



State Water Plan Update Potomac Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting

January 13, 2022
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

Committee Members in Attendance:

Charles Bennett	Dr. Sarah Principato
Pat Bowling	Brent Ramsey
Adam McClain	Donald Schwartz
Heidi Moltz	

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Barry Best	Kevin Moore
Andre Blosser	Pat Naugle
Phyllis Chant	Coleen Reamer
Mark Guise	Dr. Ronald Stanley
Russell McLucas	

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	

Visitors:

None

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. Committee Chair Charlie Bennett welcomed committee members to the meeting and completed a roll call for attendance.

Public Comment

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

Meeting Summary

The meeting summary of the October 14, 2021 meeting was approved on a Adam McClain / Charlie Bennett motion.

Election of officers

The annual election of officers was tabled because of a lack of quorum of committee members.

DEP Update

Kristina Peacock-Jones provided 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 project involving data sharing between agencies is now operational for SRBC and USGS. Data sharing is still pending with DRBC.

The three draft Critical Area Resource Plans (CARPs) continue to be under development and the drafts are progressing. Two of those CARPs are for the Ohio Regional Committee and one is for the Potomac Regional Committee.

The State Water Plan Atlas from 2009 is being developed into a Story Map as a Digital Atlas. The Digital Atlas should be ready in the first half of 2022.

The eighth Statewide Committee meeting was held on November 17, 2021. The ninth meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2022.

CARP Update

The three CARP's being developed are being reviewed internally by DEP staff. When the Potomac Region CARP is through review it will be distributed to committee members for a final review. If there are minimal comments or changes from the committee, a public hearing will be scheduled. After the public hearing, the committee will approve the CARP and then the Statewide Committee will approve.

Regional Materials

Mark Matlock provided summary materials developed by the committee over the past two years. This summary will be reviewed at a public hearing to be scheduled in March of 2022. The public hearing will be a full day event with each regional committee scheduling a one-hour time period to present the region's priorities and summary materials. There were no additional changes to the regional summary materials and the draft materials follow:

Specific Regional Priorities

The Potomac region is comparatively small and each county in the region is split with at least one other watershed. Being composed of mostly smaller watersheds, the region is at risk from changing precipitation patterns due to climate change and groundwater recharge issues related to land use practices; these issues represent a primary focus of the regional committee.

Promote Programs and Practices that Protect Water Quality and Quantity and Preserve the Ecological Integrity of Groundwater and Surface Water

A major priority of the regional committee is to develop land use programs that protect water quality and quantity while preserving the ecological integrity of groundwater and surface water, including springs, streams, lakes, and wetlands. To ensure adequate water resources for present and future generations in the Potomac basin, the committee recommends an approach that encourages municipal programs to collaborate and plan regionally, address land use planning and growth, provide domestic water well construction standards, and implement best management practices to protect water quality and quantity. Completing Countywide Action Plans to support Pennsylvania's Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan is also a high priority under this objective.

Climate Change Resiliency Especially with Regard to Stormwater Management, Flooding, and Drought

From a water resources perspective, climate change impacts stormwater management, flooding, and drought. Large intense precipitation events and longer duration storms are increasing stormwater runoff and creating or exacerbating erosion issues. Areas in this region have low infiltration rates, leading to less groundwater recharge and increased flooding. Varied storm frequencies may also lead to an increase in droughts. Promoting stormwater management with the use of riparian buffers, rain gardens, and stream restoration will reduce erosion and improve groundwater recharge.

As they would specifically relate to documented climate change, identify protection priority water resources that may be trending towards impairment for any use, through the collection and analysis of data. Priorities may be determined by looking specifically at declining water quality and/or quantity, and flooding issues. Improve the potential protection priority water resources through identified targeted solutions that may include education and outreach, asset management, resource improvement, and others.

Region's Uniqueness

What are the Potomac region's unique characteristics that are important considerations in the state's water planning?

