



**Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB) Teleconference
Call-in Number: 1-202-991-0477; Conference Code: 7706890#
September 19, 2019; 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. EDT**

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome, Introductions and Overview of Agenda

Ann-Marie Gantner, GNEB Designated Federal Officer, Federal Advisory Committee Management Division (FACMD), Office of Resources and Business Operations (ORBO), Office of Mission Support (OMS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Monisha Harris, Director, FACMD, ORBO, OMS, EPA; and Paul Ganster, Chair, GNEB

Ms. Ann-Marie Gantner welcomed the participants and conducted the roll call. A list of meeting participants is included as Appendix A.

Ms. Monisha Harris thanked the GNEB members for their efforts in working productively toward the charge, especially within the confines of their busy schedules. She explained that FACMD directly supports GNEB and three additional Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) communities and provides overall management for EPA's 22 FACA committees. Ms. Harris has reviewed the latest draft of the report, which provides a great deal of information about border initiatives. She also has shared the draft with EPA senior leadership. GNEB is EPA's only presidential advisory committee and the only EPA committee that focuses solely on U.S.-Mexico border issues. She thanked the GNEB members for contributing their wealth of knowledge and expertise about U.S. border communities, as well as for their dedication.

Dr. Paul Ganster, GNEB Chair, thanked the members for attending the call, provided an overview of the agenda (Appendix B), and explained that the Board members would discuss and approve the Board's 19th report. All page and line numbers referenced during the teleconference refer to the 09-15-19 draft provided to the GNEB members.

Ms. Gantner addressed questions that had arisen about the recusal process. Federal members generally recuse themselves; however, it is up to the other individual members whether they choose to recuse themselves.

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

Public Comments

Ms. Gantner called for public comments. No oral or written comments were offered.

Review of Current Draft and Approval of GNEB's 19th Report, *Energy Production, Transportation and Demand in the Transborder Region: Opportunities and Impacts*

In response to Dr. Ganster's call for overarching comments about the report, Mr. Erik Lee responded that the report contains a tremendous amount of interesting information, but he is concerned that the report is lengthy and not likely to be widely read as a result. He volunteered to write the executive summary with Dr. Ganster, which he thought would be more widely read. Ms. Jessica Helgesen agreed and thought that

the chapters on the U.S. and Mexican Energy sectors could be condensed, which would allow readers to get to the border discussion sooner.

Ms. Kristine Yurdin explained that a subgroup of the Board had categorized the recommendations from the 08-18-19 version of the report based on the four themes identified at GNEB's June face-to-face meeting. The group consolidated the recommendations as needed and obtained input on how to frame them as actionable items. Ms. Rebecca Roose added that the group also incorporated information to ensure that each recommendation is geared toward an appropriate action that the government, particularly the White House and Congress, can take to reframe policies; these actionable items are categorized under research and incentives, regional sustainability planning, or binational collaboration. Mr. Eddie Moderow stated that the group also had standardized the recommendations. Dr. Ganster asked for comments about the recommendations.

Ms. Helgesen asked for clarification that the Border 2020 program is the correct program to implement energy production and transportation policies as mentioned in Recommendation 8(d). Ms. Melanie Scruggs explained that the Texas Council on Environmental Quality had suggested the language because many of Border 2020's activities overlap in this area, and Mr. Moderow added that it is important to support Border 2020 where possible. Dr. Ganster suggested adding the following clause: "...that affect the environment of the border region related to energy production and transportation." Border 2020 provides a mechanism for border communities to put forward their regional environmental concerns. Ms. Helgesen noted that Border 2020 has an energy efficiency component but does not focus on energy production. Mr. Gilbert Anaya thought that this issue could be addressed by focusing on the portion of Recommendation 8(d) that speaks to leveraging resources to help vulnerable populations because this is a Border 2020 activity. He likes linking environmental and public health challenges to address issues in border communities. Ms. Roose agreed with this focus and thought that perhaps energy production and transportation were included to link the recommendation to the current title of the report. Dr. Julie Smith agreed. Mr. Anaya suggested adding language to link energy production to Border 2020 air, water and environmental goals as they relate to energy.

Ms. Yurdin suggested that Recommendation 11 should remain broad and not mention specific renewables. The GNEB members agreed to the change.

Dr. Jeffrey Payne thought that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) should be added to Recommendation 4, as the agency provides information about weather and water availability and also leads the National Integrated Drought Information System. GNEB supported this change.

