



**State Water Plan Update**  
**Great Lakes Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting**  
July 29, 2020  
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Skype

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

Tim Bruno	Zachary Norwood
Jason Childs	Craig Palmer
Harry (Ric) Diz	Brenda Sandberg
Tony Foyle	Timothy Wachter
Patrick Gehrlein	Matthew Wolford
Joe Greco	Dennis Whitney
Tom McClure	David Wright
Amy Murdock	Kathy Wyrosdick

**Committee Members Not in Attendance:**

Robert Buhl	Daniel Gold
James Cardman	Rebecca Hosack
Melissa Lyon	Deborah Phillips

**Others in Attendance:**

Kristina Peacock-Jones - DEP	Monica Gould - Strategic Consulting Partners
Mark Matlock - DEP	Bob Whitmore - Strategic Consulting Partners
James Horton - DEP	
Mike Hill - DEP	
Brad Chalfant - DEP	
Raksha Varanasi - DEP	
Rhonda Manning - DEP	

**Visitors**

Jacquelyn Bonomo - President PennFuture

**Welcome**

Mark Matlock, 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 by voice and chat acknowledgement.

## **Public Comment**

Chair Palmer opened the meeting for public comment. An opportunity to express comments verbally or in the chat box was offered. Jacquelyn Bonomo commented that Penn Futures has just opened an office in Erie, and she is attending to learn more about the Committee's work.

## **Minutes**

The minutes of the January 29, 2020 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved on a David Wright / Zach Norwood motion. The vote was via both voice and chat voting.

## **State Water Plan Update**

Kristina Peacock-Jones, DEP, provided an update on DEP activities achieved over the past 10 years that coincide with the State Water Plan Update. DEP has continued to work on better data sharing tools such as Power BI which will display water use data to the public in a more user-friendly way.

The Department is improving data sharing through USGS Water Use Data and Research Grants (WUDR 3 and WUDR 4) data sharing projects. WUDR 3 will improve the end user experience of inputting their Chapter 110 water reporting data. WUDR 4 will share data between agencies (SRBC & DRBC). The Department also continues to work on digitizing the Water Atlas into a Story map. This will create an online user-friendly tool that presents the State Water Plan achievements and incorporates cross references to other applicable programs and initiatives.

## **Presentation on the DEP Great Lakes Program**

Tim Bruno, Chief of the DEP Great Lakes Office provided an overview of DEP's work in the Great Lakes Region. The DEP office is located at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center at Presque Isle State Park. The focus of the office is on the Great Lakes water quality, linking the community with the Great Lakes, and forming community partnerships to encourage municipal and county cooperation and protect the environment. The DEP office coordinates with U.S. and Canadian federal agencies and other states and provinces to address water use and quality challenges and to develop water and land protection programs and prioritizing funding.

The Great Basin in PA covers 511 square miles of watershed and contains 77 miles of coastline. The first Great Lakes Water Quality agreement was signed by the U.S. and Canada in 1972 and a second agreement was completed in 1978. This agreement focused on an ecosystem approach with the end goal of restoring and maintaining chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the great Lakes and reduce toxic substances. The agreement was amended in 2012 and created the Great lakes Executive Committee to oversee water quality protection and restoration efforts. There are 10 Annexes in the 2012 Agreement. The Nutrients Annex is a high interest topic on the Great Lakes, with a focus on Lake Erie.

Phosphorus is a concern in Lake Erie. The main sources of phosphorus in the Lake are the Maumee River basin and other priority tributaries. There is concern with algal blooms

in the Western Basin and hypoxia in the Central basin, but this will not affect Pennsylvania. A Phosphorus Reduction Domestic Action Plan has been developed that covers 375 square miles of watershed. This plan examines land use, point and non-point sources, identifies data needs and gaps, and identifies programs to help reduce phosphorus levels. PA contributes .51% of the total phosphorus in the Lake Erie Central Basin.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin Water Resources Compact and Agreement was formalized in 2018 and governs water use and diversion within the Great Lakes Basin. The Agreement established criteria for new or increased withdrawals, bans new or increased diversions from the basin, and establishes regional reviews for evaluating withdrawals and diversion exceptions.

