Low Cost Financing for Clean Water Construction
New Officers to Lead TRA’s Board of Directors

Linda Timmerman, Ed.D
Harold L. Barnard
Michael Cronin
John Jenkins

Nancy E. Lavinski
AnaLaura Saucedo
Kim C. Wyatt

The Trinity River Authority of Texas’ Board of Directors has elected new officers who will lead the 25-member policy setting body for a two-year period beginning December 1, 2009.

Linda Timmerman, Ed.D of Streetman was elected President and a member of the TRA Board’s Executive Committee. Dr. Timmerman coordinates Strategic Business Development for Texas Dermatology Associates.

Harold L. Barnard of Waxahachie was elected Vice President and a member of the Executive Committee. Mr. Barnard is president and managing officer of the Ellis County Abstract and Title Company.

Michael Cronin of Terrell was named Chairman of the TRA Board’s Executive Committee. Mr. Cronin is Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of American National Bank of Texas.

Other TRA board members elected to serve as members of the TRA Board’s Executive Committee include John Jenkins of Hankamer, a self-employed partner in a major farming enterprise; Nancy E. Lavinski of Palestine, a retired educator with over 16-years of classroom and departmental leadership; AnaLaura Saucedo of Dallas, a residential real estate investor; and Kim C. Wyatt of Corsicana, President of Corsicana National Bank and Trust and Chief Executive Officer of Community Bank Holdings of Texas.

TRA’s new board officers will lead the 25-member policy setting body for a two-year period beginning December 1, 2009.

On the Cover: The Trinity River Authority Board of Directors has recently authorized the issuance of a total of $471,565,000 in debt to fund capital improvements for the Authority’s five regional wastewater systems. TRA secured financing through the Texas Water Development Board’s Clean Water State Revolving Funds. See page 2 for the story on how this benefits TRA’s customers.

For more good financial news, the General Manager’s column on page 4 discusses Standard and Poor’s AAA bond rating for Central Regional Wastewater System.
TRA Customers Benefit From Low Cost Financing for Regional Wastewater System Improvements

The Trinity River Authority Board of Directors has recently authorized the issuance of a total of $471,565,000 in debt to fund capital improvements for the Authority’s five regional wastewater systems. To the benefit of the Authority’s customers, TRA secured financing through the Texas Water Development Board’s Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The TWDB is the state agency charged with the planning, financial assistance, information and education for the conservation and responsible development of water for Texas. TWDB administers cost-effective financial programs for the construction of water supply, wastewater treatment, flood control, and agricultural water conservation projects.

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan program can provide loans with an interest rate of 0.95 per cent below the open market at the time of issuance. Over the life span of a 20-30 year loan, 0.95 per cent will produce significant savings.

At the October 28 meeting, TRA’s Board of Directors authorized the issuance of debt for capital improvements at two of the Authority’s regional wastewater systems.

TRA’s Denton Creek Regional Wastewater System is undergoing construction to increase rated capacity from 5.0 million gallons per day to 11.5 MGD. DCRWS serves a population of approximately 53,000 in north Tarrant County. DCRWS is currently expanding in capacity from 5.0 million gallons per day wastewater treatment plant with plans to upgrade flow capacity to 189 MGD.

The first tranche in the amount of $116,130,000 was issued in December. The second installment in the amount of $152,700,000 is expected in December 2010 and the third tranche for $65,625,000 is scheduled for mid-2011.

The Authority’s Board also authorized a loan from the TWDB in the amount of $51,100,000 to fund improvements at TRA’s Ten Mile Creek Regional Wastewater System. These funds will be received in two installments with the first installment in December of 2009 and the second in December 2010.

Finally, the Authority’s Board authorized a loan not to exceed $19,990,000 for the Red Oak Creek Regional Wastewater System to fund expansion of the system’s collection system. The first installment is scheduled for December 2009 in the approximate amount of $8,280,000. The second tranche for the remaining funds is scheduled for December 2010.

All of TRA’s regional operating projects are independent financial entities and are funded by the system’s customers. Each contracting party’s costs are determined by metering flows and dividing the total capital and operations and maintenance costs for the project into pro rata shares as determined by the individual customer’s contributions to wastewater flows to the system.
Design of CRWS Pump Station Wins State-Wide Competition

The Texas Council of Engineering Companies has selected The Trinity River Authority’s Central Regional Wastewater System’s Pump Station 13B as a Gold Medal Winner for design excellence in the Water and Wastewater Category.