Dr. Payne suggested the following addition (italicized) to Recommendation 6: "...increase resiliency, *consider the potential impacts of future environmental conditions*, provide for strategic..." Dr. Smith reads the recommendation as being focused on energy sustainability and the planning process for those energy resources as markets and policy decisions. Dr. Payne agreed that his addition would not be appropriate based on this interpretation. He volunteered to develop a new recommendation focusing on preparation for future environmental conditions. Dr. Ganster agreed that it is necessary to understand future energy demand and factors that may affect this demand. Dr. Payne noted that his concern is more basic and focuses on one factor versus many. Mr. Moderow commented that resiliency suggests change over time, and the report discusses climate change in a meaningful way early in the report. Dr. Margaret Wilder added that the Board members had discussed sustainable infrastructure during the June face-to-face meeting, but the concept has been somewhat lost in the recommendations. Dr. Payne agreed to include this sustainable infrastructure in the language that he develops.

Dr. Smith noted that the "term of art" in the energy field is "resilience" and suggested that the term "resiliency" be globally replaced with "resilience."

Ms. Yurdin recommended using active voice throughout the report whenever possible.

Dr. Ganster asked the Board to review each chapter of the report.

Dr. Wilder responded to a comment in the report about the references in Section 1.4. Reference 33 could be used in addition to the GNEB report that is referenced. Dr. Ganster added that there is historical precedence to reference previous Board reports, and the report that is referenced is based on scientific data and analysis. Three GNEB members who helped to write the report participated in the National Climate Assessment.

Ms. Melanie Scruggs responded to a comment in the report about the energy standards in Texas mentioned in Section 1.6, explaining that the efficiency goal of 25 percent is correct as stated in the report. The sentence will be revised as follows: In 2010, the Public Utilities Commission of Texas established a goal to meet 25 percent of growth in demand in 2012 through energy efficiency and is requiring utilities to meet peak demand energy efficiency targets.

Dr. Smith thought that, overall, the chapters devoted to the U.S. and Mexico energy sectors are concise and provide a broad, high-level overview of the sectors.

The GNEB members agreed to delete the introductory language at the beginning of Chapter 2.

Ms. Yurdin noted that the final two sentences of the paragraph describing Chapters 3 and 4 also would need to be removed.

Ms. Roose thought that Section 2.3 needed to be retained because it provides a high-level overview of the scope of environmental regulation as it relates to energy production and transportation. Dr. Smith agreed that it should be retained, but it could be moved to make the organization flow more logically. She provided suggestions on language to move into the One Federal Decision discussion in Section 2.5:

- The sentence: Other useful resources on federal permitting on the border include the Permitting Dashboard and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration's Environmental Review Toolkit.
- The paragraph beginning with "The Permitting Dashboard is an online tool..."

Ms. Roose noted that the suggested language is needed to provide the high-level overview in Section 2.3, so if the language is moved, a cross-reference to the new section should be added. The GNEB members agreed to reorganize the text and provide the cross-reference. Dr. Smith will provide her tracked-changes version of the report to Ms. Gantner to forward to Ms. LeBaron to reorganize the discussed text.

Ms. Yurdin noted that the following sentence is redundant and could be deleted: "One Federal Decision strives to ensure a coordinated, predictable and transparent environmental review for permitting decisions of major infrastructure projects by streamlining the process and clearly defining federal agencies' roles and responsibilities." The Board agreed.

The GNEB members considered the background information about the pipeline dispute that is discussed in Chapter 3. The dispute has since been resolved. Mr. Sol Sussman and Mr. Lopez will provide language about the resolution of the pipeline dispute for this section.

Mr. Mario Lopez noted that the quote, "we are avoiding the outrageous theft that private industry is doing," cited in the report refers to pipeline contracts and not the clean energy auctions, as stated in the report. The GNEB members agreed to delete the entire sentence that includes the quote.

The first two sentences of the first paragraph of Section 3.1.3 provide an overly broad statement about a very nuanced issue. The opposition to the Mexican president's energy views is not germane to this report. GNEB members agreed to delete these sentences and change the title of Section 3.1.3 to "President López Obrador's New Energy Policies." Board members also agreed to delete the following sentence in this section: "In the meantime, the Mexican energy sector remains under the full control of the federal government."

