



State Water Plan Update Potomac Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting

July 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
Andrea Blosser	Kevin Moore
Pat Naugle	Dr. Sarah Principato
Patrick Bowling	Donald Schwartz

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Phyllis Chant	Brent Ramsey
Mark Guise	Coleen Reamer
Russell McLucas	Dr. Ronald Stanley

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	
Brian Chalfant - 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 Vice-Chair Adam McClain 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, October, January, and April committee meetings could not be approved because of a lack of quorum of committee members.

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 moving Chapter 110 water use registration forms from paper to online is nearly complete and will be deployed soon. The project involving data sharing between agencies (SRBC, DRBC, and USGS) is in the testing phase. The project should be fully operational by the end of this summer. The Power BI report summarizing water use data will be public on our website soon. The sixth Statewide Committee meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2021.

Critical Area Resource Plan (CARP) Update

DEP staff received written comments via email from two committee members for potential inclusion in the draft Marsh Creek / Rock Creek CARP relative to updating the management alternatives in the CARP.

Story Map

DEP staff are preparing a story map of the state water planning process. Plans were to show the story map at this meeting, but internal technical problems are preventing the story map from being uploaded for showing. The story map will hopefully be revealed to the committees in October.

Regional Priorities

Mark Matlock, DEP staff, presented and briefly reviewed draft statements developed by all the regional committees. The draft priorities were shared with the Statewide Committee at their meeting in May. The State Committee asked each regional committee to review their draft priorities and provide more details or specifics if possible. were created from previous ideas, discussions, and prioritization by the committee. The draft priorities developed by the Potomac Regional Committee follow:

Promote programs and practices that protect water quality and quantity and preservethe 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 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. 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.

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 emerging contaminants, declining water quality and/or quantity, evolving land use impacts, 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.

After a thoughtful review and discussion on the priorities, committee members made slight wording revisions to the priorities and the revised priorities 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 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. 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.

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.

Education and Outreach

Committee members have been given an opportunity to participate in an online survey to answer questions regarding how education and outreach of the state water plan should be achieved. Summary comments provided by survey participants were shared with the committee. A discussion followed on each survey question and committee members added additional comments. The summary survey data and additional comments provided by the committee members follow (committee's comments are in red).

Survey Responses by Region

- Delaware – 8
- Great Lakes – 4
- Lower Susquehanna – 2
- Ohio – 4
- Potomac – 2
- Upper/Middle Susquehanna – 9

Total responses – 29

Why is it important to conduct education and outreach on the state water plan?

- People buy-in to a plan if they understand why their involvement is important
- To educate on the importance, value, and challenges facing our water resources
- To gain public long-term support and investment
- Why we need to plan for the allocation, protection, and future of water
- Awareness and knowledge of issues and remediation efforts
- Public is aware of the plan, initiatives, and goals
- Find local solutions
- Transparency
- Education and outreach prevent negative information be provided
- People do not understand the scope of the impairment in our watersheds
- To inform decision makers of water resource issues that need to be addressed
- Identifying local priorities
- Investment in water resources = wise economic strategy
- **Determine how to reach these groups (CEU and non-CEU events)**
 - **Incentive to listen**
 - **Evening events**
- **An informed public can hold their elected officials accountable and hope the implement parts of the plan**
- **Hazard awareness**

Who should we educate on the plan?

- Students and teachers
- Elected officials – local, counties, and state

- Public
- County Conservation Districts
- County Planning
- Developers
- Environmental groups
- Engineers
- Watershed organizations
- Farmers – FFA (Future Farmers of America), Farm Bureau, 4-H program
- Industrial – **consumptive users if not already identified**
- agricultural
- recreation users
 - **Water related recreational groups (ski etc.)**
- **Water suppliers**
- **Decision makers and action takers**
- **School district officials, hospital officials**
- **Homeowner associations**
- **State parks – PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**
- **State, local, and Federal agencies**
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service**
- **County emergency services**
- **Environmental clubs**
 - **Networking**
 - **Provide additional outreach as an activity**

How should the key messages of the state water plan be communicated to the public and to specific interest groups?

