit linkage is needed. Dr. Payne agreed that the chapter has structural issues. The nature of the subsections appears to be a combination of drivers and conditions as well as responses. The sections may need to be moved so that they logically flow. He will tighten the structure of this chapter and send it to Dr. Ganster.

Dr. Ganster mentioned the recent Inspector General report that indicates that it is the first report in a series about physical security on the southern border. He wondered about the timeline for additional reports. Dr. Pohlman was unsure but she can check.

Dr. Wilder explained that she had tried to obtain permission to speak to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staff about sustainable infrastructure already being implemented in the border region. Ms. Jennifer Hass explained that CBP had presented information during a teleconference, but she had not received any follow-up requests for information. She can coordinate with CBP to obtain any additional information requested by GNEB members. Mr. Joyce clarified that the teleconference in question focused mostly on solar applications. Dr. Pohlman instructed GNEB members to request information from Ms. Hass rather than contacting CBP directly. Dr. Wilder explained that the presentation from the teleconference would be helpful to develop additional language. Ms. Hass responded that a slide deck was not developed for the teleconference, but she will provide language describing examples of innovative technologies that have begun to be implemented.

Ms. LaRocque volunteered to provide a photograph of endangered species. Mr. Joyce noted that Mr. Jon Anderson's presentation from the February 2017 GNEB face-to-face meeting and a 2009 presentation have several appropriate photos. Dr. Ganster thought that a picture of an antelope crawling through vehicle barrier would be useful to highlight issues. Mr. Joyce added that the graphic designer from The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc. is another good resource. Photos must be in the public domain, or the copyright holders must provide permission.

Appendices

Dr. Ganster thought that EPA Region 6 staff could work with Dr. Pohlman and Ms. Hass to clean up the table in Appendix 1. It is important to develop summary text introducing the information. Although people may not want to read the entire table, they may be very interested in reading a summary. Dr. Pohlman will develop an introductory paragraph for Appendix 1. Mr. Niemeyer will write an introductory paragraph for Appendix 2. Dr. Eaton will write an introductory paragraph for Appendix 3. Ms. Schaub explained that she and her colleagues are developing text about Appendix 4 to include in the body of the report so that this appendix can be deleted.

Discussion of Conclusions and Recommendations

Mr. Niemeyer thought that the Board members should review the report and determine what is useful to recommend to the President and Congress at this time. Dr. Ganster agreed.

Dr. Wilder suggested organizing the recommendations under the four bulleted topics at the beginning of Chapter 2. Recommendations that do not fall under these topics (e.g., consultations with tribes) can be included in an overarching "catch-all" heading.

Dr. Payne will provide language for a recommendation regarding sedimentation and trash control. He also will draft recommendations regarding how to avoid or minimize costly impacts to environmental and public health.

Mr. Niemeyer thought that the report should acknowledge that border security is a controversial topic; this could be included in the introduction with a note that the Board is aware of this and has decided to provide its perspective as an independent advisory board in an effort to improve border environmental protection.

Next Steps and Schedule

Mr. Joyce stated that all additional text must be sent to him, Dr. Ganster and Ms. LeBaron no later than Monday, July 31, 2017. Sooner would be preferable, but July 31 is a very hard deadline so that the report is ready for the Board to discuss during the teleconference scheduled for September 7, 2017.

Mr. Joyce thanked the GNEB members for their efforts in developing the report. GNEB reports are read by a wide audience.

Adjournment

Dr. Ganster thanked the GNEB members for their input during the teleconference. The meeting was adjourned at 2:09 p.m. EDT.

Action Items

- All GNEB members will review the report and identify any pertinent recommendations that can be made in Chapter 2, supply missing references as appropriate, and edit or shorten case studies as appropriate.
- GNEB members who have photos of endangered species will provide them to Dr. Ganster, Mr. Joyce and Ms. LeBaron.
- Specific GNEB members and EPA staff have the following responsibilities:
 - Dr. Eaton will write an introductory paragraph for Appendix 3.
 - Ms. Grijalva will send the link to the report that discusses border wait times and air pollution effects so that Ms. Schaub can add text to Section 1.3.3.
 - Ms. Hass will provide language describing examples of innovative technologies that have begun to be implemented.
 - Mr. Niemeyer will send the data and tables he compiled.
 - Mr. Niemeyer will write an introductory paragraph for Appendix 2.
 - Dr. Payne will revise the structure of Chapter 2.
 - Dr. Payne will provide language for a recommendation regarding sedimentation and trash control.
 - Dr. Pohlman will provide language for the introduction about the progress that has been made since the 2007 GNEB report.
 - Dr. Pohlman will check the statements that she identified as “broad” for accuracy and provide alternate language as appropriate.
 - Dr. Pohlman will look into the timeline for the Inspector General reports on physical security on the southern border.
 - Dr. Pohlman will develop an introductory paragraph describing the table in Appendix 1.
 - Dr. Pohlman, with the help of EPA Region 6 staff, will clean up the table in Appendix 1.

