



## State Water Plan Update Lower Susquehanna Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting

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

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

Felicia Dell	Mike Kyle
Tyler Erb	Joe McNally
Jennifer Fetter	Mark Snyder
Andrew Gavin	Justin Spangler
Lincoln Kauffman	Warren Weaver

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

Andrea Blosser	Craig Robertson
Andrea Danucalov	Byron Ross
Sean Kenny	Thomas Wilson
George Pomeroy	Jenni Woodworth

### **Others in Attendance:**

James Horton – DEP	Bob Whitmore - Strategic Consulting Partners
Susan Weaver – DEP	
Mike Hill – DEP	
Dave Jostenski - DEP	

### **Visitors:**

None

### **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. Chair Felicia Dell also welcomed all members to the meeting and a roll call was completed.

### **Minutes**

The meeting summary of the April 13, 2022, meeting was approved on a Lincoln Kauffman / Andy Gavin motion.

### **Public Comment**

Chair Dell opened the meeting for public comment. An opportunity to express comments verbally or in the chat box was offered. There was no public comment.

### **DEP 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 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 twelfth statewide committee meeting was held on August 17. The thirteenth meeting is scheduled for October 19.

### **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 Lower Susquehanna Regional priorities. Committee members provided the following comments:

- DEP keep the process moving, even through the COVID-19 pandemic and the change to the virtual process.
- It would have been nice in the beginning to have an overview picture of the “big” picture of the work to be completed and then have a process chart to track progress as the meetings progressed and the plan developed, a visual update.
- Process was well facilitated by DEP staff
- Would be helpful to have targeted benchmarks and deliverables throughout the process
- Regional Committees worked well
- How could the regional committees contributed to the statewide committee work more?
- At times there appeared to be a disconnect between the roles of the statewide committee and the regional committees

- It might be helpful to bring the statewide committee and the regional committees together periodically to process what is being worked on and what needs to be accomplished.
- Some members did not attend meetings regularly. Maybe they were unclear about their role.
- A visual update of what is happening in the process and what is next would be helpful
- Appreciation to Felicia Dell, Chair, for getting everyone involved

## **Story Map – Water Atlas**

Mike Hill, DEP Geologist presented the DEP Story Map and Water Atlas for the updated state water plan. The previous state water plan had a coffee table book highlighting the work of the update which was very well received and requested. The current water atlas has been shifted to a digital story map and water atlas and contains updated data and GIS maps. The digital water atlas will be maintained by DEP staff and updated with new information. The link for the digital water atlas follows:

[The Digital Water Atlas \(arcgis.com\)](#)

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

A committee member suggested that a section on historical impacts on water resources may be helpful for future updates.

## **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 feedback on the current draft included:

- This state water plan is an improvement over the past plan.
- The report should include connections to other documents, regulations, and work of DEP.
- The state water plan should be checked for continuity and alignment between the statewide committee work and the regional committees' work
- Regional committees seem like they are on an island at times with the work. Should be more sharing of information between committees.

## **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.

- Like the idea of continuing regional committee work with two meetings per year
- Like having benchmarks for measuring progress on the development of the state water plan and measuring progress of initiatives being completed
- There are changes with stakeholders in the water resources field and identifying who the players should be in the future is critical.
- Regional committee may want to create subcommittees to address important topics in the planning process in the future and bring their findings to the full committee for consideration.
- Prioritizing activities in the plan should be based on timing cycles of regulation review, proposed legislation, and funding cycles.
- As DEP forms work group committees of stakeholders for different regulatory items, effort should be made to integrate the work of topic committees with the state water plan recommendations.

### **Recruitment for Committee Members**

The Lower Susquehanna Regional Committee currently has five openings.

- County Conservation District or Planning (2 openings)
- Agriculture
- Industry
- Local government

### **Items in the chat**

The geographic area of the Lower Susquehanna Region is described in the map below.

# Pennsylvania State Water Plan Regions



The meeting was adjourned at 11:13 a.m. on a motion by Jen Fetter.

DRAFT