



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

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

Committee Members in Attendance:

Tim Bruno	Deborah Phillips
Jason Childs	Brenda Sandberg
Joe Greco	Timothy Wachter
Zachary Norwood	Matthew Wolford
Craig Palmer	David Wright

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Robert Buhl	Melissa Lyon
James Cardman	Tom McClure
Harry (Ric) Diz	Susan Moyer
Tony Foyle	Amy Murdock
Daniel Gold	Dennis Whitney
Patrick Gehrlein	Kathy Wyrosdick
Rebecca Hosack	

Others in Attendance:

Kristina Peacock-Jones - DEP	Monica Gould - Strategic Consulting Partners
Mark Matlock - DEP	Bob Whitmore - Strategic Consulting Partners
Mike Hill - DEP	
Keith Salador - 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 April 28, 2021, meeting was not reviewed or approved because of a lack of quorum of committee members.

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 moving Chapter 110 water use registration forms from paper to online is nearly complete and will be deployed soon. The project involving data sharing between agencies (SRBC, DRBC, and USGS) is in the testing phase. The project should be fully operational by the end of this summer. The Power BI report summarizing water use data will be public on our website soon. The sixth meeting of the Statewide Committee was held on July 21, 2021.

Story Map

DEP staff are preparing a story map of the state water planning process. Plans were to show the story map at this meeting, but internal technical problems are preventing the story map from being uploaded for showing. The story map will hopefully be revealed to the committees in October.

Regional Priorities

Mark Matlock, DEP staff, presented and briefly reviewed draft statements developed by all the regional committees. The draft priorities were shared with the Statewide Committee at their meeting in May. The Statewide Committee asked each regional committee to review their draft priorities and provide more details or specifics if possible. The draft priorities developed by the Great Lakes Regional Committee are:

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.

After a thoughtful review and discussion on the priorities, committee members made slight wording revisions to the priorities and the revised priorities follow:

Protect Water Quality and Quantity in the Basin

Lake Erie is vitally important to the prosperity of northwestern Pennsylvania, serving regional domestic, commercial, agricultural, 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 role in federal legislation and other measures that may impact Lake Erie and Lake Ontario with continued support by the Commonwealth and federal agencies in respect to invasive species, pollution management, agricultural management, and stormwater management. Northwest Pennsylvania wants more input into state legislation that impacts Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

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.

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encourage open and continual communication and incentivize cooperation through grant funding.

Education and Outreach

Committee members have been given an opportunity to participate in an online survey to answer questions regarding how education and outreach of the state water plan should be achieved. Summary comments provided by survey participants were shared with the committee. A discussion followed on each survey question and committee members added additional comments. The summary survey data and additional comments provided by the committee members follow (committee's additional comments are in red). Additional surveys are being submitted and the number received is now 47.

Survey Responses by Region

- Delaware – 11
- Great Lakes – 8
- Lower Susquehanna – 5
- Ohio – 4
- Potomac – 4
- Upper/Middle Susquehanna – 10

Total responses – 42

Why is it important to conduct education and outreach on the state water plan?

- People buy-in to a plan if they understand why their involvement is important
- To educate on the importance, value, and challenges facing our water resources
- To gain public long-term support and investment for water projects that benefit the region
- Why we need to plan for the allocation, protection, and future of water
- Awareness and knowledge of issues and remediation efforts
- Public is aware of the plan, initiatives, and goals
- Find local solutions
- Transparency and broad-based citizen input
- Education and outreach prevent negative information being provided
- People do not understand the scope of the impairment in our watersheds
- To inform decision makers of water resource issues that need to be addressed
- Identifying local priorities
- Investment in water resources = wise economic strategy
- Connection between water resources protection and climate change
- Public should be informed on the direction and scope of the state water plan
- Communicating the most important components of the plan to community stakeholders should help with goals being met, widespread plan acceptance and a desire to create positive change
- Funded with taxpayer dollars
- Highlight successes, challenges, and data needs
- People do not understand the scope of impairment of our watersheds
- Plan could affect stakeholders not involved in the development of the plan

- To build coordination with planners at the local and county level
- To ensure all citizens are aware of the issues and reinforce the importance of water availability and protection
- Public awareness and buy-in

Who should we educate on the plan?

- Students and teachers
- Elected officials – local, counties, and state
- Public, every Pennsylvania resident
- County Conservation Districts
- County Planning
- Developers
- Environmental groups
- Engineers
- Watershed organizations
- Farmers
- Industrial, agricultural, recreation users
- State associations
- All water users
- Sewer and water authorities
- Water resources professionals
- State legislative offices
- Local community advocates
- State and regional water associations
- Schools, universities, elementary and high school students
- Volunteer groups
- **Other state agencies**
- **American Water Works Association**
- **PA Municipal Authorities Association**
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**
- **Organization newsletters / magazines (i.e., Trout Unlimited)**

How should the key messages of the state water plan be communicated to the public and to specific interest groups?

