

State Water Plan Policy Subcommittee
November 30, 2015
10:00; Holcombe Conference Room
CT DEEP, 79 Elm St., Hartford
Draft Summary

Attendees: Bob Moore, Betsey Wingfield, David Sutherland, Maureen Westbrook, Beth Barton, Alicea Charamut, Martha Smith, Virginia de Lima, Matt Pafford, Margaret Miner, Michael O'Neill, Denise Ruzicka, Corinne Fitting, George Logan

On the phone: John Hudak, David Radka, Larry Bingaman, Shelly Green

Approved October 29, 2015 meeting summary.

Distributed and reviewed the schedule of WPC and Steering Committee Meetings for 2016.

Corinne Fitting reported out on lessons learned at the American Water Resources Association National Leadership Institute Workshop for State Officials, held 11/11/15 – 11/13/15.

- Notes from presentation are attached.
- It was mentioned that CLEAR (Center For Landuse Education And Research) does “Story Maps” which might be a helpful way of presenting the State Water Plan to the public. May want to talk with CLEAR once the project manager is on board. An example of a Story Map is here: <http://clear3.uconn.edu/viewers/ctstory/>
- Corinne will check the availability of webinars from some of the key state planning efforts
- Other states found it important to break down the implementation process into “chunks” which would identify specifically what data is needed and develop a process for acquiring it

Discussion on scope of state water plan – does it include water quality planning and initiatives? Although water quality is mentioned in the statute, the deliverables outlined in the statute are focused on water quantity. There are already a number of water quality plans for the state in existence, one example being the recently-completed Non-Point Source Pollution Plan for the state. There is certainly a connection between use, quantity and quality, and integrating quantity and quality would be the penultimate goal for a water plan. However, because of differences in spatial and temporal scales and two different sets of stakeholders, a cross-walk between the two and identification of key issues where the two intersect may be where we want to focus for the initial plan. Some examples of key issues may be:

- Broad water quality issues, like Arsenic levels in ground water, that affect development and land use;
- Promotion of water reuse, but with use matching appropriate quality;
- Education programs or potential legislative changes to address private wells testing.

- Accessibility of existing information, and the process for acquiring and compiling that information in a visible format

DEEP will pull together a matrix of existing programs and documents on water quality for the next meeting for review and identification of potential quantity and policy issues related to the quality plan or program.

Discussion on the scope of climate change to be included in the plan.

- There are a number of planning forums and documents already underway regarding climate change and resiliency, including the new “Connecticut Institute for Resiliency and Climate Adaptation” (CIRCA) at UCONN, the Connecticut Climate Adaptation Plan, State Agencies For Resiliency (SAFR) and the Governor’s C3 initiative on greenhouse gases. DEEP will look to invite someone from CIRCA to come talk about climate, resiliency and their current efforts at our next meeting.
- The use of “triggers” or “critical points” in the broader context of climate change, and the establishment of a processes and guidelines for resolving these conflicts as they arise. This discussion led to the focus on the Drought Plan (below).
- The need to identify and define the responsibilities of the appropriate parties at each organizational level (eg. state, regional, municipality, agency, etc).
- There is an existing State Drought Contingency Plan, and a workgroup of the WPC is currently updating the plan. The update is focused primarily on triggers, stages of drought, and responses. We need to consider if the current drought response meets the needs of the state, particularly in light of climate change.
 - We want to review the existing laws to ensure that we have the authorities and tools needed for drought response now and in the future. DEEP will get together with DPH and generate a list of existing authorities for group discussion.
 - The question of if the drought triggers and responses are appropriate is a separate question. Can follow the work of the WPC Drought Committee on this topic.
 - An agricultural drought is another question, and want to ensure we have the tools to address this type of drought response as well.
- Climate change may also cause more intense rainfall events. This generates issues with flooding, stormwater, impacts to dams and to other critical infrastructure such as wastewater and water treatment plants, as well as wastewater and water conveyance infrastructure. CIRCA’s evaluation of “critical components” that is currently underway may be informative to this discussion. DEEP will advise the committee of current flood protection and design requirements for the protection of dams, water and waste water treatment facilities and other water infrastructure.

Discussion on source of appropriate future land-use and population estimates. There are numerous methodologies for making future land-use and population projections, and we need to agree on the projection methodology to use for the water plan. The Connecticut Data Center is currently updating their population projections, and are expected to release these in the spring of

2016. OPM will arrange to have someone come from the Connecticut Data Center to present to the group the meeting after next.

Next Meeting: January 11 or 12, p.m. Upcoming topics will include agricultural issues, matrix of water quality programs and documents, list of drought response authorities and laws, presentations by CIRCA and the Connecticut Data Center.

