

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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Chair
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As a follow up action to the November meeting of the Statewide Committee, we respectfully submit the following 2004 Review and current activities update report.

2004 Review

Statewide Committee:

- The Statewide Committee was appointed in the first quarter of 2004. The initial meeting of the Statewide Committee took place on May 10th followed by three additional meetings in July, September and November. Key actions of the Statewide Committee included:
 - Nominated a Chair and Vice Chair to serve in 2004 through 2005. Don Bluedorn was elected chair and Jim MacKenzie was elected vice-chair of the committee.
 - Formation of three subcommittees to work with DEP staff. Those subcommittees included a Critical Water Planning Area subcommittee to focus on various technical issues. A Policy and Integration subcommittee to provide guidance to staff on policy and issues related to the development of the State Water Plan. The Statewide committee also formalized a Public Participation subcommittee that formed prior

to the first meeting of the Statewide Committee. Each of the committees has both statewide and regional representation.

- Products produced by the Statewide Committee and subcommittees included: a *Vision Statement* to help guide the plan development; *draft Nominating Process for the establishment of Critical Water Planning Areas*; initial designation criteria for Critical Water Planning Areas; and a draft *Public Participation Process* and supporting outreach materials.
- Appointed both PADOT and Penn Vest as advisory members of the Committee.

Regional Committees:

- The Regional Committees were appointed in mid 2003 and held their first organization meeting in October of 2003. At that meeting the Committees were given an overview of the process and began formulating by-laws. Subsequent meetings were held bi-monthly through the remainder of 2003 and 2004. Key actions and activities of the Regional Committees included:
 - Development of initial regional priorities.
 - Overview and discussion of various water management programs including both water quantity and water quality programs.
 - Coordination with local activities as presented by County Planning agencies, County Conservation District Watershed Specialist and other watershed organizations.
 - Reviews of the draft schedule for the process.
 - Input and recommendations on the water use registration process.
- The Regional Committees are currently in the process of reviewing draft products of the Statewide Committee.

DEP Staff:

- Provided staff support for the Statewide and Regional Committees and relevant products produced by those committees.
- Provided outreach to numerous groups on the State Water Planning process.
- Continued to work on the water use registration process.
- Provide guidance and support to USGS on the Water Budget Screening tool.
- Drafted regional component outline for review.
- Participated in Policy and Integration, Critical Water Planning Area, and Public Participation Subcommittee meetings.
- Initiated population projection analyses.
- Developed internal working draft of Registration, Reporting and Record Keeping regulations.

- Negotiated content of MOUs with SRBC and DRBC.

2005 Outlook

DEP Staff has formulated six key goals for the process in 2005. Those goals include:

- Goal #1 Complete USGS Budget Screening Tool for statewide application.
- Goal #2 Formulate comprehensive workplan and tangible products with the River Basin Commissions (example: Delaware and Susquehanna MOUs).
- Goal #3 Refine and enhance water use registrations in the interim Registration Program.
- Goal #4 Develop the proposed regulations for the future Registration Program.
- Goal #5 Enhance programmatic support to the committees through product development.
- Goal #6 Initiate the development of the Policy and Procedures for the State Water Planning Process and each component including:
 - *Goal 6A Level of Detail*
 - *Goal 6B Draft Regional Component*
 - *Goal 6C Final Critical Water Planning Area Criteria and Nomination Process*
 - *Goals 6 D Final Public Participation Process including first round of Public Hearing/Meetings*
 - *Goal 6 E Critical Area Resource Plans (post 2005)*

Current Issues

State Water Plan Funding:

Staff has submitted a Program Revision Request as part of the DEP internal budgeting process for approximately \$3.1 million for the upcoming 2005-06 budget. In addition, staff continues to work with the Susquehanna River and Delaware River Basin commissions on the specific tasks that will be undertaken for the funding provided to each of the commissions in support of Act 220. DEP staff is also working on a proposal to use Coastal Zone Management funding to begin initial work on data collection in the Great Lakes region.