TRA’s Central Regional Wastewater System serves all or portions of 20 cities and DFW International Airport. The System currently has a rated capacity of 162 million gallons per day and is undergoing multiple construction projects to upgrade processes and eventually increase capacity to 189 MGD.

Pump Station 13B moves return activated sludge from the final clarifiers back to the aeration basins or to the thickening process. The engineering design team at Freese and Nichols, Inc, was faced with familiar challenges: the existing site was too small to accommodate traditional pump station design and surrounding pipes and structures presented many opportunities for conflict.

Freese and Nichols, Inc, proposed a trench-type wet-well design that occupies less than one-quarter of the space of a more traditional design and fits into the existing site. This saved TRA and the System’s customers $2.9 million in construction costs when compared to traditional pump station design. In addition, the new Pump Station 13B is self-cleaning which will reduce the number of staff hours needed for maintenance, another cost-savings measure.

The award will be presented at the Texas Council of Engineering Companies’ annual meeting in Spring 2010.

As the Texas Gold Medal Winner, Pump Station 13B will be entered into the national competition for Engineering Excellence with the American Council of Engineering Companies.

TRA’s Central Regional Wastewater System has a rated capacity of 162 million gallons per day and more than 200 miles of collection system pipelines. CRWS serves a population of approximately 1,520,000 in 20 cities and the DFW International Airport. Currently, CRWS is undergoing a series of projects to upgrade processes and ultimately upgrade the system’s capacity to 189 MGD. Replacing aging equipment and structures is complicated by the existence of many other structures and associated pipes and electrical equipment. Freese and Nichols, Inc. designed a pump station with the pumps installed vertically to avoid conflict with surrounding structures. Pump stations are traditionally designed with the pumps installed horizontally underground. The location of Pump Station 13B, under construction when this photo was taken, is outlined in red.
Explore the Trinity River....Online

With development along the Trinity River in both Fort Worth and Dallas in full swing, KERA public radio and television stations launched a website that explores the river’s past, present and future.

At www.TrinityRiverTexas.org visitors can explore the geography, ecology and cultural history of the Trinity River through interactive maps, videos and photographs. They can also share personal memories and observations about the Trinity and current plans to redevelop it as part of a living archive on the Web site.

The Web site is presented in sections as shown on the right.

Additional story-based content as well as classroom oriented educational materials are continually added to the Web site throughout the year.

CRWS Project’s Debt Gets AAA Rating from Standard and Poor’s Rating Service

Dizzy Dean, a true character from the early years of professional baseball, is given credit for the remark, “It ain’t braggin’ if you can back it up.”

With the history of our operating projects, the Trinity River Authority has many reasons to be proud. Recently, however, the Standard and Poor’s rating service of New York provided TRA with a reason to be extremely proud and do a little bragging. It will also be significant for the customers of TRA’s Central Regional Wastewater System.

On December 1, 2009 Standard and Poor’s (S & P) announced that it had raised its rating of the Trinity River Authority’s Central Regional Wastewater System’s outstanding debt from AA+ to AAA. At the same time, S & P awarded AAA rating on the 2009 CRWS bond issue purchased by the Texas Water Developments Board’s State Revolving Fund (SRF). This debt will be issued in three increments of approximately $32,865,000 between now and 2011.

While AAA may not sound impressive, it is important to recognize that TRA is one of a very few revenue bond issuing entities in Texas and the United States to have received such a rating. The AAA rating makes TRA’s debt attractive to bond buyers, which in turn should attract the lowest interest rate for TRA’s bonds in a competitive situation. The lower interest rates result in substantial savings for our customers by lowering the capital costs to improve and enlarge the projects they depend on for service.

Keeping these strengths within reasonable bounds is TRA management’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CRWS CIP will make system rehabilitation and upgrades over the next five years. The extensive capital program will affect our customer’s rates and operating margins, but the rating service views the overall creditworthiness as good.

One of the strengths of TRA’s regional systems is our determination to involve our customers in the capital improvement planning and implementation process. Customer advisory committees meet several times annually to discuss each project’s budget and plans for capital improvements. Including our customers in the process, assures them that TRA operates in a transparent environment devoid of surprises.

