

STATE WATER PLAN TASK FORCE MEETING

10:00 A.M. February 10, 2021

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Web-Ex Meeting Minutes

Task Force Members Present:

IDNR – OWR: Loren Wobig, Steve Altman, Rick Pohlman, Wes Cattoor, Terra McParland

IDNR – ORC: Brian Metzke, Seth Love, Leon Hinz

ISWS: Laura Keefer, Sally McKonkey, Walt Kelly, Trent Ford, Yu-Feng Forrest Lin

IDOT: BJ Murray

IEPA: Michael Brown,

IPCB: Anand Rao

IDPH: Brian Cox, Charles Jones

IWRC: Amy Weckle

Agencies not in attendance: IDNR – OMM, IDOA, IEMA, DCEO

Non-Members Present:

IFB: Lauren Lurkins

USGS: Kelly Warner

MAC: Rick Twait

MWRD: Ed Staudachere

ILGA: Brady Burden

General Attendance: Mike Sullivan

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 also mentioned that lately there has been both public and political awareness about water issues in IL. Specifically, the Joliet water supply alternatives have been in the media so the Governor's office has been asking questions about the State's policies on water issues. There have been several other highly covered projects (Brandon Road – invasive species, Upper Mississippi River Plan, etc.). All together, they are showing why the SWP is so critically needed for planning.

Issue Identification:

- The main sub-issues as identified and finalized by each committee will be due Wes (Wes.Cattoor@illinois.gov) by 3/8/21.
- Will there be a limit to the number of subtopics? No limit but remember that the SWP should encompass changes needed in the next 5-10 years and focusing mainly on the next 5 years. The Issues are not to be all encompassing. Also, the SWP can spotlight areas that require more research before recommendations/solutions can be generated.
- Should we add a time frame to the sub-issues (i.e. short-term and long-term)? Each group can recognize other issues that are not deemed a priority now but should be dealt with in future SWPs. Also, keep in mind that some long-term goals have short term steps that need to be completed now to be sure to include those as well.
- Should we identify the impact of the problem (i.e., local, state, federal, etc.) to get outside state support? Our intended audience is the IL General Assembly.
- Should we add recommendations about potential partners (state agencies, foundations) to assist the decision makers with other ideas for implementation? That would be difficult to address for each item since there are so many interested partners and some are interested in all the issues. Plus, partners might be inadvertently left off. Perhaps this can be addressed in the introduction. However, it was noted that each section should identify the lead group that should carry out each recommendation.
- It was mentioned that we should lay out milestones and goals for completion to better help determine success.

Report Format:

- Each section will be 2-3 pages and will include Background, Issues, Recommendations (now and future) with embedded graphics and photos for interest.
- Each group can reference other documents or put data/detailed information in the Appendix if more information is required.
- We want to create a dynamic product, but the report is a static delivery. Future discussion will be held about making a website which can be updated more frequently as the recommendations are implemented.
- A template for each section would help each group provide report consistency. Volunteers were solicited to submit a template for review. Laura Keefer and Wes Cattoor will submit a sample template by the end of February. Please email specific template suggestions to Laura or Wes if you have ideas or samples that have worked for other multi-group reports.

Social and Environmental Justice:

- The groups were reminded to include these subjects when both identifying sub-issues and providing recommendations.
- Should this be its own topic? This is an overarching issue for all topics, so it is best folded into each section of the report and how it relates to each specific issue. In lieu of a separate section, it was suggested that an overall introduction/discussion of injustice should be provided in the report introduction/overview. Rick Twait suggested that Social justice might be incorporated into the plan by articulating general principles and strategies, and having a group similar to a citizen's utility board.

- What resources are available to the committees to help the groups understand these issues? CMAP has prepared a GIS mapping tool which designates income levels, unemployment, minority status, etc.) that can be reviewed by each committee. Loren and Yu Feng Forrest Lin will put together a 1-hour webinar on these issues that will be open to all the committee members to better understand injustice concerns and their impacts. If anyone has any contacts for speakers, please email to Loren or Yu-Feng.
- In addition, it was suggested to bring in experts from these fields to review the final report to make sure injustice has been adequately addressed.

Public Outreach:

- The public outreach efforts (web-ex outreach meetings and public survey) were very successful. The Public Survey response period was closed on 1/15/21. We received over 700 separate responses to the public survey and 14 general emails. The summary of the survey responses has been compiled and sent to each committee leader. Each leader is encouraged to review the responses and share comments related to their issue with their committee and incorporate the suggestions into their section. The emailed responses have been forwarded to the appropriate leads.
- For pulling in the review comments, Lauren Lurkin suggested to not cherry pick the responses but provide some sort of responsiveness summary. It would not be feasible to respond in writing to each comment. Suggestions for incorporation included bringing all responses into the Appendix but that would be a lot since there will be 2 more public outreach efforts. It might be better to include the summaries only of the responses into an Appendix. Another option is to put the comments into buckets/themes and create responses to those themes. Leon Hinz suggested that responses to each comment might not be as important as showing the public how their comments were used and/or incorporated into the SWP. Each group should consider this aspect when writing their section. Rick Twait suggested that a strategy for maintaining and incorporating public input might be helpful to keep the plan moving forward. This issue will need to be resolved in the future.
- Unfortunately, no Spanish language surveys were completed so efforts needed for translating should be re-evaluated in the future. One reason for no response might be due to self-identification in the survey. While the survey was in Spanish, no other materials related to the background or website were provided so that might also be part of the issue. Perhaps one of the goals in the study should be to translate the reports and website into other languages. Armand Rao mentioned that there are new rules requiring the IPCB to provide translation services at public meetings and to require documents to be translated upon request. He will send Loren and Wes information about the rule.
- The next Public Outreach meetings will be held on 5/11 (10:00 am), 5/12 (2:00 pm) and 5/13 (6:00 pm). The last day's meeting time was changed from 5:00 to 6:00 to allow people to get home from work. The recommendations will be reviewed at this outreach event and will follow the same web-ex format as the ones in December. Each group will generate pre-recorded slides for the presentation (1-3 slides).

Other:

- **USGS Coordination:** Kelly Warner from USGS indicated that their group has received a grant as part of the Next Generation Water Observing System study which has an emphasis on the IL

River Basin. As part of their initial stakeholder outreach, it was suggested they meet with the SWPTF to see how to collaborate and align the goals for both projects. Kelly and Wes will coordinate a meeting for the end of February or early March for a meeting for those interested in collaborating.

- **Additional Outreach:** Loren and Wes have been providing group outreach presentation about the SWP upon request. If you know of anyone interested direct them to the website but if they want more information, let Wes know and he can schedule outreach. During the meetings, they are letting groups know that they can reach out to the topic leads with further questions.

Review of Schedule: The schedule has been revised since the last meeting. 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

Identifying Issues Phase

Feb 28 – Report Templates due

Mar 8 – Submit Finalized Issues

Developing Recommendations Phase

Mar TBD - Social and Environmental Justice Webinar

April 7 – Submit Committee’s list of recommendations

April 21 – SWPTF meeting – discuss recommendations outreach

May 11, 12, 13– 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

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 final issues (after incorporating Public Survey responses) (due 3/3/21) and then prepare their recommendations (due 4/7/21)

Activities to be Completed and Next Meeting Outline: The next meeting was set for April 21, 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 report template, public outreach slides and remaining SWP report tasks.

The meeting was concluded at 11:40 A.M.