NOTES

**American Water Resources Association
2015 National Leadership Institute
Workshop for State Officials
Nov 11-13, 2015; Denver, CO**

18 State officials from 14 different states met over a three-day period to launch AWRA's National Leadership Institute. Hosting 11 different speakers, the 2015 Workshop for State Officials covered a wide variety of topics, including process and techniques for developing state water plans. There was an ambitious, packed schedule, with learning objectives for each speaker and considerable time for frank sharing of information among the states on the state water planning process.

The agenda, with brief descriptions of the talks and the learning objectives is here: <http://nationalleadershipinstitute.awra.org/uploads/NLI/2015Workshop/FinalProgram.pdf>

Take-aways:

- Think of the plan as a framework with goals and objectives at the state level that can then be brought down to “place-based planning” at the local level. These are broad plans setting state policy that lead to state regulatory and non-regulatory changes. All are long-term plans (20+ yr. planning horizons), but that are updated at a shorter interval (typ. 5 yrs) to reflect changing data and issues.
- Very important to answer the questions “Why do we need a Plan?” and “What do you want to do?”. A tag line or overarching theme helps. Examples:
 - One Water;
 - Keeping Arizona’s water glass half full;
 - California Water Plan – Investing in innovation and infrastructure;
- Benefits of doing a water plan:
 - Captures “water” all in one place, allowing you to tell the story of water.
 - Opportunity to build and repair relationships and improve coordination among agencies.
 - Keeps agencies accountable for balancing investments.
 - Creates a platform for education and new partnerships.
 - Identifies the challenges the state is facing and offers solutions.
 - Builds consensus for incremental policy and regulatory change when needed.
- Because state agencies are also stakeholders, it is difficult for them to act as neutral parties. Several states stressed that neutral-party facilitation is important for acceptance of any plan.
- Important to build trust – state agencies need to be seen as honest brokers and trusted advisors. Develop a “trusted messenger strategy”.
- Need to build in time and money for graphics and publishing of the state water plan. MT included “Water User Profiles” in their plan, which really brought things home for the public and legislators, and helped with acceptance – could do a fisherman, golf course superintendent, kayaker, industry, water company...
- Spatial and temporal differences in scale between water resource planning and water quality make it challenging to include both in a water plan. Most states felt it was not well integrated, and instead just had “two plans under one cover”.

- Ensure 3-tiered benefits are considered in every recommendation: economic / environmental / social or cultural health.
- Helpful to have 1-2 pagers on key issues as decisions are made, like infrastructure.
- Getting and keeping interested, active stakeholders is a challenge, especially since the process often takes more time than anticipated and is iterative. Clear objectives and efficient use of time are important. Critical for acceptance that the state doesn't dictate to the stakeholders, that there is a collaborative approach instead.
- In WY, NRCS is assisting the state with smaller watershed studies.
- USGS Water Use Data:
 - Water Smart initiative
 - P.L. 111-11(F) – Secure Water Act
 - Section 9507: Water Data Enhancement
 - Section 9508: Water Availability Assessment
 - Water Budgets: Foundations for Effective Water-Resources and Environmental Management, Circular 1308, 2007: <http://water.usgs.gov/watercensus/AdHocComm/Background/WaterBudgets-FoundationsforEffectiveWater-ResourcesandEnvironmentalManagement.pdf>
- The only nexus EPA Region 8 saw between EPA and State Water Planning was through NEPA and 404 reviews. Under the CWA, water quality needs to cover protection and maintenance of designated uses.

Resources:

- CA has developed a Process Guide that includes Lessons Learned and which might be helpful to share. It is just being published, and Lisa will be doing webinars on it, which we are welcome to listen in on.
- CA has dealt with the water data security issue, and Lisa will get us some information on that.
- CA has a 33-page glossary of terms that is online: <http://nationalleadershipinstitute.awra.org/uploads/NLI/2015Workshop/SampleGlossary.pdf>
- OR gave a great presentation on their multi-disciplinary approach to water planning, and Alyssa is willing to do her presentation via webinar for us.
- OR has a “Conserve Water Program” – incentive-based allocation of conserved water (not sure this is applicable to us, but worth checking.)
- OR hosted virtual open houses online with surveys that they can share.
- MS has an online form for submitting water data that they shared.
- GA offered assistance with the public process in general - this is Gail’s background and expertise, and she offered to help us strategize if we wish.
- VA uses statewide cumulative impact modeling for surface water and ground water that they developed and the utilities can access to run scenarios, and Scott offered to do a webinar on this decision – support tool for us.
- USGS provided a handout on “Getting to know the USGS through Internet Resources”: <http://nationalleadershipinstitute.awra.org/uploads/NLI/2015Workshop/BalesHandout.pdf>
- (In other conversation, Leah O’Neill from EPA Region 1, offered if there is any way they can be of assistance, she’d be happy to help.)