- Written materials for municipalities
- Go to the people, do not make them come to you
- Work through schools, colleges, conservancies, conservation districts and watershed organizations.
- Business groups, chambers, and economic development organizations
- Educational materials for the public
- Targeted messages
- Easily understood, visually appealing elevator speeches
- Website; internet marketing with links to website; story map
- Social media

- Regional meetings, webinars, workshops
- Direct written correspondence to planning agencies, municipal governments
- One pager visual appealing marketing and information brochure with links that can be sent to everyone involved in water resources
- Series of newspaper articles and fact sheets; one page newspaper spread
- Watershed specialists in each conservation district (Growing Greener model)
- In person events with follow-up links to website and social media
- Through groups that already exist – Water Resources Association of the Delaware River Basin, The Water Circle (Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission), Delaware River Watershed Initiative network
- Web accessible graphics, documents, maps
- Public TV
- Recreational associations
- Summary of the plan that can be handed out
- Interactive

What is DEP staff's role in education and outreach?

- Leadership role in all aspects of education and outreach
- Develop and fine tune the message
- Support the development and distribution of materials
- Develop a written strategy and campaign for education and training
- Manage the curriculum, presentation materials and keep it up to date
- Coordination and providing of resources
- Technical advisor
- Education and training to key stakeholders
- Coordinate the website
- Creators of the information to be shared
- Provide direction and support to regional/local facilitators to engage the public
- Organize meetings
- Coordinating and funding
- Educate their own staff on the issues
- Developers / coordinators / facilitators of the plan
- Arrange workshop speakers, create informational materials, coordinate educational events
- Provide current and timely data and resources for all regions
- Provide resources to get the information out
- **Have an education center**
- **Write magazine articles**

What should the regional committee's role be in education and outreach?

- Take the message to the people
- Identify key stakeholders within the region
- Be present at local presentations by DEP and provide input
- Support the development and distribution of messages

- Organize local / regional forums to bring key planners and the public together
- Provide technical expertise and local examples of adverse conditions or solutions to problems
- Write newspaper articles, meet with local and state elected officials
- Organize regional forums
- Emphasize issues pertaining to local areas
- Connectors to different organizations
- Local representative of the plan
- Coordinating at a local level
- Provide local examples of the need for the plan
- Help to develop materials
- Coordination with other local planning organizations
- Take the state concepts and plan and transferring it to local impact

What resources are needed to be able to deliver and facilitate an education workshop to the community?

- Local venues, media advertising
- Targeted messaging materials
- Fund a signature capital project in each watershed and promote it
- Funding to organize and deliver education and training programs
- Power point presentation
- Ability to conduct a virtual meeting
- Technical experts
- Local town hall meetings
- One page fact sheet, executive summary
- Comprehensive marketing strategy for each initiative
- Financial resources

As a regional committee member, are you willing to participate in education and outreach within your region? (Scale of 1 (no) to 7 (absolutely))?

- Average score = 5.40

Should DEP prepare a comprehensive workshop presentation that can be used by regional committee members (Scale of 1 (no) to 7 (absolutely))?

- Average score = 5.79

Additional comments

- Publicity is essential
- Having a presentation available would provide an open invitation to view the work of the state water plan resources committees
- The Commonwealth should have legislative and executive support on this plan to be successful
- Keep educational material concise and to the point
- Plan needs to include what involvement we want from different stakeholder groups

- Need to convey the economic value and importance of investments and work to plan and protect our water resources
- Plan must be clear and compelling to the target audience, cannot be seen as regulatory or over burdensome
- Workshops should be tailored to regional priorities

Resources provided in the chat

- [Overview of The Vessel Incidental Discharge Act \(VIDA\) | US EPA rulemaking effort](https://www.epa.gov/overview-the-vessel-incident-discharge-act-vida-us-epa-rulemaking-effort)
- [The Vessel Incidental Discharge Act \(VIDA\) | US EPA](https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/s140/BILLS-115s140enr.pdf)
- <https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/s140/BILLS-115s140enr.pdf> (see page 153)

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.
- The committee will be reviewing the revised priority statements. Members requested the draft revised priorities be provided in advance so they can provide feedback and the priorities can be adopted at the October meeting.
- Committee members also requested to have a copy of the cumulative feedback provided by all the regional committee members on Education and Outreach.
- Committee members terms expire on a rotating basis with 1/3 of the members' terms ending in September. Mark will begin the reappointment process and committee members who terms are expiring should let him know if they do not want to be reappointed.
- The next Great Lakes Regional meeting will be held on October 27, 2021. The meeting will be a virtual meeting on Microsoft Teams.
- Committee members should decide in October if they want meetings in 2022 to be in-person or virtual meetings. Committee members expressed they may be interested in having both virtual and in-person meetings next year.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 by Chair Palmer.