DRAFT Meeting Notes for the State Water Plan Implementation Workgroup
March 14, 2023; 1:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

**Members**: Virginia de Lima (Co-Chair), David Radka (Co-Chair), Chris Bellucci (DEEP), Dan Aubin (DPH), Bruce Wittchen (OPM), Alyson Ayotte (PURA), Anne Hulick (Clean Water Action), Mike Dietz (UConn), Denise Savageau (CT Association of Conservation Districts)

**Note Taker(s):** Ali Hibbard (DEEP)

**Public:**  Kim Czapla (DEEP), Eric Lindquist (DPH)

**Meeting Started: 1:14 p.m.**

**Topics of Discussion**

**Changes to Agenda**

* No changes to the agenda

**Approval/Modification of notes from previous meeting**

* Notes from the previous meeting were approved.

**Water Planning Council March 7th Meeting Recap**

* The Water Planning Council (WPC) will review the framework that sets up the State Water Plan Implementation Workgroup (IWG) and the Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG). It is possible that some of the positions that members hold in each group may be switched around. More discussions will take place at the next WPC meeting on April 4th.
* The Department of Public Health (DPH) is continuing to put together resources on a recent private well legislative change.
* The State Water Plan (SWP) update did not make it into the Governor’s budget, but there may be other budgeting options. Other options include bonding funds or pushing to include the SWP update in the midterm budget update next year. Bonding funds could not be used to fund the Water Director position.

**Outreach & Education topical sub-workgroup**

* The lunchtime workshop planned for Wednesday, April 12th is moving forward. The topic will be drought and drought preparedness. Martin Heft will open the discussion and Doug Hoskins (DEEP) will be the moderator.
* The second lunchtime workshop is tentatively set for Wednesday, May 10th but is still being finalized.
* DEEP is continuing to work on developing brand standards for the WPC/SWP logo.
* The need to update the SWP webpage was revisited. The webpage provides resources on meetings, but there are not many resources for outreach and education on the SWP. There is still information on finished workgroups on the SWP webpage that should be archived.

**USGS Data Collection topical sub-workgroup**

* The previous meeting was on February 24th. The topic was the continuous streamflow gages network. Tim Sargent from the East Hartford USGS office was a guest. Denise Argue gave an overview of the network.
* The USGS is currently running 68 real-time streamflow gages. The sub-workgroup looked at the distribution of the network over basins, land use, and gage record length.
* Flow can’t be measured everywhere, but some gages can serve as surrogates to predict flow in ungauged streams, similar to what is used in the USGS model StreamStats.
* Next meeting is on March 27th at 10:30 a.m. and the topic will be the water quality network.

**Tracking & Reporting – Phase 2 Sub-workgroup**

* The workgroup that put together the 2022 annual report has created an after-action report to summarize the process they went through to put the annual report together. The after-action report was shared with this group with the agenda. The 2022 annual report is on the website, but not the after-action report or the new workgroup proposal.
* This past annual report summarized nearly 5 years of work. Future annual reports will be limited to the prior year, and hopefully that means it will be less time-consuming. The process can be more simplified with consistent framework between workgroup proposals and final reports. The information could be lifted from these documents and put directly into a report.
* This Tracking and Reporting – Phase 2 sub-workgroup will be setting up the reporting process and explore technologies available (such as Sharepoint and PowerBI). The workgroup will probably go through test runs of any automated process developed. This charge will likely take longer than 6 months
* Phase 2 will include determining who needs to be involved to keep the annual reporting process running in a timely manner. This includes considering the annual report to be a subset of the tasks of the Outreach and Education workgroup, which needs to be discussed further. Likely, roles between state agencies will need to be defined.
* Bruce will send the workgroup proposal through his email contact lists that are relevant to Water Planning Council matters. Dan Aubin should be contacted if a person is interested. To clarify, Dan is waiting for DPH approval to chair the group.

**IWG Membership**

* The next slate of members of the IWG needs to be voted on by the WPC in their April meeting. Updates on new terms/term renewals:
	+ Ally Ayotte – still interested and following up with her managers.
	+ Mike Dietz – still interested, but with time commitments may not be able to chair sub-workgroups
	+ Dan Aubin – Lori Mathieu is technically the appointee for DPH and Dan is the alternate. Internally DPH conversations are needed if this were to change.
	+ Anne Hulick – more information to come.
	+ David Radka – not looking to be reappointed
	+ Will need a WPCAG representative
* There is a lot of donated time from people who are not state agency employees. How can these volunteers be supported better? If the WPC isn’t a priority to the legislature, it will be difficult to keep volunteers dedicated to the process.
* The state agency employees that are involved in WPC/SWP matters are “borrowed” from other programs and not dedicated solely to WPC/SWP.
* Increase scientific and policy experts as members.
* There was continued discussion on adding two at-large members to the membership of the IWG. Even if these categories go unfilled, the IWG will propose updating the organizational plan to add two at-large members to bring in experts on different topics. There was not a concern over whether these at-large members needed to specifically be instream/out-of-stream, or neutral.
* Should alternates or alternate delegations be added to the Organizational Plan of the IWG? For the advisory groups, alternates aren’t approved by the WPC but they are listed. Having delegated alternates may allow discussions and votes to continue in a timely manner.
* The current language in the organization plan of the IWG says that it is expected that a chair of the workgroup is a member of the IWG. It was determined that a change to the organizational plan to allow members, alternates, or other state agency employees to chair sub-workgroups, is not needed. The current language in place should still allow for flexibility in chairs.
* Outreach for members needs to be increased. An example of a group to reach out to is the CT Section of the American Water Works Association.

**WPCAG**

* No update provided

**Public Comment**

* No Public Comment

**Meeting Adjourned: 2:47 p.m.**

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 11th at 1:00 p.m.**