



State Water Plan Update Potomac Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting

October 15, 2020
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Virtual SKYPE Meeting

Committee Members in Attendance:

Barry Best	Heidi Moltz
Phyllis Chant	Kevin Moore
Mark Guise	Sarah Principato
Adam McClain	Donald Schwartz

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Andre Blosser	Brent Ramsey
Charles Bennett	Coleen Reamer
Russell McLucas	Ronald Stanley
Pat Naugle	

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:

Sim Sutter
Michele Kokolis
Pia Lolster

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. Adam McClain, Vice Chair, welcomed committee members to the meeting and completed a roll call for attendance.

Public Comment

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

Minutes

The minutes of the July meeting could not be approved because of a lack of quorum of Committee Members.

DEP Update

Kristina Peacock-Jones, DEP, provided an update on DEP activities. The USGS Water Use Data and Research Grants data sharing projects are still progressing. The project for improving Chapter 110 data input is about 80% complete. The project involving data sharing between agencies has been initiated and the IT architecture and data sharing protocols are being finalized.

Staff within the Department are gathering noteworthy activities and projects achieved over the past ten years that coincide with the State Water Plan. This information will be spotlighted in the State Water Plan update.

The stormwater program is in the process of developing an updated stormwater best practices manual to incorporate green infrastructure. The Energy Programs Office, who is responsible for updating the Governor's Climate Action Plan, is currently in the revision process for the 2021 iteration of the plan. Valuable input provided by Committee members will be passed along to these DEP programs.

DEP staff are continuing to work on better data sharing tools. One of those tools is Power BI, which will display water use data to the public in a more user-friendly way.

Presentation on POWER BI

Michael Hill, DEP Geologist, provided a visual presentation and overview of Power BI. Power BI is a data sharing tool designed to expand the number of existing online water use report viewers by eliminating the need to crunch a large dataset for a summary report. It is a Microsoft application. The data presents visually the amount of surface and ground water used within the state. It does not assess water availability.

Maps, tables, and charts are available to show water withdrawals, water usage types and a breakdown of water users. The data can be viewed for each Pennsylvania County, state water planning regions, subbasins, and watersheds. The information can be exported to an Excel spreadsheet or csv format.

The current map, charts, and tables show data for 2018. Eventually data will be available for multiple years and show trends in water usage. 2019 data should be available early 2021 when it is confirmed all suppliers have provided their data. Power BI will be available to the public on the DEP website soon. The system is currently completing internal review by IT and Communications staff prior to approval for public use.

Critical Area Resource Plans (CARPs) Update

An update on the Marsh Creek / Rock Creek Critical Water Planning Areas (CARPs) was provided by Heidi Moltz of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB). The purpose of the CARP is to identify and quantify, where possible, water

resources issues that affect water availability and develop practical, implementable solutions. The initial CARP plans were initiated in 2010. The staff of ICPRB are updating the information in the CARPs with a focus on demographics within the area, current and predicted future water withdrawal from the area, and stormwater management.

The previous CARPs used 2010 census data. The update includes new estimates of the population in the area through 2030. The largest increase in population is projected for Cumberland Township with an anticipated population increase of 14%.

Water withdrawals data are provided by registered users and non-registered users. Registered users are required to report withdrawals to DEP and includes agriculture, commercial and industrial users, and public water supply systems. Non-registered users are not required to report withdrawals to DEP and include agriculture uses for irrigation and livestock, some commercial and industrial users, self-supplied domestic water users, and non-community water systems.

Total water withdrawals data supplied by registered users shows relatively stable withdrawals from 2014 to 2019. Estimated withdrawals from non-registered users shows a decline in water withdrawal due to less irrigation from decreasing acreage of cropland and a drop in livestock. Self-supplied domestic water sources data shows an increase in water withdrawals.

ICPRB will continue to collect and analyze data. They will have draft recommendations prepared to present to the Committee at the January 2021 meeting and the final document prepared by the end of March 2021.

Regional Committee Survey Data

A DEP online survey was available for Potomac Regional Committee members to complete prior to the meeting. The survey asked participants to provide open ended responses to two questions on stormwater management and climate change. The survey feedback was reviewed, and Committee members were given an opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions.

The first survey question on stormwater management and summarized survey responses included:

The last State Water Plan update included stormwater management with a focus on flood management. The goal for updating the stormwater management portion is to include a stronger focus on stormwater BMPs, which address both quantity and quality. What other areas of stormwater management do you think should be considered for this update?

- Provide funding for counties to complete Act 167 Stormwater Management Plans.
- Consideration of changing storm event frequencies, duration and return frequencies as they relate to BMP design standards.
- Consider quantity and quality with cost/benefit analysis.