- Written materials for municipalities
- Go to the people, do not make them come to you
- Work through schools, colleges, conservancies, conservation districts and watershed organization.
- Business and economic development organizations
- Educational materials for the public
- Targeted messages
- Easily understood, visually appealing elevator speeches
- Website; internet marketing with links to website; story map
- Social media (**website, Facebook, newsletters**)
- **Group presentations**
- Regional meetings, webinars, workshops
- Direct written correspondence to planning agencies, municipal governments
- One pager visual appealing marketing and information brochure with links that can be sent to everyone involved in water resources
- Series of newspaper articles and fact sheets
- **Audience may dictate what/how message**
- **Ongoing educational process**

What is DEP staff's role in education and outreach?

- Leadership role in all aspects of education and outreach
- Develop and fine tune the message
- Support the development and distribution of materials
- Develop a written strategy and campaign for education and training
- Manage the curriculum, presentation materials and keep it up to date
- Coordination and providing of resources
- Technical advisor
- Education and training to key stakeholders
- Coordinate the website
- Provide some type of metric to show progress of the plan. Will help to show areas of need and what is being implemented
- Continuous involvement and state supported funding. Cannot let State Water Plan process discontinue again
- Take the lead
- Lists of volunteers and interest groups to provide education and outreach too

What should the regional committee's role be in education and outreach?

- Take the message to the people
- Identify key stakeholders within the region
- Be present at local presentations by DEP and provide input
- Support the development and distribution of messages
- Organize local / regional forums to bring key planners and the public together
- Provide technical expertise and local examples of adverse conditions or solutions to problems
- Write newspaper articles, meet with local and state elected officials
- Provide credibility, attend public meetings, when possible, to show support
- Can help facilitate

What resources are needed to be able to deliver and facilitate an education workshop to the community?

- Local venues, media advertising
- Targeted messaging materials
- Fund a signature capital project in each watershed and promote it
- Funding to organize and deliver education and training programs
- Power point presentation (logo, who's name on files, editable issues)
- Ability to conduct a virtual meeting (webinar, zoom, teams)
 - Depending on content, public meeting may be better
 - If feedback and conversation is warranted, cap the meeting size
- Technical experts
- Local town hall meetings
- One page fact sheet, executive summary
- Regional specific items (smaller more manageable format)

- Local photographs (careful what is chosen) positive examples
- Story Map
 - State Water Plan 2022 Update
 - Digital Atlas
- Google Earth Tour
- Clean Water Academy
- Food and beverages

As a regional committee member, are you willing to participate in education and outreach within your region? (Scale of 1 (no) to 7 (absolutely))?

- Average score = 5.59

Should DEP prepare a comprehensive workshop presentation that can be used by regional committee members (Scale of 1 (no) to 7 (absolutely))?

- Average score = 6.17

Additional comments

- Publicity is essential
- Having a presentation available would provide an open invitation to view the work of the state water plan resources committees
- The Commonwealth should have legislative and executive support on this plan to be successful
- Keep educational material concise and to the point
- Plan needs to include what involvement we want from different stakeholder groups
- Need to convey the economic value and importance of investments and work to plan and protect our water resources
- Like minded individuals speaking to their peers

Next Steps

Chair Bennett 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.
- Statewide Committee will be meeting on July 21, 2021. A presentation will be given on legacy issues.
- Committee members terms expire on a rotating basis with 1/3 of the members' terms ending in September. Mark will begin the reappointment process and committee members who terms are expiring should let him know if they do not want to be reappointed.
- The next Potomac Regional meeting will be held on October 14, 2021. The meeting will be a virtual meeting on Microsoft Teams.
- Committee members should decide in October if they want meetings in 2022 to be in-person or virtual meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm on an Adam McClain / Kevin Moore motion.