A contractual requirement that adds to TRA’s fiscal strength is a first-lien pledge on net revenues derived from payments from our contracting parties. This secures TRA’s outstanding debt with great certainty. Our contracts also require unconditional payment of debt service regardless of treatment service. A debt service reserve fund, in the amount of the average annual debt service requirement, provides additional liquidity and confidence for the bond purchasers that TRA will meet its financial obligations.

A regional system that is not expanded to accommodate increasing flows or rehabilitated in a systematic and continuous manner will ultimately fail the customers it serves. Recovering from such a failure would inevitably be more expensive and chaotic than maintaining and following a well-defined CIP.

No responsible governmental entity wants to pay higher capital costs, but our CRWS customers understand why additional capital costs are necessary within the System. The S & P AAA rating will help minimize the cost burden.

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General Manager’s Message

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New Hires

GO welcomes Margaret Owen as Senior Accounting Clerk. Richard Kornegay joined CRWS as a Buyer.

Promotions

Daniel Hobles was promoted to Electronic Technician II at CRWS. Melody Cannon was promoted to Senior Buyer at CRWS. Salvador Escobedo was promoted to Maintenance Mechanic II at CRWS. Robert Gonzalez was promoted to Maintenance Mechanic II at CRWS. Jeffrey Saunier was promoted to CSS Inspector II.

Kathleen Shumate joined GO as Manager, Personnel Services.

The Trinity River Authority mourns the loss of long-time CRWS HVAC Technician Ray Diaz who passed away on November 26, 2009. Diaz began his employment with TRA September 24, 1990 as a Maintenance Mechanic I. He was promoted to Maintenance Mechanic II and then Electrician II in 1991. He was promoted HVAC Technician in 1993 and Senior HVAC Technician in 1994.

There is no doubt that Diaz will be missed at CRWS. “Ray made it his business to understand what needed to be done and take care of it. We could count on him to come through when the chips were down,” CRWS Project Manager, Bill Tatum.

Stephanie Gutierrez, a freshman at Legacy High School, won a coveted spot on the school’s Varsity Cross Country team. She went on to become the school’s top runner. Stephanie qualified to represent her school at the Regional I UIL 4A Cross Country competition on November 7 in Lubbock, Texas. Competing against 175 of the top female runners in AAAA schools in region 1, Stephanie took first place among other runners at Legacy High, 9th place among other freshman in the region and 84th overall. In January, Stephanie will start Varsity Girls Soccer at the position of outside midfielder. Stephanie’s proud mother is Maryann Gutierrez, CRWS Office Coordinator.

The Trinity River Authority 2010 Holiday Schedule

Christmas Eve .................................. Thursday, December 24, 2009
Christmas Day .................................. Friday, December 25, 2009
New Year’s Day ................................. Friday, January 1, 2010
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day ............... Monday, January 18, 2010
Good Friday ........................................ Friday, April 2, 2010
Memorial Day ..................................... Monday, May 31, 2010
Independence Day ............................... Monday, July 5, 2010
Labor Day ......................................... Monday, September 6, 2010
Thanksgiving Day .............................. Thursday, November 25, 2010
Day after Thanksgiving ...................... Friday, November 26, 2010

Trinity River Authority
2010 Holiday Schedule

Steve Lee, TCRWSS Senior Operator, and his wife, Barbara, are celebrating the birth of their fifth grandchild. Ashlyn Faith Giavona was born November 4 and was 7 pounds, 3 ounces and 19.75 inches long at birth.

Kathleen Shumate joined GO as Manager, Personnel Services.
The Trinity River Authority’s Operations Challenge team from Central Regional Wastewater System, the CREWSers, won the national operations challenge competition at the WEFTEC 09 conference in Orlando, Florida. This is the team’s fourth national championship in five years.

The CREWSers put in a steady performance taking first in both the collection system and safety events, second in the laboratory event, third in the maintenance event and fourth place in the process control event. The team earned only two penalties for the entire competition.

“We focused on accuracy first and then speed,” said Dale Burrow, CREWSers’ Team Captain.

This simple philosophy has helped the CREWSers dominate both state and national competitions for more than a decade.

Burrow is also proud of the team work shown by the CREWSers’ performance at competition events.

“We put egos aside and assign tasks on the basis of talent and ability,” said Burrow.

For example, the tasks that require maintenance knowledge are done by maintenance mechanics on the team. The operators on the team do calculations. Because all team members are comfortable with their roles in competition, the CREWSers are able to overcome difficulties and continue to focus on the competition.

“Sometimes penalties and mistakes happen,” said Burrow.