- Assess aging infrastructure for high frequency storm events.
- Stormwater BMPs do not function the same in all areas and some areas need assistance in creating unique BMPs. Adams County would be a good example where standard stormwater BMPs do not function well.
- Geology is important; watershed characteristics should be accounted for when looking at BMPs; develop site specific/regional BMPs.
- Easy to address new construction infrastructure but existing/older projects have aging infrastructure to be addressed
- Large amounts of impervious area, huge parking lots from vacant shopping malls, and retrofitting existing aging BMP's.

Committee members comments:

- Region has unique geology and soils; standard BMPs do not work because of the geology of the region
- Region specific BMPs need to be developed because of the geology
- Agree with the listed bullet points
- Need a site-specific approach and solutions; do analysis at each site

The second survey question on climate change and summarized survey responses included:

Now that we have briefly discussed climate change at our July meeting, which aspects of climate change do you think we should focus on in our discussion at the next meeting for consideration in the State Water Plan update?

- The potential/likelihood for increased storm frequency and intensity. How these storms events can and should be handled to reduce risks to safety and environmental impacts.
- Preparing to be resilient in terms of both flash flooding and potential decreased groundwater recharge. Discuss the implications of such events.
- Planning for resilience to an amplified drought of record for protection and conservation. Would help to address increased droughts.
- Consider the future risk of deeper droughts brought on by climate change and the measures needed to promote groundwater infiltration to maintain aquifers.
- Climate change implications on water supply and water quality should be considered (i.e. increased temperatures and the implications on source water quality and aquatic/ ecological health of waterways).

Committee members comments:

- All bullets address climate change and deeper droughts
- Potential for more droughts
- All points are interrelated; drought issues should get more attention and focus
- Integrated lists; includes both floods and droughts
- Need to quantify climate change with data, both the high and low precipitation events; will assist in planning

- Bullet points are on target
- Recharge is important; focus on drought is critical; need a drought plan
- Extreme weather events: more rain less snow in winter is important
- In a western state a depleted mining quarry is used as a reservoir for water resource management
- Add drought to bullet point #3
- Difficult to plan with extreme, more intense weather events
- Extremes in availability of water

- Climate change language
 - Language is important; be delicate on language
 - Collect data; lean on the science
 - Demonstrate the change; talk about the data
 - Do not have a problem with the use of the term climate change
 - Focus on Potomac region data, not global data
 - Climate change is not a political term, use the term, focus on the science, missed opportunity if we do not use the term
 - There is a difference between the term's climate change and global warming
 - How the message is delivered is important

Region's Priorities, IWRP, and Uniqueness

The following summary information was prepared for the Statewide Committee meeting in August.

Potomac Region

Committee's Top Priorities

1. Develop land use programs that protect water quality and quantity and preserves ecological integrity of groundwater and surface water - well water management and well standards
2. Integrated planning - regional comprehensive planning for land use and managing growth; Phase 3 Water Improvement Plans
3. Climate change resiliency - storm water and flooding impacts

Integrated Water Resources Planning

- Develop an IWRP for the Potomac basin with everyone working together

CARP

- Marsh Creek and Rock Creek CARPs
- Initiated in 2010
- Current data needs to be updated - current and future withdrawal uses, demographics of the areas, climate change impact, and stormwater
- Regional Committee review recommendations in October - December 2020

Region's Uniqueness

- On the divide between the Potomac and Susquehanna river watersheds
- Headwaters to the Potomac River
- Water does not infiltrate into the soil well, flooding is a big hazard
- Unique geography - flat, fertile farmland that is densely populated to rugged mountains sparsely populated
- Lots of development, I-81 corridor, warehouses

Committee Members' Comments:

Priorities

- Bullet 2 on integrated planning should include County wide action planning within the Potomac region
- Bullet 3 – add extreme weather, extreme fluctuations in weather, or more intense weather events; also add drought
- Significant flooding, but drought is also a big issue and should be added to bullet #3.
- Add evaluate levels of ground water to CARP data collection

Region's Uniqueness

- Extremes in availability of water
- Population growth will change the dynamics of water needs

Next Steps

Vice-Chair McClain 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.
- A virtual public hearing is planned for the first week of January, tentatively January 6. There will be two public hearings sessions held in one day and each regional committee's public hearing will last one hour. The am public hearing session will be an opportunity for public input on the Delaware, Potomac, and Lower Susquehanna regions. The afternoon public hearing session will be an opportunity for public input on the Ohio, Great Lakes, and Upper/Middle Susquehanna regions.
- At the January regional committee meeting the Committee members will discuss and vote on part or all the regional water planning priorities, stormwater management priorities, and climate change priorities.
- At the April 2021 regional committee meeting Committee members will finalize the priorities they wish to move forward to the State Committee.
- The State Committee will finalize the updated state water plan at the scheduled meeting in May 2021.

The next meeting of the Potomac Regional Committee will be held on January 14, 2021. It will be a virtual meeting. The April Committee meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 pm by the Vice-Chair.