



## **State Water Plan Update Potomac Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting**

April 15, 2021  
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

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

Charles Bennett	Adam McClain
Barry Best	Heidi Moltz
Andre Blosser	Pat Naugle
Pat Bowling	Brent Ramsey
Phyllis Chant	Donald Schwartz
Mark Guise	

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

Russell McLucas	Coleen Reamer
Kevin Moore	Dr. Ronald Stanley
Dr. Sarah Principato	

### **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	
Summer Kunkel - DEP	
Brian Chalfant - DEP	

### **Visitors:**

Anthony Breslin

### **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.

## **Minutes**

The minutes of the July, October, and January meetings could not be approved because of a lack of quorum of committee members.

## **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Annual election of the chair and vice-chair could not be completed due to a lack of quorum of members.

## **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.

Don Schwarz, a committee member, stated that his region is seeing an increase in solar panel farms. Don asked if anyone has knowledge or research regarding the long-term environmental impact of intensive solar panel development on the groundwater. Several resources were provided in the chat that may provide helpful information.

- <https://pubs.rsc.org/en/content/articlelanding/2016/ee/c6ee00578k#!divAbstract>
- <https://www.jnrd.info/2019/05/10-5027-jnrd-v9i0-02/>
- <https://www.nrel.gov/solar/pv-smart.html> - NREL (USDOE) photovoltaic stormwater management research and testing project

Andrea Blosser, DEP staff, commented that permitting for solar panel sites is limited to land development permitting.

## **DEP 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 components 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 the individuals and organizations that presented comments orally or in writing during the hearing and provided a brief synopsis of the comments. Committee members have received a complete written transcript of the comments provided during the public hearing process.

### **CARP Update**

Mark Matlock provided that DEP has a draft of the Critical Area Resource Plan (CARP) and the document is currently being reviewed internally within the department. After DEP has reviewed the CARP, the document will be sent to the committee for review. Pat Naugle requested the current CARP document provided to the committee should also include any information that was deleted from the previous draft reviewed by the committee.

### **Regional Priorities**

Mark Matlock, DEP staff, presented draft statements of the Potomac 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:

#### **Develop land use programs 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 a water quality objective that encourages municipal programs to collaborate and plan regionally, address land use planning and growth, provide domestic water well construction standards, and develop best management practices

to protect water quality. Completing Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plans 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. Poor soils in this region have low infiltration rates, leading to less groundwater recharge and increased flooding. Decreased storm frequencies coupled with a high volume of precipitation over a short period of time may also lead to an increase in droughts.

The draft priorities were discussed in depth by committee members and revisions were made to the draft statements and new ideas added to clarify the statements. The revised priorities for the Potomac Regional Committee follow:

**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 Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plans is also a high priority under this objective.

**Climate change resiliency especially regarding 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. Poor soils 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 improve erosion and groundwater recharge.

The committee was unable to vote on the priorities due to a lack of quorum of members. The priorities will be reviewed again and voted on at the July meeting.

## **Next Steps**

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

It was noted that a virtual Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium will be held on May 6, 2021. The website for the symposium is: <https://agsci.psu.edu/pa-water-symposium>

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 Potomac Regional Committee meeting will be held on July 15, 2021. At this meeting, the committee will be voting on the committee's priorities for the State Water Plan update. It will be necessary to have a quorum for this meeting to complete the voting on the priorities.
- The July meeting agenda is expected to include a discussion on education and outreach for the State Water Plan update and possibly sharing of a StoryMap of water projects completed or in operation since the last State Water Plan update.
- A future meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2021. It will be a virtual meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm on a Phyllis Chant / Don Schwartz motion.