Mr. Lopez noted that the Mexican president would like to separate the economic powers from political decision-making in Mexico, which has precipitated the shifts within the energy sector. Dr. Sweedler reminded the Board that the report is not an analysis of the current philosophy in Mexico. The mention of energy sovereignty provides the appropriate background for the reader to understand how decisions in Mexico may affect the U.S. energy sector. Dr. Ganster agreed that the section is challenging to write because of the evolving nature of the issue.

Mr. Lopez noted that the Comisión Federal de Electricidad has been operating as a productive state enterprise since the 1960s; therefore, the word "now" should be removed from the first sentence of Section 3.2.4.

The Board members discussed the proper use of the following acronyms: IBWC, MxIBWC and USIBWC. Mr. Anaya can help to ensure that the acronyms are used correctly in the report.

Dr. Smith has updated some language and references for Section 4.3 for accuracy; she will provide the document with her tracked changes for the Board to review.

Mr. Lopez noted that, on page 74, line 3, the California clean energy mandate of 100 percent by 2045 is not mentioned with the 2013, 2016, 2020, 2026 and 2030 goals. Mr. Early explained that the "renewables portfolio standard" described in that paragraph is different from the 100 percent clean energy mandate in SB-100. The following sentence will be added after the first sentence of the paragraph in question: "In addition, SB 100 requires a 100 percent carbon-free grid by December 31, 2045."

Mr. Early will try to locate a high-resolution map of power plants in Southern California or just in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

The Board agreed to the editorial suggestions for Section 5.1.1 provided by Ms. Helgesen.

Dr. Sweedler noted that he was unable to find power content label data more recent than 2017. If a new table is available prior to the publishing of the report, it can be added.

Dr. Patricia Juárez-Carrillo asked about the use of the acronym "SDG&E" on page 81 in line 11 and whether it should be spelled out. Ms. Kristen LeBaron will address all editorial issues, including defining acronyms, in her editorial review of the final document.

Mr. Lopez thought that it is important that the report mention the closing of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station in the section about factors influencing future demand. Mr. Early will develop a sentence about the closing for Section 5.1.4.

Ms. Kimberly Collins answered a question that had been raised about Table 6, and she will develop a sentence for the report to address this question.

Ms. Michelle Freeark commented on the lack of consistency among the sections describing the states. These sections should include information about each state as relevant to the topic of the report. Dr. Ganster explained that the sections were made as consistent as possible during content editing.

Ms. Freeark will develop additional language to explain the relevance of Figure 17.

Dr. Ganster, Ms. Gantner and Ms. LeBaron will consult with the graphic designer about Figure 20, as there are no alternative figures available.

The sentence in line 11 on page 108 will be revised to say: Doña Ana County has the second-largest population in the state with 217,522 individuals, mostly distributed along the Rio Grande corridor—a narrow band that runs approximately 90 miles north to south

Dr. Patricia Juárez-Carrillo asked about the use of the term “Borderplex area” when referring to the Paso del Norte region and wondered which term was more common or appropriate. Mr. Lopez explained that the Borderplex Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promote economic development in the El Paso (TX)—Ciudad Juárez (Mexico)—Las Cruces and Doña Ana County (NM) region. Ms. Roose will confirm the correct use of the term, as it is possible that the New Mexico Environment Department may have misspoken when using the term. The text that Ms. Yurdin plans on sending will include the clarification. Ms. Tiffany Goolsby added that the term can refer to an area or the nonprofit organization, and a Google search confirms this. The Paso del Norte Borderplex Veteran Coalition Fund organization uses both terms in its name as well. Mr. Moderow commented that he also uses both terms, although he would not refer to Paso del Norte Air Basin as the Borderplex Air Basin.

Ms. Yurdin noted that a good deal of text related to economic information had been deleted in the latest version of the report, but she thought that a nexus exists with energy, and she developed two sentences to connect the two concepts. She proposed adding the following language: Doña Ana County is designated as a U.S. foreign trade zone administered by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. In 2016, the southern part of the county and most of Luna County were designated as opportunity zones; therefore, tax incentives may provide for leveraging opportunities. Dr. Ganster noted that the revised text still refers more to general economic development rather than specifically to energy development, so the connection must be made if the text is to be added, especially since the other border states do not include this type of information in their sections. The Board agreed to add New Mexico’s text if it relates to energy development.

Ms. Yurdin provided updated information about power plants in the border region in New Mexico. The updated sentence on page 109 should read: “In addition to solar power plants, the border region in New Mexico includes several natural gas power plants, one geothermal resource area, and one biomass power plant.” She will provide the reference for this addition in the material that she sends.