USGS Update:

The USGS has developed a working document that defines current methodologies for determining pour points, surface- and groundwater availability, as well as envisioned database design and architecture. The database design and architecture has been a topic of discussion with the DEP Bureau of Information Technology and the USGS, to ascertain compatibility with existing and occurring applications using NHD. Monthly management level progress and bi-weekly

technical level meetings have taken place with the Bureau of Information Technology and USGS. Preprocessing data for basin delineation has been completed for most of the state. Relating the hydro-network structure has been completed for seven HUC's in the Delaware Basin. The remaining three Delaware Basin HUC's will be completed in the next few weeks, and work will begin on the Susquehanna Basin HUC's. After the hydro-network structure is in place, steps to begin basin delineation programming can start. The USGS has begun ArcObjects programming to develop the desktop tool features which process point data. Programming will continue to refine these tools as new data becomes available.

The Department is providing extracted Water Use Data System (WUDS) data to USGS. Updated extracts will be provided subsequent to review and upload of the water withdrawals from registrations into the WUDS system. The Department has initiated "hand computed" test watershed budgets for several watersheds across the state based on the draft criteria for delineation of critical water planning areas utilizing the statistics being developed for the tool from USGS and DEP water withdrawal data

Additionally, the Department is evaluating the calling of a "User Group" meeting in February with potential end users to assist the USGS in establishing user standards to guide the functionality of the budgeting tool.

Registration Update:

Since October, efforts have been made to reach public water suppliers who have not submitted registrations. On December 7, 2004 letters were sent out to those public water suppliers who either had not pre-registered or who pre-registered, but had not completed the registrations. These efforts have contributed to an additional 715 public water supply sources being registered since October. As of January 11th, we have received 954 agriculture source registrations along with 2,390 non-agriculture, and 3,918 public water supply source registrations for a total count of 7,262.

Staff is also preparing to reach out in January and February to energy producers, golf courses and industries that have not registered including attending a turf management conference January 12th and 13th to reach out to golf courses and other turf facilities. We are evaluating the purchase of a mailing list to reach industries and commercial businesses for registration.

In early November, two temporary clerks hired by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission began assisting staff in registration data input. The clerks have helped us tremendously in transferring paper registration data into electronic format. We estimate that the temporary clerical help will be required at least into mid February.

Subcommittee Status and Reports:

- **Critical Water Planning Area:** The Critical Water Planning Area (CWPA) Subcommittee has been meeting monthly since its inception in June 2004. The CWPA Subcommittee developed draft Nominating Process and draft Designation Criteria documents that the Statewide Committee approved on Nov. 19, 2004 to send to the Regional Committees for their comment. The Subcommittee will be meeting on Jan. 14, 2005 to discuss the numeric criteria that need to be added to the Draft Designation Criteria document.
- **Policy and Integration:** The Policy and Integration Subcommittee took action at their October meeting to send a Draft Regional Component Outline to the Nov. 19 Statewide Committee meeting requesting approval to send it to the Regional Committees for initial comment. The Subcommittee recently met on Jan. 5, 2005 to discuss the policy issues surrounding the CWPA draft designation criteria and how these items relate to the USGS Budgeting Tool being developed. A specific point of discussion centered on when do projects/facilities get added or subtracted from the Budgeting Tool.
- **Public Participation:** The subcommittee will hold a conference call on January 13, 2005, to discuss a framework agenda that will be presented to the Regional Committees for consideration at the February regional meetings. In addition, the subcommittee will be commenting on a proposed PowerPoint presentation that may be used by the Regional chairpersons at the public meetings.

Regional Committee Activities:

All six Regional Committee December meetings followed similar agendas. Presentations were made by DEP to the Regional Committees introducing the CWPA documents (draft Nominating Process and draft Designation Criteria) and the draft Regional Component Outline. The Committees are to comment on these documents by Feb. 28, 2005. They also discussed the public meetings/hearings at their December meetings. May 2005 is the target month for holding at least one public meeting/hearing in each basin. The Regional Committees were directed to refine their list of priorities they developed earlier in the year in preparation for May 2005 Public Meeting /Hearing. The Regional Public Meetings/Hearings will be discussed in more detail at the February Regional Committee meetings.