



State Water Plan Update Ohio Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting

April 27, 2021
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Committee Members in Attendance:

Erin Kepple Adams	Ronald Musser
Sam Dinkins	Annie Quinn
Chuck Duritsa	Mary Ellen Ramage
Matthew Genchur	Ron Rohall
Duane Goodsell	Robert Softcheck
Kevin Halloran	John St. Clair
Sheryl Kelly	Jason Stanton
Deb Lange	Donna Lynn Zofcin
Jason McCabe	

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Daniel Dahlkemper
Lori Dayton
Deb Simko
John Walliser

Others in Attendance:

Kristina Peacock-Jones - DEP	Monica Gould - Strategic Consulting Partners
Mark Matlock - DEP	Bob Whitmore - Strategic Consulting Partners
Mike Hill - DEP	
James Horton - DEP	
William Brogan - DEP	
Summer Kunkle - DEP	
Brian Chalfant - DEP	

Visitors:

Ingrid Pearson
J.G.

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. Ron Rohall, Committee

Chair, welcomed committee members to the meeting. Attendance was completed through the online participant list.

Minutes

The minutes of the January 26, 2021 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved on a Bob Softcheck / Mary Ellen Ramage motion. The vote was completed by a voice vote.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Bylaws of the Ohio Regional Committee require an annual election of the committee chair and vice-chair positions. Chair Rohall requested that Mark Matlock facilitate the election of officers. Nominations for chair was opened to the committee. Both Chair Rohall and Vice-Chair Chuck Duritsa indicated they are willing to serve in these roles for an additional year or other members could step forward to be nominated.

A Bob Softcheck / Chuck Durista motion was unanimously approved to re-elect Ron Rohall to the chair position for the committee.

A Mary Ellen Ramage / Sam Dinkins motion was unanimously approved to re-elect Chuck Duritsa to the vice-chair position for the committee.

Public Comment

Chair Rohall 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 State Water Plan Update

Kristina Peacock-Jones gave the committee an update of what DEP is working on regarding the State Water Plan update.

The USGS Water Use Data and Research (WUDR) grant data sharing projects are progressing well. The project for improving Chapter 110 data input is complete and will be deployed soon. The project involving data sharing between agencies (SRBC, DRBC, and USGS) has been initiated with the IT architecture and data sharing protocols in place. Testing of the data sharing has begun, and the project should be fully operational during the second quarter of 2021.

The fifth Statewide Committee meeting is scheduled for May 19, 2021.

Public Hearing Summary

Mark Matlock informed the committee that a public hearing on the State Water Plan update was held on January 6, 2021. The January 6, 2021 hearing was advertised in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on December 26, 2020 and all sunshine requirements were met. Each committee's hearing was held for one hour via Microsoft Teams. The purpose of the hearing was to solicit comments from interested persons on water resources planning issues related to preparation of the regional component of the State Water Plan update.

Written comments were accepted by the committees on or before January 20, 2021. The following public comments were offered:

- Delaware Water Resources Regional Committee – 9:00am – no participants
- Lower Susquehanna Water Resources Regional Committee – 10:00am – one participant
- Potomac Water Resources Regional Committee – 11:00am – no participants
- Ohio Water Resources Regional Committee – 1:00pm – nine participants
- Great Lakes Water Resources Regional Committee – 2:00pm – no participants
- Upper/Middle Susquehanna Water Resources Regional Committee – 3:00pm – one participant

Mark reviewed who the individuals or organizations were that presented comments and provided a brief synopsis of the comments. The committee members have received a complete written transcript of the comments provided through the public hearing process. Individuals or organizations who provided testimony from the Ohio region included:

- Chestnut Ridge Chapter, Trout Unlimited
- Mark Killar
- Casselman River Watershed Association
- James Moses
- Lisa Werder Brown, Executive Director of Watersheds of South Pittsburgh
- John Detisch, Pennsylvania Division President of Izaak Walton League
- American Rivers
- University of Pittsburgh
- Piper Forestry Services

Back Creek and Laurel Hill CARPs

Mark Matlock shared the two Critical Area Resource Plans (CARPs) are being reviewed internally at DEP. Committee members should be receiving updated information soon and the CARPs will be reviewed at the next meeting. A question was asked if the CARPs are being removed. Mark indicated there is no intention or process to remove the CARPs. The significant time between the original documents being created may mean some recommendations may need to be revised. A public hearing on the CARPs must still occur.

