# State Water Plan Update
# Delaware Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting

October 13, 2020
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Skype

**Committee Members in Attendance**:
Kelly Anderson
Ed Boscola
Mark Bowen
Becky Bradley
Joseph Buczynski
Carol Collier
Patrice Dume
Kate Harper
Irvil Kear
Gary Kribbs
James McCarthy
Susan Myerov
Mark Nemitz
Christopher Norris
Chad Pindar
Bill Royer
Jane Rowan
Elaine Paul Schaefer
Eliza Walbridge
Nathan Walker

**Committee Members Not in Attendance:**
Andrew Frankenfield
Peter Rykard
Christopher Uhland

**Others in Attendance:**
Kristina Peacock-Jones - DEP
Mark Matlock - DEP
Mike Hill - DEP
James Horton - DEP
Brian Chalfont - DEP
Monica Gould - Strategic Consulting Partners
Bob Whitmore - Strategic Consulting Partners

**Visitors**:
Alex Ridyard
Kristen Bowman Kavanaugh - DRBC
Curtis Schreffler
Ellen Kohler
Geoff Reese

**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. Chad Pindar,

Committee Chair, welcomed all committee members to the meeting. Attendance was recorded through the online participants' log.

**Public Comment**
Chair Pindar 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 14, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved as presented on a Kate Harper / Bill Royer motion.

**DEP Update**
Kristina Peacock-Jones, DEP, provided an update on DEP activities. The USGS Water Use Data and Research Grants data sharing projects are still progressing. The project for improving Chapter 110 data input is about 80% complete. The project involving data sharing between agencies has been initiated and the IT architecture and data sharing protocols are being finalized.

Staff within the Department are gathering noteworthy activities and projects achieved over the past ten years that coincide with the State Water Plan. This information will be spotlighted in the State Water Plan update.

The stormwater program is in the process of developing an updated stormwater best practices manual to incorporate green infrastructure. The Energy Programs Office, who is responsible for updating the Governor's Climate Action Plan, is currently in the revision process for the 2021 iteration of the plan. Valuable input provided by Committee members will be passed along to these DEP programs.

DEP staff are continuing to work on better data sharing tools. One of those tools is Power BI, which will display water use data to the public in a more user-friendly way.

**Presentation on POWER BI**
Michael Hill, DEP Geologist, provided a visual presentation and overview of Power BI. Power BI is a data sharing tool designed to expand the number of existing online water use report viewers by eliminating the need to crunch a large dataset for a summary report. It is a Microsoft application. The data presents visually the amount of surface and ground water used within the state. It does not assess water availability.

Maps, tables, and charts are available to show water withdrawals, water usage types and a breakdown of water users. The data can be viewed for each Pennsylvania County, state water planning regions, subbasins, and watersheds. The information can be exported to an Excel spreadsheet or csv format.

The current map, charts, and tables show data for 2018. Eventually data will be available for multiple years and show trends in water usage. 2019 data should be available early 2021 when it is confirmed all suppliers have provided their data. Power BI will be available

to the public on the DEP website soon. The system is currently completing internal review by IT and Communications staff prior to approval for public use.

**Regional Committee Survey Data**

A DEP online survey was available for Delaware Regional Committee members to complete prior to the meeting. The survey asked participants to provide open ended responses to two questions on stormwater management and climate change. The survey feedback was reviewed, and Committee members were given an opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions.

***The first survey question on stormwater management and summarized survey responses included:***

The last State Water Plan update included stormwater management with a focus on flood management. The goal for updating the stormwater management portion is to include a stronger focus on stormwater BMPs, which address both quantity and quality. What other areas of stormwater management do you think should be considered for this update?

- Standards for asset management including inspection reporting and intervals for conditions assessment.
- Regional planning or watershed scale planning of water resources possibly lead by a county, 'watershed authority', or partnership of municipalities.
- Consideration of changing storm event frequencies, duration and return frequencies as they relate to BMP design standards.
- Consider adopting a policy that Act 167 plans do not alleviate flooding on tributaries at the expense of main-stem flooding.

**Committee members comments**:

- Design standards should incorporate changes to the environment; capture current conditions
- Regional planning is a good idea in theory but will be challenging because of local boundaries and getting local municipalities to work together
- Projects related to agriculture have a downstream/upstream connection; improve source water projects impacting downstream use
- Stormwater needs to be address on a regional scale; DEP can provide support to regional water authorities and counties to use the tools available and provide implementation and technical assistance
- Industrial and residential growth has an impact on water quantity and water quality; Delaware region is impacted by New York and New Jersey
- Stormwater planning must be understandable by lay people, so they understand what is needed and what needs to be done
- Hazard mitigation of stormwater is important and building relationships between eastern part of PA and New York and New Jersey is important
- Goal is to get stormwater back into the ground as quickly as possible and this is not a simple process

- Stop stormwater at the source; stormwater management practices should mimic nature processes
- One Water - look at water holistically
- Mine pools in headwater region; need to slow streams so they do not flood
- Stormwater should be managed by watershed districts vs. individual municipalities; encourage counties to create ordinances for local municipalities; stormwater authorities can communicate news to everyone and take pressure off local municipalities
- Public is unaware of the impact of stormwater; education of the public is especially important relevant to MS4, Act 167 and DEP stormwater standards
- Stormwater management means different things to different people
- Stormwater planning should be regional, or watershed based; need both incentives and sticks to require participation; take it out of the hands of local municipalities
- Set industry standards for asset management and share this with municipalities
- Invest in agriculture for water quality and impact on streams
- How do we engage PennDOT to address stormwater?
- No longer BMP's in new DEP manual, now called storm water control measures
- Still have counties that do not have 167 plans and other plans are outdated; make sure they are completed and updated.

