



State Water Plan Update Lower Susquehanna Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting

July 14, 2021
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Committee Members in Attendance:

Andrea Blosser	Sean Kenny
Tyler Erb	Mike Kyle
Jennifer Fetter	Andrew Gavin
Jeff Hines	Joe McNally
Lincoln Kaufman	Warren Weaver

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Silas Chamberlin	Craig Robertson
Andrea Danucalov	Byron Ross
Felicia Dell	Justin Spangler
Ruth Hocker	Thomas Wilson
George Pomeroy	Jenni Woodworth

Others in Attendance:

Kristina Peacock-Jones - DEP	Monica Gould - Strategic Consulting Partners
Mark Matlock - DEP	Bob Whitmore - Strategic Consulting Partners
Mike Hill - DEP	
James Horton - DEP	
Brian Chalfant - DEP	

Visitors:

John Seitz
Curtis Schreffler

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. Mike Kyle, Vice-Chair, welcomed committee members to the meeting and completed a roll call for attendance.

Minutes

The minutes of the April 14, 2021 committee meeting could not be approved because of a lack of quorum of committee members.

Public Comment

Vice-Chair Kyle opened the meeting for public comment. An opportunity to express comments verbally or in the chat box was offered. There was no public comment.

DEP 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 Statewide Committee meeting is scheduled for 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 Lower Susquehanna Regional Committee are:

Reduce or prevent point and nonpoint source pollution with a focus on currently impaired water resources

Reduce existing point and nonpoint source pollution in the region's significant number of impaired water resources. Focus added attention on currently impaired water resources. Prevent new water pollution throughout the region for all sources. Implement active solutions to reduce pollution by forming public-private partnerships (P3), engaging willing landowners, targeting funding, and others. Broaden support and advocacy for our water resources through enlisting stakeholders, enhancing partnerships, and coordinating efforts.

Identify and target solutions for potential protection priority water resources

Identify protection priority water resources that may be trending towards impairment for any use, through the collection and analysis of data. Priorities may be determined by looking specifically at emerging contaminants, declining water quality and/or quantity, evolving land use impacts, and flooding issues. Improve the region's protection of priority water resources through identified targeted solutions that may include education and outreach, asset management, resource improvement, and others.

Definition of "Protection Priority" - water resources prioritized for protection based on potential threats to water quality, for the purpose of setting long-term priorities for where focused efforts towards restoration, best management practices, and protection would provide the most benefit to the watershed.

Committee members discussed if the two priorities should be combined into one priority and then an additional priority developed. Revisions to the two priorities and comments on an additional priority are outlined below. (Comments offered during the meeting are provided in red.)

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Economic development and climate change impacts related to stormwater and flooding

- Water quantity based more than quality based
- Groundwater recharge – hi intensity storms do not provide as much recharge and long duration events
- Micro droughts/flash droughts
- Land development and land management
- Increased storm frequency and duration
- Sediment runoff
- Soil conditions and infiltration rates
- Pervious/impervious surface area – manufacturing, industry, and commercial growth (reshoring)

- Aging infrastructure – focus and funding on replacement and retrofitting. Critical with population growth, replace and/or add new
- Infrastructure resiliency due to climate change and flooding
- Green infrastructure, green roofs to capture runoff
- Provide support, resources, and training to local governments/municipalities in developing ordinances/guidance to manage these concerns
- NGOs – watershed groups, river keepers, TU

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 comments are in red font).

Survey Responses by Region

- Delaware – 8
- Great Lakes – 4
- Lower Susquehanna – 2
- Ohio – 4
- Potomac – 2
- Upper/Middle Susquehanna – 9

Total responses – 29

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
- 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
- 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 **public support is essential for implementation**
- **Coordinate efforts, resources, and funding**
- **Get all parties interested in water! – difficult when not in drought or flood scenario**
- **Lead time is necessary**

Who should we educate on the plan?

- Students and teachers
- Elected officials – local, counties, and state
- Public
- County Conservation Districts
- County Planning
- Developers
- Environmental groups
- Engineers
- Watershed organizations
- Farmers
- Industrial, agricultural, recreation users
 - Difficult to reach directly
- Local and regional Chambers of Commerce
- Environmental justice communities (maps available at state and federal level)
 - Can be coincidental to flood plains
 - Target areas of concern via public outreach, social media
- PA State Association of Township Supervisors
- Zoning officials
- DEP Regional Offices – permit approvals
- County Commissioners

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 organization.
- Business 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 (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Nextdoor)
- 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
- TV commercials, news blurb, radio stations
- Webinars
- In-person meetings/training
- Multiple languages
- Bill stuffers (utility), door hangtags

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
- **Take the lead**

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
- **Willing to participate/attend**
- **More of an advisory role**
- **Attend public hearings**

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
- **Education and outreach programs (Penn State Extension)**
- **Social media apps – concise messaging**
- **Constant contact – email marketing**
- **Blog posts**
- **Create a list-serv**
- **Centralized material/content center**
- **Public libraries**

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 = 5.59

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

- Average score = 6.17

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
- **Pithy – focused to the point in very few words**

Next Steps

Vice-Chair Kyle 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 July 21, 2021. A presentation will be given on legacy issues.
- 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 Lower Susquehanna Regional meeting will be held on October 13, 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.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 on a Warren Weaver / Jeff Hines motion.