DRAFT Meeting Notes for the State Water Plan Implementation Workgroup
April 11, 2023; 1:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

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

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

**Public:** Iris Herz Kaminski (City of New Haven), Kim Czapla (DEEP), Sean Hayden (Lake Waramaug Task Force)

**Meeting Started: 1:00 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 April 4th Meeting Recap**

* The Water Planning Council (WPC) accepted the member slate proposal that includes some membership shifts. Denise Savageau will now represent the Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG) and Virginia de Lima will now be an in-stream representative. Also, the WPC approved the addition of David Murphy as a member.
* The request for funding for the State Water Plan update and water director position was not included in the most recent Governor’s Budget. The WPC agreed that of the two requested items, the water director role would be the first thing to find funding for. Some of the concerns were that implementation of the plan is falling to volunteers and state agency employees that don’t solely work on implementation of the SWP. That is the drive for hiring a water director to work solely on implementation of the SWP.
* The Interagency Drought Workgroup meetings are ongoing, even though there is not currently a drought.
* Martin Heft mentioned that he is looking at the possibility of restructuring the WPCAG and this workgroup. The WPCAG is statutorily established, and the industries of members involved in the workgroup are set by statute. The state agencies are not members of the WPCAG, per the statute.

**Implementation Workgroup Membership**

* The membership slate was accepted by the WPC. Alternates do not need approval by the WPC, but members are encouraged to designate an alternate in the case of missing a meeting. Members should contact Virginia with the name of their alternates.

**Identify IWG Co-Chair**

* Any members that are interested in serving as a co-chair should contact Virginia.
* The workload for serving as a co-chair include putting together a monthly agenda, reviewing the monthly meeting notes, and attending the WPC monthly meetings to provide an update.
* There was discussion on if state agency employees should be eligible to serve as a co-chair. It was determined that there is not a concern if a state agency employee served as co-chair.

**Outreach & Education topical sub-workgroup**

* The workshop “Preparing for Drought in Connecticut” will be Wednesday, April 12th from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
* The next workshop will be May 23rd with a focus on climate change and forests as a nature-based solution.
* Denise discussed possibly starting a new workgroup to develop content for the SWP webpage.
	+ The platform which hosts the State of Connecticut webpages (SiteCore) is limited with what can be changed on any state webpage. It would help to have someone who is familiar with SiteCore to explain the limitations and set up of the platform.
	+ Maintaining the website should be the responsibility of the state agencies since it is a State of Connecticut platform.
	+ It’s not necessary to make a lot of new content – there are already many resources that just need to be compiled and shared in one place.
	+ The webpage needs could possibly tie into the discussions to have an online interface showing the tracking and reporting of the SWP. Updating the website is the first step to interconnecting the two.
* To move forward on the workgroup, a proposal for the WPC should be drafted. Also, OPM will need to share the current webpage access with other state agencies.
* The Outreach and Education workgroup 2023 workplan also includes drought education and the water resources job pipeline.

**USGS Data Collection topical sub-workgroup**

* At the last meeting on March 27th, the topical workgroup looked at the water quality monitoring done by DEEP to compliment the water chemistry that is collected by the USGS.
* Next meeting will be on the water quality network on April 24th from 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

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

* The next steps for this workgroup is to identify a chair, what type of people should be invited to participate, and what type of schedule the workgroup meetings should follow. Dan Aubin would be interested in chairing the tracking and reporting phase 2 sub-workgroup.
	+ NGOs representatives should be involved to capture the work done by NGOs.
	+ The end audience of the annual report is the legislature. It would help to have someone familiar with working with legislators provide insight on what type of information would be helpful to them.
* The Phase 2 of tracking and reporting is about the technical process - how the information is solicited and put together.
* Dan Aubin will draft an email soliciting help and will share with Bruce to distribute through his web lists.

**WPCAG**

* No update provided

**Public Comment**

* We could distribute the topical sub-workgroup updates by email in the future. It would only work if chairs of topical sub-workgroups got the updates out, and if members of the IWG read the updates. Solicited feedback – mixed reactions. The consensus was to keep the current format of providing oral reports during these monthly meetings.

**Meeting Adjourned: 2:28 p.m.**

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 9th at 1:00 p.m.**