

STATE WATER PLAN TASK FORCE MEETING

July 11, 2022

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Web-Ex Meeting Minutes

Task Force Members Present:

IDNR–OWR: Loren Wobig, Wes Cattoor, Rick Pohlman, Steve Altman, Megan McKinney, Wei Han

IDNR–ORC: Brian Metzke, Brennan Caputo

ISWS: Laura Keefer, David Kristovich, Walt Kelly

IEPA: Scott Twait, Jeff Edstrom, Gary Bingenheimer, Christine Davis

IDOA: Michael Woods

IDPH: Brian Cox

IEMA: Zachary Krug

IDOT: BJ Murray

Agencies not in attendance: IDNR–OMM, DCEO, IPCB, IWRC

Non-Members Present:

Kelly Warner, USGS

The Meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. The meeting agenda, meeting recording 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 July meeting and thanked everyone for attending and participating in this effort. As Terra was absent, Wes handled most of the moderation. Wes did point out that Terra is continuing to compile all the edits to make sure they are ready to hand over to the stakeholders, and NGO’s. A topic of focus is the upcoming public meetings and what form those will take.

Upcoming Public Meetings

A preliminary report is being sent to the stakeholders shortly for their feedback to make sure that we’ve addressed the things they want addressed and ask for their feedback by the end of July which will allow us to finalize the report itself.

Laura brought up that there was a Supreme Court ruling recently that related to public waters. She summarized that the Supreme Court affirmed that private ownership of private waters is private ownership. Basically, that means you can’t just canoe/kayak any where you want, it needs to be a public

area but sometimes even forest preserves are not considered public for the residents that live there. Loren pointed out that there's a common misconception in Illinois that the land on the water is public and the land under the water was the land owners. That is true in Wisconsin, but not Illinois. Loren clarified that the private property owner owns that water in front as the water passes from property line to property line and you are therefore trespassing if you are not on a public water. There will likely be some follow up from agencies and legislations on how this will continue to work in Illinois.

Cross sections

Wes stated that before we were trying to put into the report that we were describing issues but it was more factual vs. putting in why are we making these recommendations and giving a bit of an explanation for each one. Terra will be reaching out to the topic leads in the next few days. We want to make sure we present the best possible version of what we have to the public for the August draft publication. Wes couldn't remember if it had been discussed about a single letter that every Agency signs in agreement or were we going to do letters of encouragement from say every Agency involved and then tweak it from there? Sounds like the consensus is one letter and all the Agency's sign it.

Public Meetings

Wes said we're moving on to getting some additional feedback from stakeholders. Looking at doing some of the outreach say the 3rd or 4th week in August. Say one in Bartlett, one IDNR here in Springfield, one in Southern Illinois. BJ will check on if Carbondale has a space we can use for this. Laura mentioned she had some conflicts and BJ said he knew the State Fair was coming up, ending the 21st of August. Wes will send out a poll to gauge everyone's availability. Sounds like there may be some public outreach in the evenings which is when most of the public was available to have an opinion. BJ pointed out that the last outreach we did was at 6 PM, 2 PM and 10 AM. But those were virtual, not in person. Wes says he'll likely extend the outreach until 8 PM or so.

The format for this was 1) defining the issues, 2) laying out recommendations, and 3) present as a possible Q & A or more of an open house to answer questions that may be more specific. Wes pointed out this was not his meeting, others could agree or disagree. BJ and Zachary agreed with his proposal. Christine piped up and said it sounded more like a presentation type meeting. Wes clarified that its more in 2 parts: a presentation and the second more of an open house where more specific questions could be asked of people involved in the SWTF and talk 1:1. Christine offered up her plotter to help make posters or anything to help with the open house. She suggested boards so people can put thumbs up or thumbs down to show they agree or not. Christine said there's a lot to be covered on these boards but it can help people remember what to ask later. We want to focus on more than just the water management stuff. There are other things people are interested in like boating. 4) of the schedule is that final comments are due from the stakeholders July 31th. We'd like the report to be compiled by the first part of August so we can share during the outreach. We'll give the public until the end of September to give us their full comments, then having another task force meeting around September 19th from 9 am to 11 am.

Wrap Up

Christine asked what about the recommendations that are orphans and don't make it into the plan, and we ask one Agency to take this on and they don't? Wes said hopefully if that Agency is the lead agency they are coordinating on getting that task accomplished but if we can't come to an agreement, it would have to be removed. Christine asked who do we notify in that case? Wes said the topic lead and copy

Wes and Terra. Also perhaps Loren. The Director's office is having a bit of an issue with some of the issues that if they see this as more of a task list than a wish list in that if something isn't accomplished will they be held responsible for not accomplishing it? We're trying to make them see that these are a wishlist more so of things we want to accomplish in the future. Christine said she thinks we could give them 100 years and they'd still be trying to commit to stuff especially when we don't have the staff we need and moving into a smaller building. Christine said that the majority of the issue is they run into an enforcement or continuation of implementation of a state or federal after law. A recommendation is there to be supported or accepted by all water related agencies. Which can then be stretched into having a budget item or legislative issue.

General:

- Project Schedule:
 - NGO/Stakeholder Review, July 11 to 31
 - Public outreach and Draft Report published mid to late August
 - Draft report published in October

Schedule: The schedule will be revised and posted on the website.

Next Meeting: It was determined that the next meeting will be set for **September 19 at 9:00 A.M.** to be held via Web-Ex.

The meeting was concluded at 9:56 AM.