“Over the years, we have learned to accept the mistake and keep going.”

The TRA CREWSers have won back-to-back national championships in 2005-2006 and now in 2008-2009. Will they be able to win three in a row? In the history of operations challenge competitions, only one team has managed to win three consecutive national championships. The LA Wrecking Crew earned national victories from 1993 to 1995. The CREWSers will have a chance to pull even with the LA Wrecking Crew at next year’s national competition at WEFTEC.10 in New Orleans, LA.

The CReWSers Win Fourth Operations Challenge National Championship in Five Years
Revenue and visitation continue to trend upward for the third year in a row at Trinity River Authority’s Wolf Creek Park on Lake Livingston. Revenue increased by 29.3 percent in 2009 after showing increases of 53.9 percent in 2007* and 17.5 percent in 2008. A portion of the dramatic increases in revenue and visitors in 2007 was due to artificially low numbers in 2006 when the level of water in Lake Livingston was lowered by four feet to facilitate emergency repairs to damage caused by Hurricane Rita. A 46 percent decrease in visitors to the park resulted in a nearly 32 percent decrease in revenue for 2006.

The number of visitors to the park was up by 23.4 percent in 2009 after showing increases of 45.3 percent in 2007 and 26.9 percent in 2008.

A possible explanation for the upward trend in revenue and visitors at Wolf Creek Park are improvements that have taken place over the last 5 years. In 2005, ten waterfront campsites were upgraded with full RV hook-ups including 50 amp electrical service and concrete pads to accommodate RVs. These beautiful campsites have proved to be very popular with visitors and are usually reserved in advance.

New this year, park personnel are upgrading seven additional waterfront campsites with full RV hook-ups. Campers can park in the shade and enjoy unobstructed views of the lake.

In 2008, 19 campsites that had water but no electricity were upgraded to include access to electricity. Campsites without electricity are most often used by tent campers. With the addition of electricity, camper trailers, pop-up campers and RV’s can enjoy the sites. The 19 campsites are located in a secluded area among tall pine trees with convenient access to hot showers and clean restrooms. These also proved to be popular with visitors to the park.

Wolf Creek Park has a total of 57 campsites outfitted with water and electricity plus 46 campsites with full hook-ups for RVs. All campsites are generously spaced to give families lots of room to enjoy the park.

The park is located on the west side of Lake Livingston in San Jacinto County. The remote location among tall pine trees and low hills is a beautiful and quiet place to stay. Visitors to the park take advantage of outdoor recreational activities on Lake Livingston’s 83,000 surface acres of water. There is a swimming area, a boat ramp, fishing piers and a fish cleaning station. Boat rentals, bait and provisions are available at the park’s marina and grocery.

The park has clean restrooms and hot showers available around the clock.

For youngsters, or the young at heart, there is a basketball court, playground and a sand volleyball court. A water-front miniature golf course operated by the marina adds to the recreational possibilities.

The park is staffed by a team of recreation professionals and operates under park rules that ensure that visitors enjoy a safe and pleasant stay.

Golfers staying at Wolf Creek Park should definitely bring their clubs. The nearby 18-hole Cape Royale Golf Course is a real challenge.

The park is a short distance from ColdSpring, population about 750. A community with an abundance of small town ambience, ColdSpring offers real country cooking and authentic folk arts and crafts.

Wolf Creek Park is one of the few campgrounds in Texas that allows visitors to reserve a specific campsite in advance. Campsites at Wolf Creek Park can be reserved in advance by calling 936-653-4312 or visiting TRA’s website at http://www.trinityra.org/Recreation/Reservations.htm. The website has detailed information concerning deposits and fees as well as additional information about the Park.
Anniversaries

30 Years
Ed Mach, Manager, TMCRWS

25 Years
Marcella Kilgore, Buyer, CRWS

20 Years
Mark Waters, Assistant Manager, LLP

15 Years
Martin Madaras, Senior Maintenance Mechanic, TMCRWS
Thomas Seimet, Senior Maintenance Mechanic, TCWSP

10 Years
Willie Cobb, Senior Maintenance Mechanic, CRWS
Rosario Saldivar, Operator II, DCRWS

5 Years
Araceli Snyder, Senior Secretary, CRWS

3 Years
Jeffrey Finch, Operator I, CRWS
Douglas Raggett, Senior Park Ranger, LRF
Yesha Rai, Senior Secretary, NR