Ms. Yurdin suggested the following changes:

- Delete the phrase “all of” in the sentence that begins “All of the state’s new and planned electricity generating capacity...”
- Updates to language in 5.3.4, including new information received from New Mexico’s Air Quality Bureau about the energy byproducts.
- Delete “administrative” in the title of Section 5.3.6.
- At the end of the first paragraph under Section 5.3.6, insert a sentence about the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority (CRRUA) to recognize that in 2012 the city of Sunland Park and Doña Ana County combined to form the CRRUA via a joint power agreement and share planning and zoning authority.

Ms. Yurdin thought that a reference is needed for the following sentence: “Although there are no nuclear generating facilities in New Mexico, the Public Service Company of New Mexico (PMN) owns and purchases power from Palo Verde, a nuclear generating station in Arizona.” She and Dr. Ganster were unclear as to who supplied this sentence. Ms. Goolsby noted that El Paso, Texas, also purchases power from Palo Verde and may be a potential source for a reference. If a reference cannot be located, GNEB members agreed that the sentence should be deleted. Ms. Roose noted that the PMN website states a 10 percent ownership; this could be used as the reference.

Ms. Goolsby noted that the last sentence in the first paragraph of the Hatch Solar Energy case study should read that El Paso Electric is “a major electricity provider” instead of “the main electricity provider” as stated. Ms. LeBaron also will ensure that the case study references are restored.

The GNEB members discussed Figure 24 and determined that the figure is correct, and Arizona does not have cross-border interconnections. The Board decided not to add a footnote that a cross-border interconnection is planned in Arizona.

Mr. Lopez did not think that the information about electricity capacity described in line 5 of page 133 is correct, so he will research this and provide accurate information. Also, the capacity of Cerro Prieto described in lines 15–18 on page 133 may be outdated, and the way the sentence is worded may be confusing. Mr. Lopez will confirm these figures and rewrite the sentences as necessary. Dr. Sweedler recommended that the sentence, “At its peak in the early 2000s, Cerro Prieto had a capacity of 820 MW.” be replaced with “Currently, actual generating capacity is only 330 MW.” Mr. Lopez will confirm the current operating capacity and supply a reference.

Mr. Lopez thought that the following sentence in Section 6.1.2 should be deleted: “San Pedro Mártir is believed to have significant wind resources, as well.” Sierra de San Pedro Mártir is not relevant because it is so far away from a major grid that the wind resources will not be developed. He suggested the following language for the section: “The wind generation initiative began with the state-operated 10 MW wind project run by the Baja California State Energy Commission.” He will provide his suggested language to update information about wind generation projects in Section 6.1.2.

The Board agreed to remove the word “now” from the third sentence in Section 6.1.4 at Mr. Lopez’s suggestion.

Next Steps and Schedule

Ms. Gantner explained that Ms. LeBaron will make the changes discussed during the teleconference, and Dr. Ganster will ensure that the discussions have been captured correctly. If Board members have pictures that they would like included in the report, they will need to submit them to Ms. Gantner. Dr. Ganster, Ms. LeBaron and the graphic designer will work together to prepare the report for publication at the end of December 2019. Ms. Gantner must work out the logistics and details of presenting the report to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

If GNEB members have potential topics that Ms. Gantner can present to CEQ for future reports, they should email their ideas to her.

Current board membership expires in March of 2020. Normal Board terms are 2 years. Non-state representatives interested in being reappointed must inform Ms. Gantner, as she is going to begin the full membership drive process. She noted that she does not make the final decision about GNEB membership. The process is different for state representatives. EPA will contact governors and the heads of relevant state agencies, who then will determine who will serve on the Board.

Adjournment

Dr. Ganster thanked the GNEB members for their thoughtful input and discussion. Dr. Sweedler thanked Dr. Ganster for his efforts in finalizing and delivering the 2018 advisory letter within the tight timeframe.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m. EDT.

