



**State Water Plan Update
Great Lakes Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting**

April 28, 2021
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Committee Members in Attendance:

Tim Bruno	Zachary Norwood
Jason Childs	Craig Palmer
Tony Foyle	Deborah Phillips
Patrick Gehrlein	Brenda Sandberg
Joe Greco	Matthew Wolford
Rebecca Hosack	Kathy Wyrosdick

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Robert Buhl	Susan Moyer
James Cardman	Amy Murdock
Harry (Ric) Diz	Timothy Wachter
Daniel Gold	Dennis Whitney
Melissa Lyon	David Wright
Tom McClure	

Others in Attendance:

Kristina Peacock-Jones - DEP	Monica Gould - Strategic Consulting Partners
Mark Matlock - DEP	Bob Whitmore - Strategic Consulting Partners
James Horton - DEP	
Mike Hill - DEP	
Brad Chalfant - DEP	
Summer Kunkel - 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. Craig Palmer, Committee Chair, welcomed Committee members to the meeting and completed a roll call for attendance.

Public Comment

Chair Palmer opened the meeting for public comment. An opportunity to express comments verbally or in the chat box was offered. No public comment was offered.

Minutes

The minutes of the October 28, 2020 meeting were approved as presented on a Brenda Sandberg / Pat Gehrlein motion. Joe Greco noted the minutes indicated that outreach could be done to encourage more public comment and participation. Joe is a member of Trout Unlimited and he will ask the organization about including dates for public comment in their electronic newsletter.

The minutes of the January 27, 2021 meeting were approved on a Brenda Sandberg / Kathy Wyrosdick motion.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Bylaws of the Great Lakes Regional Committee require an annual election of the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Chair Palmer opened the meeting for discussion and asked for nominations for both the Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Both Chair Craig Palmer and Vice-Chair Brenda Sandberg indicated they are willing to serve in these roles for an additional year or other members could step forward to be nominated.

A Brenda Sandberg / Joe Greco motion was unanimously approved to re-elect Craig Palmer to the Chair position for the Committee.

A Joe Greco / Tony Foyle motion was unanimously approved to re-elect Brenda Sandberg to the Vice-Chair position for the Committee.

DEP State Water Plan 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 improving Chapter 110 data input is complete and will be deployed soon. The project involving data sharing between agencies (SRBC, DRBC, and USGS) has been initiated with the IT architecture and data sharing protocols in place. Testing of the data sharing has begun, and the project should be fully operational during the second quarter of 2021.

The fifth Statewide Committee meeting is May 19, 2021.

Public Hearing Summary

Mark Matlock informed the Committee that a public hearing on the statewide water plan was held on January 6, 2021. The January 6, 2021 hearing was advertised in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on December 26, 2020 and all sunshine requirements were met. Each Committee's hearing was held for one hour via Microsoft Teams. The purpose of the hearing was to solicit comments from interested persons on water resources planning

issues related to preparation of the regional component of the State Water Plan. Written comments were accepted by the Committees on or before January 20, 2021. The following public comments were offered:

- Delaware Water Resources Committee – 9:00am – no participants
- Lower Susquehanna Water Resources Committee – 10:00am – one participant
- Potomac Water Resources Committee – 11:00am – no participants
- Ohio Water Resources Committee – 1:00pm – nine participants
- Great Lakes Water Resources Committee – 2:00pm – no participants
- Upper/Middle Susquehanna Water Resources Committee – 3:00pm – one participant

Mark reviewed who the individuals or organizations were that presented comments and provided a brief synopsis of the comments. The Committee members have received a complete written transcript of the comments provided through the public hearing.

Regional Priorities

Mark Matlock, DEP staff, presented draft statements of the Lower Susquehanna Regions priorities to be included in the update State Water Plan. The draft priorities were created from previous ideas, discussions, and prioritization by the Committee. The draft priorities presented were:

Protect Water Quality and Quantity in the basin

Lake Erie is vitally important to the prosperity of northwestern Pennsylvania, serving regional domestic, commercial, and industrial needs. Lake Erie supplies power generation, offers world-class recreational opportunities, and provides transportation and trade access to the entire St. Lawrence Seaway. As a result, the Committee believes that Pennsylvania should have a larger voice in federal legislation that may impact the shores of Lake Erie. This could be accomplished through legislation and other measures with continued support by the Commonwealth and federal agencies.

Additionally, the Committee recognizes that the region is not composed solely of Lake Erie, so efforts must be made to protect water quality throughout the larger region's watersheds. This can be accomplished by analyzing contaminants, evaluating the impacts of storm water management, and agricultural best management practices throughout the region. This will also allow for a better understanding of the impact of climate change on this unique watershed.

Coordinate with Partners

The only way to achieve the larger goals of the Committee is to actively engage with partners along multiple political strata. This includes other states, Canada, and potentially many other stakeholders. Beginning with education and outreach it will be possible to better understand land use impacts and implement best management practices to better maintain the hydrologic integrity of the region. On a local level, municipalities can collaborate toward a regional approach with support from the Pennsylvania Department

of Environmental Protection (DEP), whose role would be to encourage and incentivize cooperation through grant funding.

The draft priorities were discussed in depth by Committee members and revisions were made to the draft statements and new ideas added to clarify the statements. The revised priorities for the Great Lakes Region follow:

Protect Water Quality and Quantity in the basin

Lake Erie is vitally important to the prosperity of northwestern Pennsylvania, serving regional domestic, commercial, and industrial needs. The Great Lakes supplies power generation, offers world-class recreational opportunities, and provides transportation and trade access to the entire Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Seaway. As a result, the Committee believes that Pennsylvania should have a larger voice in federal legislation and other measures that may impact Lake Erie and Lake Ontario with continued support by the Commonwealth and federal agencies.

Additionally, the Committee recognizes that the region is not composed solely of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, so efforts must be made to protect water quality throughout the larger region's watersheds. This can be accomplished by analyzing contaminants, evaluating the impacts of storm water management, and agricultural best management practices throughout the region. This will also allow for a better understanding of the impact of climate change on this unique watershed.

Coordinate with Partners

The best way to achieve the larger goals of the Committee is to actively engage with partners along multiple political strata. This includes other states, provinces, and other stakeholders including governmental and non-governmental. Coordination should begin with education and outreach to better understand land use impacts and implement best management practices to better maintain the hydrologic integrity of the region. On a local level, municipalities should collaborate toward a regional approach with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), whose role would be to encourage open and continual communication and incentivize cooperation through grant funding.

A Brenda Sandberg / Matt Wolford motion to approve the revised priority statement "Protect water quality and water quantity of the basin" was unanimously approved.

A Matt Wolford / Brenda Sandberg motion to approve the revised priority statement "Coordinate with partners" was unanimously approved.

A Pat Gehrlein / Tony Foyle motion to retain the original order of the priorities was unanimously approved. The order of the priorities should be:

- 1. Protect Water Quality and Quantity in the basin**
- 2. Coordinate with Partners**

Next Steps

Chair Palmer 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 May 19, 2021.
- The next meeting of the Great Lakes Regional Committee will be held on July 28, 2021. At this meeting DEP staff are planning to share a story map of water projects completed or in operation since the last State Water Plan update. The discussion topic will include the development of ideas for education and outreach of the state water plan. If anyone has suggestions of associations or organizations to support education and outreach, please provide them to Mark Matlock in advance of the meeting. It will be a virtual meeting.
- Future meetings will be held on October 27, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:24 by Chair Palmer.