- This region forms the headwaters to the Potomac River, which makes interstate coordination crucial, as the majority of the basin is located within Maryland.
- This region borders the Susquehanna and Delaware River basins. Each county in this region is split between at least two planning regions.
- Local geology and topography limits groundwater storage and recharge; water does not infiltrate into the soil well and may lead to flooding.
- Unique location along the I-81 corridor with a high amount of development, particularly warehouse expansion.
- The geography is unique in that it is predominantly farmland that is densely populated, but also has rugged mountains that are more sparsely populated.

- There has been increased residential growth throughout the basin as a result of urban sprawl from the Baltimore, Harrisburg, and Washington DC metropolitan areas, which will change the dynamics of water needs.
- Adams County within the region has, in conjunction with local well drilling contractors, developed a set of standards for well construction. They are the only county in the region to have accomplished this thus far.

Stormwater and Flood Management

What are the region's concerns and recommendations for stormwater and flood management to preserve water quality?

- Promote countywide action plans which are beneficial for facilitating coordination and addressing stormwater.
- Consider water quantity and quality when performing cost/benefit analysis for land development and infrastructure.
- Regional authorities should assess aging stormwater infrastructure for high-frequency, as opposed to high intensity storm events. Retrofitting aging best management practices and providing groundwater recharge areas for large impervious areas such as parking lots from vacant shopping malls would be beneficial.
- The region's unique geology that limits groundwater recharge and storage should be taken into account for regional planning of stormwater and flooding events.

Climate Change Adaptation for Water Resources

How are water resources within the region being impacted by climate change and what could we do to adapt?

- With the potential for increased storm frequency and storm intensity, stakeholders should find ways to reduce safety risks, environmental impacts, and generally be more prepared for these types of storm events.
- Increasing resiliency for flash flooding events should be considered in regional planning. Riparian buffers and conveyance structures can help reduce the effects of flash flooding and promote groundwater recharge.
- Extremes in water availability requires regional authorities to plan for both flooding and drought, which creates difficulty in planning and coordination. Integrated water resource planning (IWRP) can help coordinate these efforts.
- Since there is increased risk of more severe droughts brought on by climate change, there needs to be greater resilience of water resources. Protection and conservation of groundwater sources can be accomplished through increased infiltration and aquifer maintenance.
- Stakeholders should investigate climate change implications on water supply and water quality. This can be accomplished by collecting data on both the high and low precipitation events.

- Stakeholders should explore ways to communicate climate change that won't alienate potential allies.
- Where possible, use 'on the ground' data collection, science, and regional data as opposed to global datasets. This data will provide more accurate forecasting, attract more stakeholders, and help with localized decisions. Additional types of data and sources would be beneficial in finding the best way to analyze and track local changes ([CoCoRaHS network](#)).

Logic Model

James Horton, DEP, shared a template of the previous logic model work completed by the committee. The logic model can be used to make the region's priorities actionable and measurable. A logic model is a picture that links the long term and short-term outcomes, or changes and results you hope to achieve, with the program activities and resources available to move the priorities forward.

The logic model template has the following components.

- Resources
- Activities
- Outputs
- Intermediate outcomes
- Long term outcomes

Committee members reviewed the draft logic models and provided additional revisions and comments.

Comments in the Chat

- Bill Reichart, Exec Dir. PGWA
- Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin

Next Steps

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

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

- Edits to the committee's developed materials will be updated.
- Within the next week, a public hearing will be scheduled for March 2022. The public hearing will be a full day hearing with each regional committee having one hour to receive public comment. Comments from the public hearing will be available for the Delaware Regional Committee to review at the April meeting.
- A committee vote on approval of the committee's priorities and Story Map materials will be held at the April meeting.
- The approved regional committee documents will be provided to the Statewide Committee.
- Next Statewide Committee meeting is Wednesday, January 19.

- Potomac Regional Committee meetings are scheduled for the following dates in 2022.
 - April 14
 - A July meeting is not scheduled at this time.
 - October 13

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 pm on a Pat Bowling / Adam McClain motion.

DRAFT