Action Items

- GNEB members who have ideas for future report topics will provide them to Ms. Gantner.
- GNEB members who do not represent states and would like to serve on the Board for an additional term will contact Ms. Gantner.
- Ms. Collins will develop a sentence to explain the reduced energy production referenced in Table 6.
- Mr. Early will:
 - Attempt to locate a high-resolution map of power plants in Southern California or in just San Diego and Imperial Counties.
 - Develop a sentence about the closing of San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station for Section 5.1.4.
- Ms. Freeark will develop additional language to explain the relevance of Figure 17.
- Dr. Ganster and Mr. Lee will develop the Executive Summary.
- Dr. Ganster, Ms. Gantner and Ms. LeBaron will consult with the graphic designer about redrawing Figure 20.
- Mr. Lopez will provide accurate information about energy capacity and wind generation for Sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2.
- Dr. Payne will develop language for a recommendation about sustainable infrastructure and preparing for future environmental conditions.
- Ms. Roose will confirm the correct use of the term “Borderplex.”
- Dr. Smith will:
 - Provide her tracked-changes version of the report to Ms. Gantner to forward to Ms. LeBaron.
 - Provide language to update Section 4.3 for accuracy.
- Mr. Sussman and Mr. Lopez will draft language about the resolution of the negotiations related to gas supply and pipelines contracts for Section 3.1.3.
- Ms. Yurdin will submit additional text for Section 5.3 and subsections, including adding language to make information about general growth relate to energy development.
- Ms. LeBaron will make the following changes to the report:
 - Ensure the instances of passive voice are minimized, acronyms are standardized, and other punctuation and grammar issues are addressed.

- Reorganize the text in Chapter 2 based on Dr. Smith’s tracked-changes version of the report and include the appropriate cross-references discussed during the teleconference.
- Delete the following sentence on page 44: One Federal Decision strives to ensure a coordinated, predictable, and transparent environmental review for permitting decisions of major infrastructure projects by streamlining the process and clearly defining federal agencies’ roles and responsibilities.”
- Delete the following sentence on page 50: The stated reason for the cancellation was that the bid bases had not been fair and equitable. According to the recently appointed director general (CEO) of the Mexican government agency managing the auctions, “we are avoiding the outrageous theft that private industry is doing.”
- Change the title of Section 3.1.3 to “President López Obrador’s New Energy Policies.”
- Delete the first two sentences of the first paragraph in Section 3.1.3.
- Delete the following sentence in Section 3.1.3: In the meantime, the Mexican energy sector remains under the full control of the federal government.
- Remove the word “now” from the first sentence of Section 3.2.4 and the third sentence in Section 6.1.4.
- Update Section 4.3 based on text that Dr. Smith submits.
- Add information about the clean energy mandate of 100 percent by 2045 after the first sentence of the second paragraph of Section 4.7.
- Update the report with Ms. Yurdin’s and Ms. Goolsby’s suggested revisions about the New Mexico section, including the information about Doña Ana County in Section 5.3.1 and the Hatch case study.
- Add NOAA to the list of federal agencies in Recommendation 4.
- Rewrite Recommendation 8(d) with Mr. Anaya’s suggested language.
- Delete “particularly solar and wind” in Recommendation 11.

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

Kimberly Collins, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Barbara and William
Leonard Transportation Center
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Bryan Early

Special Advisor to Commissioner McAllister
and Advisor to Chair Weisenmiller on Mexico
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Michelle Freark

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Tiffany Goolsby, AICP

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South Central Council of Governments
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Federal Members

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Salvador Salinas

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Federal Alternates

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Appendix B: Teleconference Agenda



Good Neighbor Environmental Board

Public Teleconference
Discussion of the Draft Report on
Energy Transmission in the U.S.-Mexico Border Region

September 19, 2019
12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. EDT

Call-In Number: 1-202-991-0477 Conference Code: 7706890#

AGENDA

- 12:00–12:15 p.m. Welcome, Introductions and Overview of Agenda
- Ann-Marie Gantner, Designated Federal Officer
 - Monisha Harris, Federal Advisory Committee Management Office
 - Paul Ganster, Chair, Good Neighbor Environmental Board
 - Board introductions
- 12:15–12:30 p.m. Public Comments
- 12:30–3:45 p.m. Review of Current Draft and Approval of GNEB’s 19th Report, *Energy Production, Transportation, and Demand in the Transborder Region: Opportunities and Impacts*
- Overarching concerns or questions on comments
 - Discussion and review of recommendations
- 3:45–4:00 p.m. Next Steps and Schedule
- Editing and production of report
 - Release of GNEB’s 19th report
 - Membership drive
- 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 September 19, 2019, and that the minutes accurately reflect the discussions and decisions of the meeting.



November 18, 2019

Paul Ganster, GNEB Chair

Date