Water users in the PA Lake Erie Basin use 40.6 million gallons per day with Erie Water Works being the largest utility and using 25 million gallons per day. The Great lakes Restoration Initiative is administered by EPA and has provided \$2 billion to assist in restoration activities. This funding helped delist Presque Isle Bay from the Great Lakes Areas of Concern. Partners in the GLRI include the VinES program which works directly with vineyard owners and farmers to identify physical and operational improvements, the Small Flow Treatment Facility Program which helps owners identify pollution causes and fix systems to improve public health, the Municipal Stormwater Assistance Program which protects water quality and provides for sustainable municipal management of infrastructure, the Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring program which provides for monitoring and detection of harmful algal blooms along Pennsylvania’s shorelines, and the lake Erie Environmental forum which provides an opportunity to learn about public policy issues in the Great Lakes.

**Data Provided through the Regional Committee Survey**

An online survey was previously provided to Great Lakes Regional Committee members and 17 members completed the survey. The survey asked members to rank regional priorities, comment on Integrated Water Resources Planning, comment on climate change, and comment on the uniqueness of the region compared to the rest of the commonwealth.

**Priority Issues**

Priority rankings of issues identified in the survey is provided in the following chart.

Priority	Ranking
Support legislation and other measures that will protect the quantity and quality of water in Lake Erie	12.82
Collaboration, coordination, and communications with partner jurisdictions, other states, and Canada	12.41
Analysis of contaminants and emerging contaminants in streams, rivers, and lakes	10.50
Land use impacts, best practices, and sustainable planning	10.50

Maintain the hydrologic integrity of the region by addressing land use changes	10.38
Support legislation and measures to protect water quantity and quality	10.38
Stormwater management and MS4	10.06
Integration and collaboration for water resource management	9.25
Agriculture best practices	8.63
Assess water quality improvements	8.18
Invasive species	8.00
Protect Lake Erie from outside legal decisions and bank erosion	7.18
Sustainable water resources	6.71
Climate change	6.38
Have a stormwater primer	4.82

Committee members discussed the priorities identified. Comments provided combined priorities to reduce the total number of priorities for the committee to consider and develop ideas and action plans. The top identified priority areas and supporting priorities and comments for each priority include:

- 1. Support legislation and other measures that will protect the quantity and quality of water in Lake Erie.**
  - a. Support legislation and measures to protect water quantity and quality
  - b. Protect Lake Erie from outside legal decisions and bank erosion
  - c. Pennsylvania should have a stake and voice in Federal legislation that impacts the shores of Lake Erie
  - d. Commonwealth should consider taking a more aggressive approach in the courts to protect water equality and environmental rights.
  
- 2. Collaboration, coordination, and communications with partner jurisdictions, other states, and Canada**
  - a. Land use impacts, best practices, and sustainable planning - Education and Outreach to communicate ideas
  - b. Maintain the hydrologic integrity of the region by addressing land use changes
  - c. Integration and collaboration for water resource management
  - d. Promote cooperation, collaboration, communications, and a regional approach with municipalities
  - e. DEP role is to encourage and recommend cooperation but does not require it. Incentives for regional cooperation through grant funding is more effective than forcing cooperation.
  - f. Develop green infrastructure and best practices should become the accepted normal
  - g. Education about water quality and how important it is to the region
  - h. Outreach programs
  - i. Agriculture best practices
  - j. Create an infrastructure that is more accessible for business growth and tourism.

