STATE WATER PLAN TASK FORCE MEETING

10:00 A.M. April 21, 2021

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Web-Ex Meeting Minutes

Task Force Members Present:

IDNR – OWR: Loren Wobig, Steve Altman, Wes Cattoor, Terra McParland
IDNR – ORC: Brian Metzke, Brennan Caputo
ISWS: Laura Keefer, Sally McKonkey, Walt Kelly, Trent Ford, Yu-Feng Forrest Lin, David
      Kristovich, Glenn Heistand
IDOT: BJ Murray, Holly Bieneman
IEPA: Michael Brown
IDPH: Brian Cox, Gerrin Butler
IWRC: Amy Weckle
Agencies not in attendance: IDNR – OMM, IDOA, IEMA, DCEO, IPCB

Non-Members Present:

USGS: Kelly Warner

The Meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. The meeting agenda, presentation and minutes are posted on the State Water Plan Task Force (SWPTF) website. The website also contains general information about the State Water Plan's history and current activity.
(https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/WaterResources/Pages/StateWaterPlanTaskForce.aspx)

Note: An Illinois State Water Plan (SWP) was first published in March of 1967 and was updated in 1984. The Task Force which compiled the 1984 report continued to meet and publish several subsequent documents to continue the planning process and to provide updated information. That State Water Plan Task Force (SWPTF) continues to meet quarterly to address issues related to the waters of Illinois. The SWPTF is comprised of state agency representatives and invited federal and local partners.

Welcome: Loren welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending and participating in this effort. The agenda was reviewed and approved with no changes. Loren apologized but he must leave at 11:20. Loren reminded the group that this report is a spotlight that acts as a strategic plan of water issue priorities for the next five to ten years. It appears that some stakeholders might believe that the SWP has more power in that it sets policy or becomes governance. The plan is an outline of goals and objectives which then recommends strategies for implementation. However, the plan in and of itself does not institute policy changes or new legislation. Laura Keefer reminded the group that similar to the 1984 Plan, the next steps after the development of the report will be a deeper evaluation of selected recommendations and additional work to develop methodology for implementation. After the report publication, would be when we implement those recommendations and try to pass that legislation or make the policy changes in the associated programs.

May Public Outreach: The outreach sessions allow the public to provide input.

- The May Public Outreach meetings will be held on **May 25 (6 pm), May 26 (2 pm) and May 27 (10 am)**. (Note, the dates provided in the meeting were incorrect and were updated after the meeting to these listed dates).
- Slides with embedded audio from each group will be due on **5/7/21**. Please email to Wes (Wes.Cattoor@illinois.gov). If the slide is too large for email, contact Wes and we can use the State's ftp site. Each Critical Topic's committee will be allowed 2.5 minutes to discuss their (DRAFT) recommendations. The goal of the last outreach was the issues so focus more on the recommendations for this outreach effort.
- You can use more than one slide but will be limited by the 2.5 minutes. No sample slide format is provided for this round. Each committee can also provide a copy of the written text if that is feasible.
- Wes asked Brian, Terra and Steve if they were available for hosting the meetings. Wes will reach out separately for confirmation. The hosts will set up Web-Ex meetings for those dates and times.
- The meeting format will be the same as the previous outreach effort with the public reviewing the slides before the meeting. During the meeting, there will be separate web-ex links for detailed discussion about the 13 topics.
- Loren/Wes will develop an introduction and the meeting will end with an overview discussion for all participants to attend.

Outreach Feedback: Discussed how to get the best feedback from this round of outreach.

- Will we generate another public survey? Another option might be to have people email the group leader with comments. Or they can send comments using the general Task Force email.
- Several members thought we should provide the email and survey options as before to continue to show that we are soliciting public input.
- The survey will ask for input about each recommendation and if any are missing. The survey will restate the recommendations and ask for input for each.
- Send Wes each groups list of recommendations on **5/7/21** to be incorporated into the survey.
- As part of the survey, we should ask, "How do you see including environmental justice and social equity" into each recommendation. Maybe also similarly ask about climate change or any other cross cutting issues.
- Due to the zero responses last time and lack of time for preparation, we will not provide a Spanish language version of the survey.
- The public comment period will end June 18, 2021.

Section Templates:

- Next, we looked at 3 formatting templates for each group to use when generating their section of the report.
- The main headings for the section will be Overview, Issues, and Recommendations. Section length will be 2-4 pages. Also include some graphics to provide interest in the report.
- The group liked Option 10 with a few changes
  - Instead of 5- and 10-year plans, use near-term and long-term.
  - Add some color changes to the recommendations table line by line.

