Water Resources Planning Act (220) and the State Water Plan, Then and Now

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PENNSYLVANIA’S PIECE OF THE EARTH’S WATER RESOURCES

- 42 inches of precipitation annually
- 83,161 miles of streams and rivers
- 3,900 lakes, ponds, and reservoirs
- 80 trillion gallons of ground water
- Direct connection to 20% of the Earth’s fresh surface water

Questions?

- How much water do we have?
- How much water do we use?
- How much water do we need?

Question?

- When will the next drought hit Pennsylvania?

History

Pa’s only water rights act was passed before the outbreak of World War II and affects only a small percentage of water use.

A History

- Act of July 25, 1913 authorized first “Water Resources Inventory”
- Ten Reports – completed by 1918
- First report SWP-1 Planning Principles published in 1975
  - Nineteen Sub-basin Reports published from 1978 through 1983
**Act 220 of 2002**  
**Water Resources Planning Act**

- Planning or Process Act  
- Establishes a Framework for State Water Plan development

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**State Water Plan**

- Completed in 5 years and updates every 5 years thereafter  
- 6 Regional Components will be developed  
- Regional components will be reviewed through an open public process  
- Components will be incorporated into the State Water Plan

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**State Water Plan Considerations**

- Interconnection – Ground/Surface Water  
- Regional Water Resource Needs and Priorities  
- Needs and Priorities of Comprehensive Plans and Zoning  
- Water Quantity/Quality Necessary to Support Reasonable/ Beneficial Uses  
- Balance Multiple Uses  
- Distinction Between Long/Short Term Uses  
- Benefits/Costs/Environmental and Social Impacts  
- Equal/Uniform Treatment of All Water Users
Use of State Water Plan

- Policy and Guidance Document
- Provides Information, Objectives, practices and recommendations to help the private sector and government make informed decisions
- Does not contain regulations, prohibitions, prescriptions

Registration and Reporting

- Requires the following uses of 10,000 gallons a day or more to be registered and then periodically reported to DEP:
  - All public Water supply agencies
  - All hydropower facilities
  - All users of 10,000 gallons a day or more in a 30 day period

Registration and Reporting

- No fees for registration and reporting
- Work with River Basin Commissions to share information and avoid duplication
- EQB will adopt regulations that will provide for alternatives to metering by water users with withdrawals between 10,000 and 50,000 gallons
- Prohibits the metering of home owner wells

Critical Water Planning Areas

- Areas identified in the process where demand exceeds or is projected to exceed supply
- Developed on a Watershed basis
- Critical Area Resource Plans or “water budgets” will be developed
- Critical Area Advisory Committees will be developed

Critical Water Planning Areas

- Regional Committees and the Critical Area Advisory Committees will develop the plan
- Plan will be submitted for review for consistency with the Official Planning Agency and governing body of each municipality in the identified area
- Regional Committee will recommend plan to Statewide Committee and DEP Secretary

Critical Area Resource Plans

- Include a water availability evaluation
- Assess water quality and water quantity issues
- Identify existing and potential adverse impacts on water resources uses
Voluntary Water Conservation Program

- Formal program to promote water conservation and water use efficiency
- Establish a Water Resource Technical Assistance Center to promote water conservation and efficiency education and technical assistance
- Grants for water resources education and technical assistance

Regional Water Resources Committees

- **Purpose:**
  - Guide the development of Regional Plan Component and recommend to Statewide Committee for Incorporation into the State Water Plan
  - Delaware, Upper/Middle Susquehanna, Lower Susquehanna, Ohio, Lake Erie/Genesee, Potomac Drainage Basins

Regional Water Resources Committees

- **Membership (22 voting):**
  - Four Planning Commission and Conservation District Members (minimum of 2)
  - Two Agriculture (1) Production and (1) Horticulture
  - Three Industrial, Commercial, Energy Development and Production
  - Three Environmental and Conservation Interest
  - Four Water Resource Professional (1) Registered Geologist
  - Three Local Government (other than counties)
  - Department Employee (non-voting)
  - Compact Commission Representative

Statewide Water Resources Committee

- **Purpose:**
  - Recommend to the Secretary the approval and adoption of the State Water Plan, including the regional components following a consultation process.

Statewide Water Resources Committee

- **Membership (24 voting):**
  - 6 from regional committees appointed House and Senate Leadership
  - 6 from cross section of water user interest appointed by the Governor
  - 6 from local government, environmental and professional groups appointed by the Governor
  - DEP, AG, DCNR, PFBC, PUC, PEMA voting members
  - DCED, GCLGS, Compact Commissions (ex officio non voting members)

Critical Area Advisory Committees

- **Purpose:**
  - Evaluate policy, program and management alternatives and advise the regional committee and DEP
  - **Membership:** Gov. Agencies, Agricultural, Public Water Supply, Industrial and other users, Environmental, and others with background in water resources planning and management
Implementation

• Year One-Two:
  – Establish Committees and Procedures
  – Initiate development of statewide information system
  – Initial registration
  – Draft priority and guidelines for regional plan components
  – Initiate draft regulations for registration requirements, reporting and record keeping

Implementation

• Year Two-Three (2004):
  – Hold Committee Meetings
  – Issue RFP for Regional Plan Components and State Water Plan assistance and award potential contract
  – Complete Initial Registration Process
  – Hold Public Meetings
  – Gather public and committee input
  – Establish Water Conservation and Technical Assistance Center

Implementation

• Year Three (2005):
  – Plan development
  – Committee meetings
• Year Four (2006):
  – Complete draft regional plan components
  – Hold public meetings

Implementation

• Year Five (2007):
  – Complete regional plan components
  – Prepare draft State Water Plan
  – Committee Meetings
  – Deliberative Process
  – Approve State Water Plan (Feb 2008)

Questions/Discussion