



## **State Water Plan Update Great Lakes Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting**

October 26, 2022  
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

### **Committee Members in Attendance:**

Tony Foyle	Zachary Norwood
Joy Fronzoli	Deborah Phillips
Joe Greco	Craig Palmer
Tom McClure	Matthew Wolford

### **Committee Members Not in Attendance:**

Tim Bruno	Susan Moyer
Robert Buhl	Amy Murdock
James Cardman	Brenda Sandberg
Jason Childs	Timothy Wachter
Patrick Gehrlein	Dennis Whitney
Daniel Gold	David Wright
Rebecca Hosack	Kathy Wyrosdick
Melissa Lyon	

### **Others in Attendance:**

James Horton – DEP	Bob Whitmore - Strategic Consulting Partners
Susan Weaver - DEP	
Mike Hill – DEP	
Brian Chalfant – DEP	
Sriranksha Varanasi - DEP	

### **Visitors**

Jenny Tompkins

### **Welcome**

James Horton, DEP, welcomed everyone to the meeting, explained the meeting was being recorded, and provided helpful hints on the use of the technology. Craig Palmer, Committee Chair, welcomed committee members to the meeting and completed a roll call for attendance.

## **Public Comment**

Chair Palmer opened the meeting for public comment, an opportunity to express comments verbally or in the chat box. No public comment was offered.

## **Minutes**

The meeting summary of the June 23, 2022, meeting was tabled with a lack of quorum of attending members.

## **DEP State Water Plan Update**

Susan Weaver provided an update of what DEP is working on regarding the State Water Plan Update.

The three draft Critical Area Resource Plans (CARPs) are progressing. The draft Back Creek CARP is complete and has been shared with the Ohio regional committee; it was approved by the committee to enter public comment and the 45-day agency review phase followed by a hearing to receive testimony from the public. This review time has ended, DEP staff and the Critical Area Advisory Committee have addressed the comments and suggested edits and anticipate sharing this CARP along with a comment/response document with the Ohio regional committee later this month. The draft Laurel Hill CARP will be shared at a later date. The Marsh and Rock Creek CARP is still under review, but we anticipate it will be released shortly. Once the draft CARPs have been reviewed by their respective committee and approved by DEP with any additional edits, they will be sent to a list of stakeholders and planning officials within their watershed for review and comment. Additionally, DEP will host public hearings specifically to consider each CARP and solicit comments from the public prior to the vote for recommendation. Once the CARPs have been edited in accordance with public and planning agency feedback, the CARPs will return to their regional committees to vote on their recommendation to the statewide committee.

The final State Water Plan Update report has been drafted and was shared with the public in accordance with Act 220 requirements. This document was concurrently reviewed by members of the statewide committee's Final Report Workgroup who submitted edits of their own. Both a comment/response document and the final report are currently being internally reviewed by DEP staff and will be shared with the statewide committee at their November 16 meeting. The final report includes regional components, work group products, an assessment of progress since the last plan update, and a strategic plan going forward. You have received a link to the draft document shortly after the public comment period went active on August 20. We will be discussing this document with you today.

The draft Marsh and Rock Creek CARP has been updated and is being reviewed by DEP staff. The CARP should be available for the committee to review in spring of 2023.

The State Water Plan Atlas from 2009 has been developed into a StoryMap as a Digital Atlas. We plan to share this with you today.

The thirteenth statewide committee meeting was held on October 19th. The next meeting is scheduled for November 16.

### **Debrief on the State Water Plan Process**

Committee members were asked to provide feedback on the two-year process to develop the current draft state water plan and the Great Lakes regional priorities. Committee members provided the following comments:

- The virtual meetings are shorter, less engaging, and members seem more reserved.
- Everyone was given an opportunity to participate
- Restore the in-person meetings when possible
- The committee started strong and finished strong
- Great dialog during the meetings and produces a great product
- Great group of committee members
- The process was effective
- What is the process for changing the bylaws?
- Maybe a legislative priority is to review Act 220 with suggested changes
- Time element for developing priorities. How can we do business in a shorter time frame?
- Members changed professional positions and the level of engagement decreases, and process takes too long
- Combination of both in-person and virtual meetings, when significant issues are being voted on the meeting should be in-person.

### **Story Map – Water Atlas**

Mike Hill, DEP Geologist, presented the Digital Water Atlas StoryMap. In 2009 a coffee table book was developed describing the State Water Plan and current information. The original book has been updated into a digital StoryMap. The current digital version contains much of the original coffee table book information with updated information and maps that can be updated in real time.

The link for the digital water atlas follows:

[The Digital Water Atlas \(arcgis.com\)](http://arcgis.com)

The digital water atlas has the following topical tabs for the visitor's use:

- Introduction
- Regional committees and planning regions
- Map tour
- Watershed and subbasins, how watershed is delineated
- Water resources – ground water, and drinking water
- Climate – climate change data, average annual precipitation
- Drought data

- Water use and planning
- Recreation and managed lands
- Population changes
- Geology of the regions
- Stormwater and flooding
- Land cover

#### Committee comments

- Very impressive
- Waiting to see the link on the DEP website

### **Final Report Overview**

Committee members were asked to provide feedback on the draft State Water Plan report they have received. Several sections of the draft have been enhanced since the draft committee members reviewed. These sections are the executive summary and path forward. Committee members did not offer feedback on the current draft.

### **Path Forward**

The committee discussed the path forward for the State Water Planning committees and the proposed ideas in the draft State Water Plan. James Horton, DEP, provided the following ideas for committee activities in the path forward.

- Carry on meetings of the regional committees on a regular basis, perhaps twice each year in April and October.
- Phase 1 of the path forward activities will include clarifying and organizing the information contained in the State Water Plan, public outreach, and providing information in the Clean Water Academy.
- Phase 2 of the path forward activities will identify metrics for measuring progress on the initiatives identified in the State Water Plan.
- Phase 3 of the path forward activities will include measuring progress on initiatives.
- It is planned to begin working on the next update to the State Water Plan within three years with the fifth year being the integration of all regional committees and the statewide committee.

Committee members offered the following suggestions for a path forward.

- At the spring meeting the committee should discuss recruitment, review the bylaws, and vote on the chair and vice-chair positions.
- How does DEP impact other state agencies in aligning their organization goals with the State Water Plan?
- Identify stakeholders to share communications and information
- Empower Tim Bruno, DEP lead in the region, needs more capacity, understaffed. What other DEP resources are available?
- Share the Executive Summary with committee members to discuss the local impact and advance priorities
- Committee members are well connected, get people involved

- Leverage the systems across the Commonwealth

**Recruitment for Committee Members**

The Great Lakes Regional Committee currently has no openings. Chair Palmer has suggestions for new committee members as vacancies occur. If anyone has a suggestion for possible committee membership, please send the name to DEP.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 am on a Matt Wolford motion.

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