

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Water Management

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SUBJECT: Water Resources Planning Process Status and Update

TO: Statewide Committee Members

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It was recommended at the last Statewide Committee meeting to reformat this document to better align with the various efforts that are occurring within the Department. The general format follows the one-page summary entitled Pennsylvania State Water Plan.

As a follow up action to the September meeting of the Statewide Committee, we respectfully submit the following current activities update report.

1. Public Information (Marketing) Document

The P&I subcommittee has been working with DEP staff to develop draft text for the public information (marketing) document. The subcommittee has agreed that the current draft, refined during a Nov. 29 conference call, will be included in the RFP to produce this document and the Pennsylvania Water Atlas.

2. Pennsylvania Water Atlas

The Department is moving forward with an RFP for production of the Pennsylvania Water Atlas. The RFP should be issued by the end of the year and advertised early in January.

3. Action Agenda for the Future (Setting the Course)

The regional committees have been working to develop regional action agendas for the past several meetings. They will continue with their work for at least one more session. At the February meetings, we will discuss whether or not we need to devote more meeting time to developing goals, objectives, and action items.

4. Resources Inventory and Assessment

The identification of critical water planning areas will be accomplished through a two “tier” application of a water budget screening process utilizing a series of demand projection methodologies and a budget-screening tool. The DEP, with assistance of the USGS, DRBC and the SRBC will first use these tools and processes on two pilot watersheds while at the same time conducting a thorough verification process on the withdrawal and discharge data used in the analyses. The pilot work will be followed by a statewide application of the process that will identify “critical water planning areas” or where demand may exceed supply under current and future conditions.

USGS Screening Tool

Withdrawal, discharge and Q7-10 stream flow statistics have been compiled for pilot applications of the budget screening tool on the Wissahickon Creek by DEP staff and for the Codorus Creek by the USGS. Preliminary water budget runs for both the watersheds were completed during the week of December 11th. Data is being provided to regional drinking water program and regional watershed managers as well as river basin commissions for evaluation and comment prior to final runs.

Water Use Analysis Tool (WUAT)

Work on the processes to develop demand projections and data gap filling is complete. Any adjustments that may be necessary will be done during the statewide implementation of the budget-screening tool.

Yield Analysis Tool (YAT)

Work continues on the development of the Yield Analysis Tool. On November 16, project team staff from DEP, Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) attended a demonstration of Module 1 of the Yield Analysis Tool being built by Buchart-Horn under contract to the SRBC for State Water Plan and Water Allocation work. In addition, discussions were held regarding the data and operation needs of Module 2. Additional work by a joint SRBC and DEP team is needed to fine-tune the analysis process. The tool is scheduled for completion in early 2007.

Data Management

Since February of 2006, the Department has been collecting required reports on 2004 and 2005 withdrawals from both public water suppliers (PWS) and voluntary reports by non-public water supply facilities. For 2004 reports by PWS's, a total of 1,919 have reported out of 2,193 that were in existence in 2004 (now 2155 due to acquisitions). The 2005 reports for PWS's are in process. The voluntary 2004 and 2005 non-PWS reports are also in processing. Plans are being prepared to issue notices of 2006 reports in February 2007.

Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMRs)- DMR collection is complete for the Great Lakes, Potomac and Susquehanna Basins. The reports for the Delaware are complete, but are awaiting final review by the DRBC. The SRBC has been collecting reports for the Ohio basin and are scheduled for completion in April 2007.

5. Issues Analysis (White Papers)

Act 220 requires DEP to perform an assessment and include recommendations related to navigational needs, stormwater problems, and public water supply assessments. These topics will be released in separate papers and recommendations from these papers will be considered by the regional committees and the statewide committee as they develop the action agendas. In addition, a review and assessment of statutes, regulations, policies, and institutional arrangements will be conducted and summarized in a white paper for committee review and consideration as they develop recommendations for the statewide action agenda.

An Assessment of Floodplain and Stormwater Management Problems

The Policy and Integration Subcommittee reviewed a preliminary draft in February 2006. The document is currently undergoing revisions based upon those comments.

Review and Evaluation of Statutes

The review and evaluation of statutes, regulations, policies, and institutional arrangements is continuing, both within DEP and with other state agencies. The Pennsylvania Management Associate (PMA) team project, which entails the review and evaluation of the statutes, regulations, and policies of other state agencies, has moved into Phase 2. The PMAs will be conducting interviews with representatives in program areas that may be impacted by the State Water Plan.

6. Supporting Resources

Regulations

The draft Chapter 110 Water Resources Planning regulations were published in the PA Bulletin on Dec. 2, 2006 and open for public comment for 30 days.

Guidelines for Identification of Critical Water Planning Areas (Document ID #392-2130-014)

Published as a final guidance document on Sept. 30, 2006

Guidelines for Development of Critical Area Resource Plans (Document ID #392-2130-015)

The Statewide Committee discussed this document at the September meeting and took action to direct DEP to move forward with the next step.

State Water Plan Website

We are currently working on the conversion of existing State Water Plan web pages to a new template version that is required for all DEP programs. A mock-up of a new site will be

presented at this week's Statewide Committee Meeting that will include existing information and place holders for future information.

Also, Staff is researching and evaluating current DEP policies to establish protocols and a policy on posting and distributing State Water Plan information onto the web. This was in response to a suggestion by Representative Kate Harper at a recent regional committee meeting to provide authority levels of posting, for documenting, and archiving state water plan information to avoid the "creep" of changes to posted information and to avoid confusion of end users when changes do occur.

WAVE

The Water Attribute Viewer for the Enterprise (WAVE) is a GIS web application that will be beneficial to a multiple number of programs in DEP to internally view various water-related data sets in one unified tool. A preview for the entire department is scheduled by BIT for January 2, 2007. We will be further evaluating an external version of the WAVE for use in the state water plan in delivering GIS views to the public.