



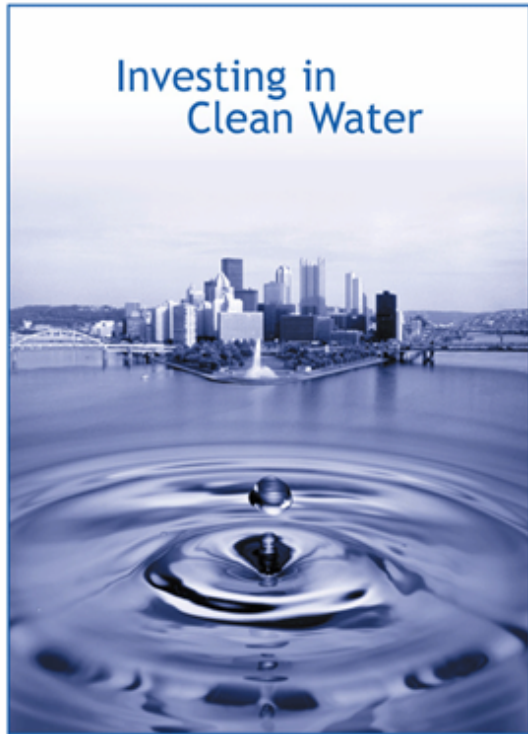
Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force Testimony

Dr. Jared L. Cohon

Tyler Gourley

May 19, 2008

Task Force Background



A Report from the Southwestern Pennsylvania
Water and Sewer Infrastructure Project Steering Committee

- Over the last decade, several regional studies have provided extensive information on SWPA's water, sewage, and stormwater problems.
- These efforts have consistently recommended regional collaboration to adequately confront our problems.
- The Regional Water Management Task Force was formed to begin achieving consensus on action steps.

Mission

- Designing an approach to our region's water-related challenges in a way that best serves our citizens
 - *Protect the public's health, ensure environmental and financial sustainability, provide for the region's economic vitality, and avoid costly regulatory actions*
- Institutional not technical project
 - Extensive public and stakeholder engagement to determine consensus on regional alternatives



Representation/Scope

- ◆ Diverse, high-level representation from 11 southwestern Pennsylvania counties
- ◆ Appointed with input from county commissioners and state legislators
- ◆ Chair — Dr. Jared Cohon
President, Carnegie Mellon University
- ◆ Vice Chair — Dr. Angelo Armenti
President, California University of Pennsylvania
- ◆ 15 additional members from throughout the region



Task Force Members

- 💧 **Robert Agbede** – ATS-Chester Engineers
- 💧 **John Andrighetti**
- 💧 **Daniel Bailey** – Municipal Authority of Carmichaels
- 💧 **Bruce Hottle** – Eagle Concrete
- 💧 **Robert Kunkle** – Indiana County Municipal Services Authority
- 💧 **Theodore McConnell** – Kirkpatrick & Lockhart
- 💧 **Andrew Quinn** - Kennywood
- 💧 **Carmen Rozzi**