- Ms. Schaub and EPA Region 6 staff will develop text about Appendix 4 to include in the report so that this appendix can be deleted.
- Drs. Wilder and Ganster will develop a discussion section for the end of each chapter.
- Dr. Zamora-Arroyo will send Ms. LeBaron the information about the California Regional Water Quality Control Board reference.
- Dr. Zamora-Arroyo will provide examples of progress in the Baja-California border area.
- Dr. Zamora-Arroyo will provide examples of infrastructure installation that is counterproductive for the environment and provides only marginal security benefits; this will be added to the discussion on pages 43 to 45.
- All additional text/revisions must be sent via email to Dr. Ganster, Mr. Joyce and Ms. LeBaron ***no later than Monday, July 31, 2017.***

Appendix A: Meeting Participants

Chair

Paul Ganster, Ph.D.

Director
Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA

Nonfederal, State, Local and Tribal Members

Lauren Baldwin, LEED-GA

Sustainability Program Specialist
City Manager's Department
Office of Resilience and Sustainability
City of El Paso, Texas

David J. Eaton, Ph.D.

Bess Harris Jones Centennial Professor
LBJ School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX

Lisa LaRocque

Sustainability Officer
Public Works Department
City of Las Cruces
Las Cruces, NM

Keith Pezzoli, Ph.D.

Teaching Professor, Department of
Communication
Director, Urban Studies and Planning Program
University of California, San Diego
La Jolla, CA

Federal Members

U.S. Department of Commerce—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Jeff Payne, Ph.D.

Acting Director
Office for Coastal Management
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
Mount Pleasant, SC

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., P.E.

Chairman of Commissioners
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Austin, TX

Margaret Wilder, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
School of Geography and Development
Center for Latin American Studies
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ

Jose Francisco Zamora-Arroyo, Ph.D.

Director
Colorado River Delta Legacy Program
Sonoran Institute
Tucson, AZ

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Teresa R. Pohlman, Ph.D., LEED, AP

Executive Director
Sustainability and Environmental Programs
Undersecretary for Management
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C.

International Boundary and Water Commission

Dan Fines

United States Section
International Boundary and Water Commission
El Paso, TX

U.S. Department of State
Hillary Quam
Border Affairs Coordinator
Office of Mexican Affairs
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C.

U.S. Department of Transportation
Sylvia Grijalva
U.S.-Mexico Border Planning Coordinator
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
Phoenix, AZ

Nonfederal Alternate

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

Federal Alternates

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Jennifer Hass, J.D.
Environmental Planning and Historic
Preservation Program Manager
Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C.

*International Boundary and Water
Commission*
Dan Fines
Special Assistant
United States Section
International Boundary and Water Commission
El Paso, TX

William Bresnick
Attorney Advisor in Environmental Law
Office of the General Counsel
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regional Office Participants

Region 3
Jose Redmond
Region 3
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Philadelphia, PA

Lisa Schaub
Region 6
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Dallas, TX

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters Participant

Mark Joyce
Associate Director
Federal Advisory Committee Management Division
Office of Administration and Resources Management
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, D.C.

Other Participants

Amena Saiyid

Reporter

Bloomberg BNA

Arlington, VA

Contractor Support

Kristen LeBaron

Senior Science Writer/Editor

The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.

Gaithersburg, MD

Appendix B: Teleconference Agenda



Good Neighbor Environmental Board
Public Teleconference
Discussion of Draft Report on Environmental Protection and Security
In the U.S.–Mexico Border Region

July 11, 2017
12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. EDT

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

AGENDA

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 12:00–12:30 p.m. | Welcome, Introductions and Overview of Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mark Joyce, Acting Designated Federal Officer, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency• Paul Ganster, Chair, Good Neighbor Environmental Board• Board introductions |
| 12:30–2:30 p.m. | Review of Current Draft <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overarching concerns or questions• Comments or questions on specific chapters or sections |
| 2:30–3:30 p.m. | Discussion of Conclusions and Recommendations |
| 3:30–4:00 p.m. | Next Steps and Schedule |
| 4:00 p.m. | Adjournment |

Appendix C: Chair Certification of Minutes

I, Paul Ganster, Chair of the Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB), certify that this is the final version of the complete minutes for the teleconference held on July 11, 2017, and that the minutes accurately reflect the discussions and decisions of the meeting.



Paul Ganster, GNEB Chair

September 12, 2017

Date