DRAFT Meeting Notes for the State Water Plan Implementation Workgroup
June 13, 2023; 1:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

**Members**: Virginia de Lima (Chair), Dan Aubin (DPH), Chris Bellucci (DEEP), Kelsey Sudol (Northwest Conservation District), Ally Ayotte (PURA), Becca Dahl (OPM alternate), Bruce Wittchen (OPM), Denise Savageau (CT Association of Conservation Districts), Anne Hulick (Clean Water Action), Janice Ehlemeyer (Lower Connecticut River COG)

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

**Public:** Kim Czapla (DEEP)

**Meeting Started: 1:00 p.m.**

**Topics of Discussion**

**Changes to Agenda**

* Under the Water Planning Council Recap, the group should discuss priorities.

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

* Notes from the previous meeting were approved.

**Water Planning Council Meeting Recap**

* The Water Planning Council (WPC) accepted Kelsey Sudol as a workgroup member and supported Mike Dietz as a co-chair.
* The WPC is holding a retreat on Wednesday, July 12th in lieu of the July meeting which would have fallen on July 4th. The tentative location for the retreat is at Dinosaur State Park. Virginia agreed to facilitate and will collect feedback on what the goals and outcomes of this retreat should be. A possible goal of this meeting could be to reassess the WPC priorities and identify information that is missing from the State Water Plan (SWP), but more direction is needed from the WPC. Many things in the plan have not been addressed yet.
* Comments on SWP priorities to consider:
	+ A possible SWP update should include action items on source water protection.
	+ There are parts of the plan that have not been addressed yet that can help the implementation of other action items (such as funding) that serve as “gears”. These specific action items should be identified and become a priority.

**Implementation Workgroup Membership**

* Members were asked to identify alternates and let Virginia know. DEEP, OPM, and DPH have identified their alternates.
* The workgroup discussed if alternates were necessary. If an alternate is not participating frequently with the workgroup, they may not be able to participate in the discussion fully. But having an alternate present would allow a quorum, although that person may need to abstain from voting. After discussing, the workgroup determined that state agencies should have an alternate. Therefore, PURA should identify an alternate and inform Virginia.

**Possible Change in Meeting Date/Time**

* Virginia and Ali Hibbard will explore other options for sharing the meeting information such as calendar invites. More information to come at the next meeting.
* Mike Dietz has difficulty getting to these meetings in the spring semester and changing the time would allow him to participate in more of this meeting.
* Overall, the workgroup was in favor of keeping the regular meeting time to Tuesdays. After some discussion, 12:15 p.m. on every second Tuesday was settled on. Virginia will communicate with Mike to confirm that this time change would work with his schedule. The July meeting will be at the regularly scheduled time of second Tuesday at 1:00 p.m.

**Should chairs of topical sub-workgroups be limited to IWG members?**

* The SWP Implementation Workgroup Organizational Plan (dated July 21, 2020) states that “it is expected that each topical sub-workgroup will be chaired by a member of the IWG.” The workgroup would like to edit or remove that language to allow non-members to participate at a higher level. The organizational plan should be updated to reflect the wants of the workgroup.
* The most flexible option would be to remove the statement from the organizational plan “recommending” that a sub-workgroup chair be a member.

**Should topical sub-workgroups actually do the work they recommend?**

* In the past, some sub-workgroups have operated by developing recommendations for others to do the work. Typically, state agencies would then implement the sub-workgroup’s recommendations. But that is not always the case -the recent annual report sub-workgroup is an example of a group that developed a workplan and completed the work themselves.
* A workgroup can make recommendations and implement those action items but having a finalized report summarizing the action items help to explain the rationale and process.
* If a sub-workgroup was tasked with doing the work they are recommending, the WPC would need to outline a specific approval process.
* In the past, we discussed workgroup closeouts – a way to formerly wrap up a sub-workgroup. That process could include a designation on if the sub-workgroup is producing a report or implementing recommendations.

**Possible new topical sub-workgroup for State Water Plan Website**

* A draft sub-workgroup proposal was shared with the IWG for review. The proposed sub-workgroup would be temporary, as it is expected that a future water director would be responsible for managing and updating the website.
* Updating the website has been a difficult process, especially since the information involved multiple state agencies, and each state agency has their own internal process for reviewing and publishing website content. The process for updating the website can be broken down into phases by identifying what can be updated quickly in the short-term, and what would be a long-term update.
* With whatever update does take place, state agencies need to be involved to access the web platform, as well as to understand the capability of the website platform. There are limitations on what type of changes can take place, and the overall architecture of the website cannot be edited. Also, there should be a way to document the progress of renovating the State Water Plan website. This can be done through screenshots.
* After discussing what the sub-workgroup would be responsible for, it was determined that the proposal as-is will not be accepted and should be edited if the group would move forward. Some website updates can take place outside of this workgroup as well.

**Outreach & Education topical sub-workgroup**

* Did not discuss agenda item

**USGS Data Collection topical sub-workgroup**

* Did not discuss agenda item

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

* Did not discuss agenda item

**WPCAG**

* No update

**Public Comment**

* No public comment

**Meeting Adjourned: 2:55 p.m.**

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