***The second survey question on climate change and summarized survey responses included***:

Now that we have briefly discussed climate change at our July meeting, which aspects of climate change do you think we should focus on in our discussion at the next meeting for consideration in the State Water Plan update?

- The ability of infrastructure to manage high intensity storm events.
- Infrastructure maintenance is key to mitigating flooding impacts by keeping the system clear, that flooding will occur during large events, and that property owners need to be aware of risks in low lying areas.
- Consider the future risk of deeper droughts brought on by climate change and the measures needed to promote groundwater infiltration to maintain aquifers.
- Planning for resilience to an amplified drought of record for protection and conservation.
- Planning strategies to mitigate impacts to sea-level rise, salt line movement up the Delaware River channel and increased storm surge.
- Drought management and basin scale management of reservoir systems and flow management policies should be included.
- Climate change implications on water supply and water quality should be considered (i.e. increased temperatures and the implications on source water quality and aquatic/ecological health of waterways).

**Committee members comments:**

- Who is the audience involved in the discussion regarding climate change?

- Highlight infrastructure and basin management, lack of maintenance of infrastructure, develop modeling scenarios
- Develop scenario models for sewer authorities and local government so they understand how to proactively plan
- PennDOT, DCED and others are key strategic partners in the DEP state water plan
- The water plan should be an inventory of the needs of municipalities and the tools available to assist them
- Delaware Climate Change Committee - newly formed to gain more tools and ideas
- Retrofit existing situations to adapt to climate changes; when the infrastructure was built the issues may not have been there; cannot just focus on building new infrastructure
- Keep PennDOT involved; they can support future improvements; streams have been covered over with roads
- Three categories: water quality, resilience of infrastructure, ecological drinking water management
- We do not have enough gauges in the Delaware River to understand water quality
- Port facilities are important economic benefit to the region; how are rising sea levels going to impact port management facilities
- Water levels are rising; sea levels are rising; are we prepared?
- Vast parts of eastern PA are critical to economic supply chain
- Hazard mitigation and life safety are important, emergency management planning
- Agriculture; importance for taking care of the soil
- Recognize the political reality, southeastern PA has strong unions resistant to fossil fuel impact on the climate
- Models for the impact of water chemistry on fish and wildlife
- Capture and reuse water
- Recognition the Delaware region is vastly different from other regions; uniqueness makes planning for factors other regions may not encounter
- Drought and flood - ecology of rivers is impacted by climate change
- Conservation Districts issue permits and restore flood plains; how are we involving the Conservation Districts; often seen as a regulatory organization vs implementing role; involve Conservation Districts in the discussion; consider an expansion of their role
- Envirothon program - operating for 37 years in schools; getting younger people involved
- Language in the bullets is critical; public safety and other language that resonates with the public may be helpful
- Salt line in Delaware River is important
- Language - climate change - some are not comfortable with the term.
    - Climate resilience?
    - Increases in sea-level or sea-level changes
    - Storms intensifying
    - Lack of snowfall creating an impact on reservoirs
    - Changes in rain frequency and intensity

    - Increases in temperature
    - Must look at droughts and floods
    - Future may look different for people
    - Climate change adaption
    - Changes in floods
- Committee needs direction from DEP on how to handle the words “climate change”
- Global warming has an opposite impact

**Resources:**

- https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/library/documents/SOTBreport_july2019.pdf
- https://www.phila.gov/WATER/SUSTAINABILITY/Pages/default.aspx

**Next Steps**

Chair Pindar 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.
- A virtual public hearing is planned for the first week of January, tentatively January 6. There will be two public hearing sessions held in one day and each regional committee’s public hearing will last one hour. The am public hearing session will be an opportunity for public input on the Delaware, Potomac, and Lower Susquehanna regions. The afternoon public hearing session will be an opportunity for public input on the Ohio, Great Lakes, and Upper/Middle Susquehanna regions.
- At the January regional committee meeting the Committee members will discuss and vote on part or all the regional water planning priorities, stormwater management priorities, and climate change priorities.
- At the April 2021 regional committee meeting Committee members will finalize the priorities they wish to move forward to the State Committee.
- The State Committee will finalize the updated state water plan at the scheduled meeting in May 2021.

The next meeting of the Delaware Regional Committee will be held on January 12, 2021. It will be a virtual meeting. The April Committee meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am on an Irvil Kear / Kate Harper motion.