



**State Water Plan Update
Ohio Water Resources Regional Committee Meeting**

October 25, 2022
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
In-Person Rachael Carson Building

Committee Members in Attendance:

Duane Goodsell	Ron Rohall
Matthew Genchur	Deb Simko
Kevin Halloran	Robert Softcheck
Sheryl Kelly	John St. Clair
Jason McCabe	Donna Lynn Zofcin
Mary Ellen Ramage	

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Erin Kepple Adams	Ronald Musser
Daniel Dahlkemper	Christine Phillips
Lori Dayton	Annie Quinn
Sam Dinkins	Jasun Stanton
Chuck Durista	John Walliser
Deb Lange	

Others in Attendance:

James Horton – DEP	Bob Whitmore – Strategic Consulting Partners
Mike Hill – DEP	
Susan Weaver – DEP	

Visitors:

None

Welcome

James Horton, DEP, welcomed everyone to the meeting, explained the meeting was being recorded, and provided helpful hints on the use of the technology. Ron Rohall, Committee Chair, welcomed committee members to the meeting. Attendance was completed through the online participant list.

Minutes

The meeting summary of the July 14, 2022, meeting was approved on a Duane Goodsell / Jason McCabe motion.

Public Comment

Chair Rohall 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 State Water Plan Update

Susan Weaver provided an update of what DEP is working on regarding the State Water Plan Update.

The three draft Critical Area Resource Plans (CARPs) are progressing. The draft Back Creek CARP is complete and has been shared with the Ohio regional committee; it was approved by the committee to enter public comment and the 45-day agency review phase followed by a hearing to receive testimony from the public. This review time has come to a close, DEP staff and the Critical Area Advisory Committee have addressed the comments and suggested edits and anticipate sharing this CARP along with a comment/response document with the Ohio regional committee later this month. The draft Laurel Hill CARP will be shared at a later date. The Marsh and Rock Creek CARP is still under review, but we anticipate it will be released shortly. Once the draft CARPs have been reviewed by their respective committee and approved by DEP with any additional edits, they will be sent to a list of stakeholders and planning officials within their watershed for review and comment. Additionally, DEP will host public hearings specifically to consider each CARP and solicit comments from the public prior to the vote for recommendation. Once the CARPs have been edited in accordance with public and planning agency feedback, the CARPs will return to their regional committees to vote on their recommendation to the statewide committee.

The final State Water Plan Update report has been drafted and was shared with the public in accordance with Act 220 requirements. This document was concurrently reviewed by members of the statewide committee's Final Report Workgroup who submitted edits of their own. Both a comment/response document and the final report are currently being internally reviewed by DEP staff and will be shared with the statewide committee at their November 16 meeting. The final report includes regional components, work group products, an assessment of progress since the last plan update, and a strategic plan going forward. You have received a link to the draft document shortly after the public comment period went active on August 20. We will be discussing this document with you today.

The State Water Plan Atlas from 2009 has been developed into a StoryMap as a Digital Atlas. We plan to share this with you today.

The thirteenth statewide committee meeting was held on October 19. The fourteenth meeting is scheduled for November 16.

CARP Update

James Horton stated the draft Back Creek CARP was shared with the Ohio committee in July and then available for public review and comment. The draft has been revised to

include the public comments and is now under internal DEP review. The CARP will be shared with the committee as soon as the internal DEP review is completed. James would like to schedule a one-hour meeting of the Ohio committee for late November or early December to review and vote on approval of the CARP.

Debrief on State Water Plan Process

Committee members were asked to provide feedback and comments on the state water planning process. Comments provided by committee members included:

- It would be nice to meet in person one time each year to meet with members and build relationships
- Teams meeting went well
- Many times, members were silent during the calls, may not happen if in person
- Team calls are helpful because it is difficult to get out of the office to travel to meetings
- Would like to have more information on the state water planning process and progress as it is occurring. Maybe a written bulleted report sent along with the agenda.

Story Map – Water Atlas Presentation

Mike Hill, DEP Geologist, presented the Digital Water Atlas StoryMap. In 2009 a coffee table book was developed describing the State Water Plan and current information. The original book has been updated into a digital StoryMap. The current digital version contains much of the original coffee table book information with updated information and maps that can be updated in real time.

The link to the Story Map is [The Digital Water Atlas \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com/storymaps/view/172934)

The Digital Water Atlas
of Pennsylvania's State Water Plan, 2022 - DRAFT
storymaps.arcgis.com

Highlighted sections of the Story Map are the following:

- Main themes - bookmarks across the bottom of the screen
- Map tour
- Watersheds and water basins
- Surface water
- Sources of ground water
- Average precipitation
- Links to the DEP climate change website
- Drought history
- Water use trends
- Critical Water Planning Areas
- Population by county and municipality
- Storm water and flooding
- Land cover

Final Report Overview and Path Forward

James Horton reviewed the development of the final report of the State Water Plan and the path forward within the plan. The executive summary and path forward in the current draft of the State Water Plan has been enhanced from the version currently available to committee members.

The statewide committee will review the updated draft of the plan on November 16 and make final edits to the plan. The statewide committee will then vote on whether or not they will approve the plan at a meeting on December 14. Assuming the plan is approved and recommended by the statewide committee, the plan will be sent to the DEP Secretary for signature.

Act 220 requires regional committees to meet one time per year in between updates of the State Water Plan. James would like to have regional committees meet twice each year in April and October to review progress on goals and initiatives.

Committee members were asked to provide comments or feedback on the State Water Plan.

- This update to the plan is much better than the original document.
- This updated plan is easier to understand
- Excellent document to go out to the public.

Recruitment for the Ohio Committee

The Ohio committee currently has four openings for members and committee members are encouraged to provide names for consideration of the Governor appointment. The committee openings are in the following categories.

- Industrial & commercial, energy development and production
- Environmental and conservation (2 openings)
- Local government, other than county

Comments in the Chat

- Horton, James; jahorton@pa.gov
- Tentative meeting dates to review the CARP in late November or early December
 - Dec 2 is not good for me.
 - November 28 not good for me
- Possible future members
 - Environment & Conservation - What about someone from the Western PA Conservancy?

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm on a Mary Ellen Ramage / Donna Zofcin motion.