- o Separate the Issues heading into more narrative form but keep the recommendations in the table under a new Recommendations Heading.
  - o Also include social/environmental issues discussion in the Issues narrative.
  - o Note if the item needs further study.
  - o Change Legislation needs column heading to Action Items and cover more additional items in this column including legislation needs and further study.
  - o To not make the recommendations column too long, add footnotes to table for if additional information needs to be added to the recommendation. R
  - o It was suggested to show the magnitude or range of funding needs for the recommendations when feasible. This will help the General Assembly in making decisions about prioritization.
  - o Topics will be the term for the 13 priorities developed for this report. Issues and related recommendations will be the subset of the topics.
- Fu-Yung suggested showing how all the issues connect to each other in a spiderweb type graphic. This can also be used to show how the recommendations overlap. The issues graphic would be in the overall report introduction and recommendations graphic would be in the report conclusion. The recommendations graphic will show what is in common and that would be a point of future collaboration and pulling together resources as well. Laura Keefer and others will draft an example for group input, and we can share it with the public at the third outreach meeting.
- A question was raised about if programs are already in existence but just not funded or taking a solution far enough, does it need to be outlined in the report? The group felt it should be listed. If it is a program already funded and very important, but no changes are recommended, no need to address in this report.

Social and Environmental Justice:

- The group was provided links to several articles since the last meeting. The group felt they were helpful but the topic itself is overwhelmingly complex and difficult to know the best way to address them adequately.
- The groups were reminded to include these subjects when both identifying sub-issues and providing recommendations.
- While these 2 issues are very big and important, we do have to be careful in that we incorporate these issues but don't make the report be only addressing these issues and lose sight of the overall SWP goals.
- Yu-Feng will provide a few more articles for the group.
- Terra reminded the group that we should try to make sure we address all 3 of the following equity parameters: income, racial and ability.
- Wes asked for help formulating the Social/Environmental questions for the public survey and Laura suggested reaching out to Laura Peek (from one of the links sent to the group) as someone to help. Laura will reach out for input.
- It was reminded that at the last meeting it was suggested to bring in experts from these fields to review the final report to make sure injustice has been adequately addressed.

Other:

- **Retirement:** The group thanked Sally McConkey for her many years of serving on the Task Force and committees and we wished her well for her retirement. She will be active as a public participant for the SWP in the future. A new member, Glenn Heistand, will represent ISWS in future meetings and committees.

- **Environmental Group Memo:** Several environmental groups collaborated to send a memo to IDNR requesting the following:
    - *This Plan needs to provide more and improved opportunities for experts to give meaningful feedback.* Several of these groups have joined the various subcommittees but they felt they were not getting input into the final issues and recommendations. The SWPTF felt that was not the case and that input was being solicited and included in the issues and recommendations.
    - *The Task Force should improve its outreach methods in order to increase public engagement.* Ideally, we'd all prefer face-to-face meetings but that is not possible now. The SWPTF felt that the outreach sessions were the best format that could be used due to the COVID restrictions and that we had received a multitude of comments with the public survey. We will continue these efforts. We felt the question and answer period of the outreach meetings was very important which is why we made sure all the leads were in attendance. Due to the different technical levels of understanding amongst stakeholders, some will always feel outreach is too technical and some will feel it is not detailed enough.
    - *Incorporate guiding values and principles into the final recommendations.* The Task Force is concentrating on pulling Social and Environmental Justice and Climate Change into all the critical topics. The survey will request additional input into these areas and how to make sure these issues are adequately addressed. Other issues of concern include sustainability, adaptive management, and ecosystem integrity. Each section should also look at those issues if they apply.
    - Loren and Wes will respond to the memo based on today's discussion. Wes also reminded the group to continue pulling in public comments into their sections. Committee leads can also reach out to some of the individuals directly if needed for more clarification or details to the comments.

Schedule: The schedule was reviewed. The schedule can be used as a framework to help groups keep on task.

Red font = Committee Deadlines; Blue font = Public Outreach Meetings; Green font = Task Force Meetings

Developing Recommendations Phase
May 7 – Submit Committee's slide and list of recommendations
May 25, 26, 27– Public Outreach on report recommendations
June 18 – Close public comments period
July 14 – SWPTF meeting – Discuss comments and next steps
Aug 31 – Finalize recommendations

Final Report Phase
Sept 8 – SWPTF meeting – Discuss draft report and outreach (Tentative)

Oct 11 – Submit Committee's Draft Section
Oct 30 – Combined Draft report developed
Nov 17 – Final Public Outreach on draft report
Dec 8 – SWPTF meeting – discuss final report needs
Dec 31 – Publish Report

Discussion of Next Steps:

- Groups that haven't completed their Background narrative need to finish.
- Next, all groups will generate draft recommendations slide and narratives (due 5/7/21)
- Committee leads need to attend the Public Outreach meetings or find a substitute.

Activities to be Completed and Next Meeting Outline: The next meeting was set for **July 14, 2021 at 10:00 A.M**. to be held at the IDNR building in a room TBD or via Web-Ex depending on COVID-19 restrictions at that time. The agenda will include a discussion about the Phase 2 public comments, connectivity exhibits, how to make the SWP dynamic/updateable, and add-on reports.

The meeting was concluded at 11:52 A.M.