Regional Priorities

Mark Matlock, DEP staff, presented draft statements of the Ohio Regional Committee's priorities to be included in the State Water Plan update. The draft priorities were created from previous ideas, discussions, and prioritization by the committee. The draft priorities presented were:

Inter-agency Water Resource Planning

The Ohio Water Resources Regional Committee supports a holistic approach to water quality, quantity, and availability. They believe inter-agency water resources planning can address many water priorities. Organizations that should be involved in inter-agency water planning include federal and state agencies, local municipalities, conservation districts, watershed districts, watershed authorities, nonprofit

environmental organizations, and the Army Corp of Engineers. Plans should identify water resources needed to promote and facilitate economic development while maintaining watershed integrity and recreation benefits. They should also evaluate impacts of resource extraction from the Marcellus Shale on water quality, emerging contaminants in water systems, reclaiming of water resources impaired by abandoned mines, and inter-basin transfers of water. Act 167 stormwater planning at the county level is an initial step toward inter-agency water resource planning.

Water Quality and Quantity

The committee believes it is critical to think of water as a single entity which requires an approach that considers both water quality and quantity simultaneously. Stormwater is significantly impacted by climate change and aging infrastructure. Excessive amounts of storm water runoff can damage the quality of the waterways they are entering. Storage, infrastructure upgrades, and treatment are potential solutions but planting additional trees along the banks of tributaries can help as well. Trees mitigate long-term impacts of stormwater and improve water quality. Stormwater is a potential problem for both water quantity and quality and its potential solutions can have impacts on both as well.

Other concerns in the Ohio basin include legacy issues encompassing acid mine drainage and orphaned wells, inter-basin transfers, and the introduction of larger-scale industry water users in the region have implications on both quantity and quality.

The draft priorities were discussed by committee members and revisions were made to the draft statements to clarify the statements. The revised priorities for the Ohio Regional Committee follow:

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A Mary Ellen Ramage / Chuck Durista motion to approve the “Inter-agency Water Resource Planning” priority statement was unanimously approved.

A Bob Softcheck / Jason McCabe motion to approve the revised “Water Quality and Quantity” priority statement was unanimously approved.

A Mary Ellen Ramage / Donna Lynn Zofcin motion to retain the original order of the priorities was unanimously approved. The order of the priorities should be:

1. Inter-agency Water Resource Planning
2. Water Quality and Quantity

Resources Provided in the Chat

- County Conservation Districts, and Council of Governments would be good tools for outreach and education
- University of Pennsylvania - The Water Center - Three Rivers Watershed Action Network and Leadership Incubator - [Three Rivers Watershed Action Network and Leadership Incubator | Water Center \(upenn.edu\)](https://www.watercenter.upenn.edu/)
- <https://upenn.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Embed/index.html?webmap=2e28a491c5d6447f9f902c05dba3116f&extent=-82.6445,39.1948,-76.6405,41.7147&zoom=true&previewImage=false&scale=true&search=true&searchExtent=false&details=true&legendLayers=true&activePanel=legend&disableScroll=false&theme=light>
- <https://spcwater.org/topics/planning-and-resiliency/integrated-water-resource-planning/> - blueprint for One Water
- Integrated Water Resource Planning - SPC Water Resource Center - Integrated water resource planning (IWRP) is a flexible and holistic type of planning that involves professionals from various water sectors working together.
- <https://www.streamrestorationinc.org/> - Stream Restoration Incorporated - A Nonprofit Organization Restoring Watersheds
- <https://ninemilerun.org/> - Nine Mile Run Watershed Association

Next Steps

Chair Rohall thanked all committee members for their attendance, participation, and ideas.

Mark Matlock, DEP staff, provided an overview of the committee's future work.

- Summary notes from today's discussion will be provided to committee members.
- The Statewide Committee will be meeting on May 19, 2021.
- The next Ohio Regional Committee meeting will be held on July 27, 2021. At this meeting DEP staff are planning to share a StoryMap of water projects completed or in operation since the last State Water Plan update. A discussion will also focus on education and outreach to the community of the region's priorities / State Water Plan update.
- A future meeting is scheduled for October 26, 2021. It will be a virtual meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 pm on a Chuck Duritsa / Donna Lynn Zofcin motion.