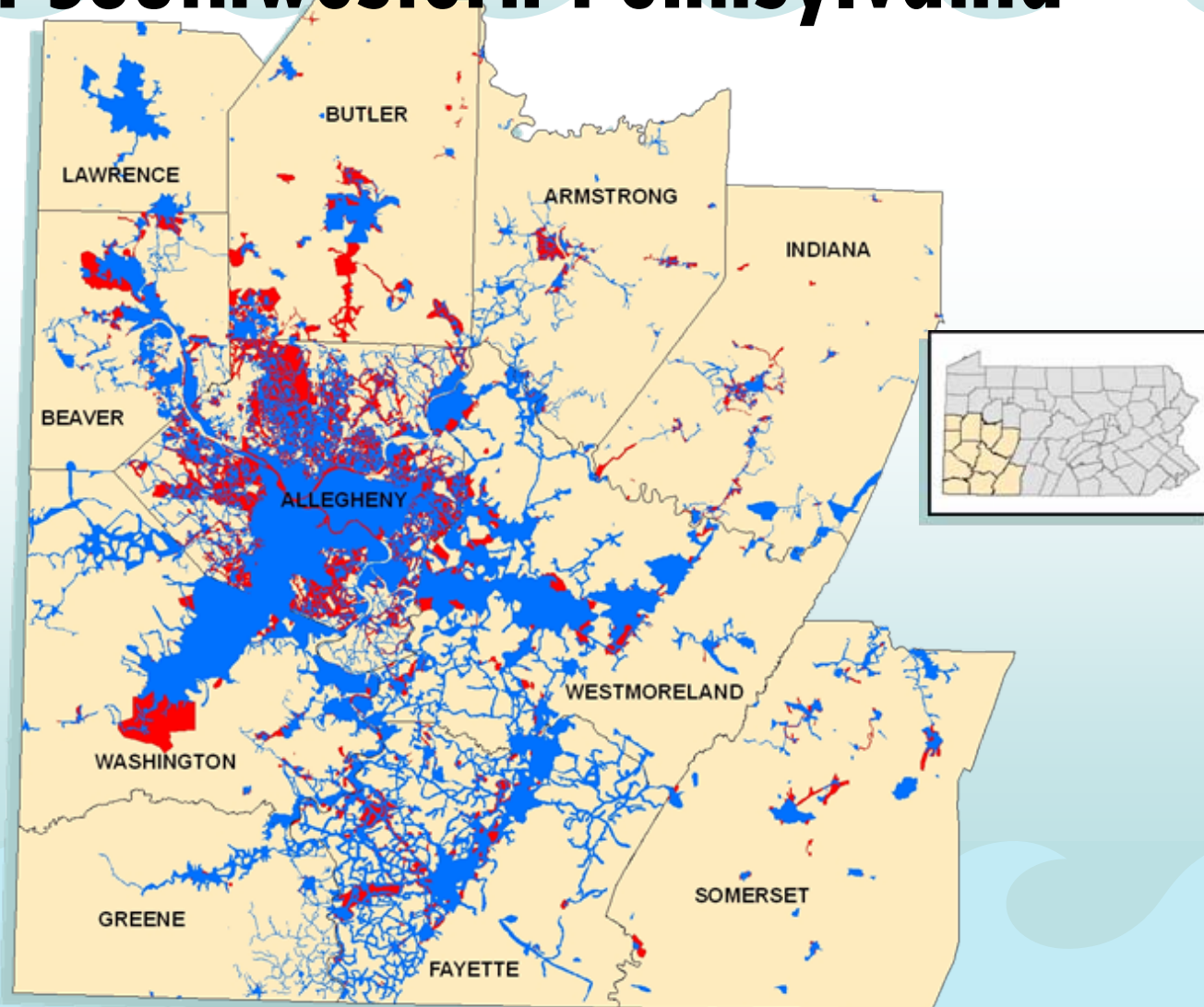


Task Force Members

- 💧 **Edith Shapira** – River Life Task Force
- 💧 **Diane Mintus Sheets** – CDC of Butler County
- 💧 **Deb Simko** – Mountain Watershed Association
- 💧 **Kenneth Smith** – Geneva College
- 💧 **Mark Snyder** – Snyder Associated Companies
- 💧 **Richard Taylor** – Macedonia Development Corp.
- 💧 **Doris Carson Williams** – African American Chamber



Public Water and Public Sewage Services in Southwestern Pennsylvania



Cooperation Takes Many Forms

- As a region, we value the autonomy of municipalities and there are strengths to this system which can be capitalized on
- However, sometimes we pay a cost
- Not local ineptitude but regional inefficiency
 - Water is a multi-municipal problem
- Nuances of regional approaches to regional problems
 - Not about losing identity or voice but rather about watershed based and innovative collaboration...
 - ...because we all live downstream...



Progress since May 2006

- **Phase I – Benchmarking, SWPA case studies, municipal surveys**
 - May - November 2006
 - Encapsulated in Phase I report
- **Phase II - Wide public and stakeholder engagement - ongoing**
 - 14 public meetings in first half of 2007
 - Attended by over 200 people
 - Public opinion polling
 - All outreach has included discussion of our problems and evaluation of potential institutional alternatives



Regional Input – The Problems

- 💧 **60% of SWPA respondents believe our water and sewer systems suffer occasional to serious deficiencies (compared with just 30% in a statewide poll)**
- 💧 **49% of those polled have been directly and negatively affected by a water-related problem in SWPA.**
- 💧 **90% think more public funds should be expended on water and sewer system improvements.**
- 💧 **60% of respondents would pay at least \$10 more per month if they knew it would lead to system improvements.**

Regional Input – The Alternatives

- Trend model (status quo) is unacceptable to twice as many respondents as any other model (with nearly 50% finding it unacceptable)
- Regional financing and any form of forced consolidation also unpopular.
- However, 80% percent rate regionwide planning and technical assistance as a preferred or acceptable option.

Draft Recommendations

💧 Southwestern Pennsylvania Water Resources District

- 11 counties
 - Counties contiguous to the District and within the Ohio River Basin could join by petition and approval of the District
- 2 main functions
 - Local government services
 - Regional Planning
- Implementation is comprehensive, including rural, suburban and urban issues

Draft Recommendations

💧 Southwestern Pennsylvania Water Resources District

- **Governing Board of 29 members**
 - Six-year terms
 - 2 from each county and two from the City of Pittsburgh
 - One by the Governor
 - Four by the House and Senate leadership

Draft Recommendations

💧 Southwestern Pennsylvania Water Resources District

- **Responsibilities/Functions:**

- Integrated water resource planning (including prioritization of water-related projects based on regional data)
- Model water-related ordinances
- Pursuit of coordinated funding
- Technical Assistance
- Facilitation of multi-jurisdictional water efforts
- Water quality data collection and management
- Public Education



Draft Recommendations

💧 Southwestern Pennsylvania Water Resources District

- Revenue

- Activities would annually require between \$1.8 and \$5.4 million (between \$0.75 and \$2.00 per capita)
- This range of revenue is dependent on where the District is in updating its regional plans and also the level of technical assistance being provided to local governments

- Advisory Councils

- District may create and utilize any number of advisory councils to garner wide input from regional stakeholders

Potential Benefits of District

💧 Efficiency

- Operations and management
- Shared equipment, technology and personnel
- Facilitation of multi-jurisdictional cooperation

💧 Money

- Greater access to funding
- Coordinated investment based on sound data and regional priorities

💧 Equity

- Greater ability to work out problems on a watershed basis
- Shared planning regarding future water decisions
- Upstream/downstream equity, Long term sustainability

💧 May appear a modest step, but would really be quite significant