

Delaware Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting

May 11, 2006
9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
961 Marcon Blvd., Suite 310
Allentown, PA 18109-9397

DRAFT Meeting Summary

Attendance

Committee members in attendance:

Carol R. Collier
Jeff Featherstone
Julie Lyn Gallisdorfer
Helen Haun
Desiree Henning-Dudley
John Hoekstra
Darryl Jenkins
Leonard Johnson
Irvil Kear

Preston Luitweiler
Michael Meloy
George Kunkel – alt. for Howard
Neukrug
Bob Wendelgass

Committee members not in attendance:

Allen Fidler
Hon. Kate Harper
Gary Kribbs
Arthur Needham

Howard Neukrug
Barbara Smith
Michael Stokes
Maya van Rossum

Others in attendance:

Rob Cavett – Merck & Co., Inc.
Michelle Clark - DEP
Bill Gast – DEP
Mike Kaiser – Lehigh Valley Planning
Commission
Hoss Liaghat - DEP
Dennis Livrone – Bucks County
Planning Commission
Bill Manner – DEP

Michael Phillips - DEP
Geoff Reese – Lehigh Valley Planning
Commission
Sue Rockwell – Lehigh Valley Planning
Commission
Leslie Sarvis - DEP
Sabrina Stanwood - DEP
Sarah Whitney – PA Sea Grant

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Introduction

Mike Kaiser, LVPC Executive Director, welcomed the committee and attendees and gave a brief overview of some of the water management issues in the Lehigh Valley. Mr. Kaiser commented that there has been much growth occurring, mostly from New Jersey, and that there are many Delaware River commuters.

The LVPC has completed studies on water supply, stormwater and sewage and hazard mitigation. They are anxious for the State Water Plan to be completed, because the Municipalities Planning Code requires that county comprehensive plans are consistent with the State Water Plan.

Administrative Items

The Draft February Meeting Summary was approved with no changes.

Motion: Helen Haun

Motion Second: John Hoekstra

Motion was carried.

DEP Summary of Activities

Leslie Sarvis highlighted the Statewide Committee Memo dated March 10, 2006. The draft registration and reporting regulations are going through DEP's approval process and anticipated for presentation to the Environmental Quality Board in July.

Currently there are three vacancies on the committee, including John Coscia's retirement from DVRPC in April. DEP has received nominations for two of the vacancies, for the categories of "industrial" and "county conservation district director." These nominations, along with nominations from the other regional committees, will be forwarded to the Governor's Office for determination of appointment.

The Water Planning Office received \$1.8 million from DEP's Environmental Stewardship Fund for fiscal year 2006 –07.

John Hines presented testimony to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee on May 2, 2006. In addition, Carol Collier of DRBC and Tom Beauduy of SRBC presented testimony to the Committee. Copies of John's and Carol's testimonies were sent via email to the committee members.

The Statewide CWPA Subcommittee has completed Draft CARP Guidelines and has asked for comments on the document from Statewide and Regional Committee members. **Comments are due to Sue Weaver (suweaver@state.pa.us) by June 1, 2006.** There were concerns from committee members about the delay in finalizing the CWPA Criteria and Process Guidance Document. It is to be finalized soon by DEP Staff. The committee is anxious to see how the process will work for nomination and identification of Critical Water Planning Areas (CWPAs) and subsequent Critical Area Resource Plans (CARPs). The process and the role of the regional committee should become more clear once a CWPA is identified and goes through the CARP process.

Leslie led a discussion on how the final products of the 2008 State Water Plan will be formatted and displayed and what resource materials will be available to the public. The data and analysis portion of the State Water Plan will be displayed in a cd and web format. The Regional Atlas portion of the Plan (see discussion below) will be presented in a paper format along with an accompanying cd and possibly an interactive webpage. A marketing document and static webpage will also be developed to increase awareness and interest in the State Water Plan. This marketing document will highlight the activities of water users and showcase success stories. In addition, participants in DEP's Learning to LEAD program are working on creating a marketing strategy and identifying market sectors to promote the State Water Plan. Finally, a statewide action agenda, or policy document, will be developed which will contain recommendations for water management and planning and will identify data and information gaps to be addressed in the next State Water Plan. This document will also be in the form of a static webpage.

Comments from the Public

Bill Manner of DEP's Northeast Regional Office reported that in the northern portion of the Delaware basin, there are large developments being planned, including 800-900 home developments. Easton is at the end of its allocation and will need another permit and plan. In the Poconos there are concerns over groundwater supply because of two proposals for large developments and because casino facilities are tremendous water users.

USGS Budget Tool Presentation

Hoss Liaghat gave a powerpoint presentation on the USGS-contracted Water Budget Tool. The water budget tool is a GIS-based program that was developed jointly between DEP and USGS. The program computes water availability in watersheds and is structured based on nested watersheds represented by pour points. The program indicates if the water availability in a watershed is positive or negative, thus flagging an area for additional investigation into water availability. Hoss also discussed the development of the Yield Analysis Tool (YAT), which is a GIS-based program that analyzes specific water yields to assess the current and future capabilities of public water supply agencies.

Draft Critical Area Resource Plan (CARP) Guidelines Discussion

Preston Luitweiler and Bob Wendelgass discussed the development of the Draft CARP Guidance Document. A CARP must be drafted upon designation of a Critical Water Planning Area (CWPA). The draft document outlines the criteria and the process that will be used to develop, review and approve CARPs. The committee discussed the composition of a Critical Area Advisory Committee (p. 17), but decided not to submit any comments as a committee. Individual committee members may submit comments on the draft document to Sue Weaver by June 1, 2006.

Regional Atlas (Component) Discussion and Binders

Leslie Sarvis discussed the idea of presenting the regional component as a regional atlas. A copy of the Ohio Coastal Atlas was passed around for committee members to view and consider as a template for the State Water Plan

Regional Atlas. The Regional Atlas will incorporate the sections of the regional component and depict much of the information through maps, charts, graphs, etc. Binders were distributed to each of the committee members so that maps, charts and text to be included in the regional atlas can be added to them at subsequent meetings. The committee members had comments and questions about some of the maps and sections of the atlas. The committee will continue discussing the atlas at future meetings.

Water Loss Evaluation Tool Presentation

George Kunkel of the Philadelphia Water Department gave a presentation on "Water Accountability & Efficiency Improvements for PA State Water Plan Consideration." Mr. Kunkel discussed the drinking water industry's work on a standardized tool to determine water supply efficiency, including new methods of water auditing and loss control, and how the State Water Plan can consider these new methods as a component of the Plan.

Follow-up/Next Steps

Time will be allotted on the August agenda for refinement of the committee's regional priorities. Leslie asked the committee members to be thinking about specific examples of why and where the priorities are most significant in the basin, and to consider the comments received at last year's public meetings/hearings.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2006 at the Monroe County Conservation District in Stroudsburg, PA. Note: It was suggested to move the meeting to Thursday, August 10 for better attendance, but subsequent emails with committee members determined that the meeting will stay on the original date of Friday, Aug. 11.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.