### 3. Water Quality

- a. Analysis of contaminants and emerging contaminants in streams, rivers, and lakes
- b. Storm water management and MS4
- c. Climate change impact
- d. Invasive species
- e. Emphasize water quality contribution to the economy and recreation
- f. Agricultural best practices
- g. Bank erosion
- h. Impact of climate change - increased flooding; frequent/larger storms; stream run-off during storm events; reduced water quality; infrastructure challenges
- i. Support legislation and measures to protect water quantity and quality

#### Resource:

- [https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/drinking\\_water/PFAS/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/My-Water/drinking_water/PFAS/Pages/default.aspx)
- <http://www.depgis.state.pa.us/emappa/>

### Questions 2, 3, and 4 of survey - Integrated Water Resources Planning

Q2 What comes to mind when you hear the term Integrated Water Resources Planning (IWRP)?

planning<sub>management</sub> water<sub>water resources</sub>

Q3 How could IWRP help your region?

planning<sub>resources management source</sub> better<sub>PA</sub>  
water resources<sub>help impacts</sub> Lake Erie region

Q4 How do you see the state helping to facilitate your region's IWRP efforts?

efforts assistance state<sub>help</sub> planning<sub>Erie</sub> water<sub>funding</sub>  
resources<sub>County Facilitation</sub>

Comments provided in the Committee discussion:

- Start with outreach and education
- Incentives are better than interventions
- Must look at everyone's needs, different audiences, municipalities have different concerns
- Pennsylvania's role
  - Provide unbiased, manageable data
  - Provide incentives for all water organizations to work together
  - Provide both financial and non-financial incentives

**Resources:**

- [www.paiwrp.com](http://www.paiwrp.com) - IWRP flowchart tool
- <http://www.paiwrp.com/page.asp?id=1> - IWRP flowchart
- <http://www.paiwrp.com/uploads/pdf/York-IWRP-Flowchart.pdf> - York County IWRP flowchart
- <https://www.ycpc.org/319/Water-Resources-Planning>
- [http://www.adamscounty.us/Dept/Planning/Documents/CAJCP/1CAJCP\\_DRAFT\\_Dec18.pdf](http://www.adamscounty.us/Dept/Planning/Documents/CAJCP/1CAJCP_DRAFT_Dec18.pdf)

**Questions 5 & 6 - Climate Change Survey Feedback**

Q5 How has climate change affected your region? For example, increased heavy rain events and flooding, water availability, Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), etc.

data HIGH Water Levels water high Lake Erie concerns  
increased levels climate change  
heavy rain events events cause erosion lead lake also

Q6 Climate Change: How do you think your region could/should adapt to or mitigate these climate change effects?

efforts increase planning Great Lakes will Need  
infrastructure climate change

Comments provided in the Committee discussion:

- More severe storms
- More liquid events and less snowstorms
- Increased flooding
- More frequent and larger storms

- Stream run-off during storm events
- Reduced water quality
- Infrastructure needs
- Lake Erie is a valuable resource to the economy and recreation
- Environmental impacts - Spotted lantern fly will impact the region in future years, it is an invasive species and need preventative measures
- Pennsylvania has a \$20 billion deficit in water infrastructure sustainability; need asset management and planning
- Water affordability - if we do not manage quality water it becomes more expensive for everyone, and especially vulnerable populations.

### **Resource**

- <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/climate/Pages/default.aspx> - link to DEP's webpage on climate change
- <https://planning.saccounty.net/PlansandProjectsIn-Progress/Pages/CAP.aspx> - climate action plan for Sacramento County, California

### **Act 220 Discussion**

Matt Wolford is the Great Lakes Committee representative to the State Committee. The Regional committee discussed Act 220. The Committee feels the Act is cumbersome, can be made more efficient, and will support changes made to the Act.

### **Bylaws Changes**

A discussion on changes to the bylaws was tabled on a Matt Wolford / Tim Wachter motion.

### **Next Steps**

Chair Palmer thanked all committee members for their attendance, participation, and ideas. DEP would like to document achievements in the Great Lakes Region that have occurred since the last plan was developed. Please provide ideas and stories to Mark Matlock at the DEP office.

To complete the work for the updated plan, each meeting will focus on one or two topics for discussion. DEP will provide the identified topic(s) for discussion in advance of the next meeting, and possible homework reading, so committee members have time to prepare background information and solutions.

The State Committee will be meeting August 19, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. For additional information on State Committee meeting, look on the DEP website.

The next meeting will be held on October 28, 2020. It will be a virtual meeting. Mark Matlock stated that DEP requires the meeting to be held via SKYPE and this is the platform that will be used for future meetings.

Chair Palmer adjourned the meeting at 11:57 am.