

Needs Assessment Workgroup Status Report

Address to the Governor's Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force
John Schombert, Chairman, Needs Assessment Subcommittee
July 22, 2008

Meetings:

- The Subcommittee met on May 27, and again on June 10. An additional meeting is scheduled for July 22 (this afternoon).
- The first meeting served to communicate information and begin a dialogue on the issues that were of concern to group members. Subsequent work by members on those issues was developed and shared electronically.
- The second meeting served to direct the Gap Study to provide appropriate graphs and tables required for subsequent Subcommittee work.

Evolution of Subcommittee Products:

- The topics initially considered by members represented a wide variety of concerns. Materials developed by Needs Assessment members on the following topics were provided to other Subcommittees for their consideration:
 - ✓ Innovative Technologies (assigned to Innovative Measures Workgroup)
 - ✓ Governance of Satellite Systems (to Financial Sustainability)
 - ✓ Need to Apply Asset Management (to Financial Sustainability)
 - ✓ Aging Workforce and Training Needs (to Financial Sustainability)
 - ✓ Need for Board/Council Member Training (to Financial Sustainability)
 - ✓ Consolidation of Services and Regionalization (to Financial Sustainability)
- The efforts of the workgroup were then focused on the issues as described in the Conceptual Subcommittee Structure, as refined by assignments of issues that were redirected to the Needs Assessment Subcommittee from other Subcommittees. That work is intended to emphasize:
 - ✓ Current and projected costs for the construction / operations & maintenance of water and wastewater systems.
 - ✓ Examination of actual costs, including those which continue to be deferred by systems. To include an allocation of costs between customers and subsidy programs.
 - ✓ Examination of user rates and affordability.

- Currently proposed action items being refined by the Subcommittee are on the attached early-draft Needs Assessment chapter report, and summarized below:

Short-Term Recommendations:

- Affordability concerns – communities
- Refine State/Federal subsidy programs to stretch funding
- Evaluation of issues which tend to increase construction costs
- Collect more needs/affordability data and refine analyses

Long-Term Recommendations:

- Customer Assistance Programs for low-income households
- Review and make adjustments to local user rate structures and rates
- Local governments promote improved on-lot system maintenance