

State Water Plan Vision and Principles

Vision:

Pennsylvania's abundant and magnificent natural water resources provide the basis for an exceptional quality of life. The Commonwealth's water resources are the foundation for unparalleled natural beauty, abundant ecosystems, and economic growth throughout the Commonwealth, and are therefore vital to the citizens of Pennsylvania. Sustainable economic development in the Commonwealth depends on the sensible management of this essential resource. The State Water Plan envisions serving the Commonwealth and its citizens in their efforts to manage their water resources. It will assist and inform the conservation, protection, and enhancement of the quality and quantity of Pennsylvania's water and thereby empower the Commonwealth and its citizens to provide a high quality of life and economic prosperity through beneficial growth and economic development.

Purposes of the State Water Resources Plan:

The purpose of the Plan is to provide a scientifically sound, consistent, and reasonable framework of water resources information, policies, tools, and priorities. That framework is intended to meet the needs of those who make decisions affecting the Commonwealth's water resources. Users of the Plan will include federal, state, and local governments, river basin commissions, businesses and industrial firms, agricultural enterprises, water and wastewater purveyors, conservation organizations, outdoor enthusiasts, citizens, and others who have an interest in the use and conservation of the Commonwealth's water resources. All users have a stake in conserving high environmental quality where it exists and in striving to achieve it where it does not yet exist. The State Water Plan provides the information and guidance to ensure that the vital water resource remains the basis for a high quality of life, abundant natural resources, and economic prosperity throughout the Commonwealth.

Principles:

To that end, the State Water Plan fulfills the mandate of Act 220 and the vision of the Plan by addressing the following principles.

1. The State Water Plan should serve the purposes of its users by providing well-documented, reliable data that are accessible and in a format users can utilize.
2. The Plan should offer guidance to public and private decisionmakers and regulators on how they may weigh the availability and quality of water and the relationship between land uses and water resources when considering matters involving either the use or conservation of the Commonwealth's natural resources.
3. The Plan, and particularly the regional components of the Plan, should consider federal, state, and interstate water resources policies, plans, objectives, and

priorities, including those identified in statutes, regulations, compacts, interstate agreements, or comprehensive plans adopted by federal or state agencies or compact basin commissions. In addition, the Plan, and particularly the regional components of the Plan, should consider the needs and priorities reflected in comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances provided one of the conditions of section 3112(b)(4) of Act 220 is met. To the extent reasonably feasible, the Plan should anticipate its users' needs to integrate the principles, goals, objectives, and substance of those plans with this Plan and provide guidance on doing so.

4. The Plan should improve the integration of land use planning and infrastructure expansion to guide growth into the most desirable areas and protect rural, agricultural, and natural lands.
5. The Plan should acknowledge that private and public decisions involving or affecting water resources are made under existing law and that the Plan will not change existing law. The Plan may include recommendations for changes in law or policy, but the Plan cannot assume that those changes will be made.
6. The Plan should encourage best conservation and management practices to avoid harm to this water resource and to promote continued economic benefit, abundant natural resources, and a high quality of life for the citizens of the Commonwealth.
7. The Plan should consider the extent to which particular technologies for sustaining this resource are cost-effective and available for use to help fulfill the vision of the State Water Plan and should be encouraged.
8. The Plan should consider both the quality and quantity of water resources, including the effect of water quality on water availability and the effect of water quantity on water quality.
9. The Plan should consider the implications of transfers of water between watersheds.
10. The Plan should consider opportunities presented by stormwater and treated wastewater to replenish natural water resources and to augment water supplies.
11. The Plan should identify opportunities for water resources to be used to encourage and to promote economic growth.
12. The Plan should consider surface and ground water problems created in the past and measures that may be appropriate and available to improve the integrity of these impaired resources for the future.
13. The Plan should assess floodplain and stormwater management problems.
14. The Plan should promote the protection of sources of public drinking water supplies from pollutants.

15. The Plan should engage and educate all stakeholders in the Commonwealth's water resources about the conservation and enhancement of these resources.

16. The Plan should emphasize pollution prevention strategies and technologies.