

STATE WATER PLAN TASK FORCE

Public Outreach #3 Meeting Minutes

August 24, 25 and 29, 2022

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Live and Web-Ex Meeting Minutes

Link to State Water Plan DRAFT report: [SWP Link](#)

Link to Presentation: [PDF](#)

Meeting No. 1 - August 24, 2022, 1:00-3:00 pm. Yorkville Public Library, Community Room, 902 Game Farm Road, Yorkville, IL 60560

Meeting Recording: [link](#)

Meeting Minutes -

Welcome: The meeting was opened at 1:02 pm; Loren opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in person and online to the meeting. He reminds people that this is for the northern part of the state and their public outreach for their part of the state. We are getting toward the end of the process and we're providing outreach for the northern part today and tomorrow will be in Carterville followed shortly by Springfield. Loren began the presentation. Q&A to follow.

Presentation:

Loren briefly recapped the first part of the State Water Survey.

- -What is the State Water Plan? It's a specific plan by State agencies to plan on addressing the water issues facing the state in an efficient and united front. It's an opportunity to step in and develop a plan and accomplish a plan to affect change within the state.
- -How is this Plan different? Social and environmental justice aspect. Updateable. Accessible to the public, annual status reports, GIS Web based data, "paper" report every 10 years.

Survey was done asking how do you plan to use the State Water Plan? 13% want to do infrastructure planning. The highest was 20% was for public education with residents. 17% regional watershed planning. We're not just trying to change state policy or its overviews. Loren turned it over to Wes Cattoor.

Wes checked on the chat, no questions at this time. Wes began with the Plan development process, got everyone together and to assign lead and supporting agencies. What are the critical issues or can we update existing? We then moved to research and outreach, identifying issues, impacting, ongoing activities. We're now combining the report and determining the next steps.

We are currently in Outreach 3. First was Dec 2020 and second was May 2021.

So, what's in this actual report? 19 sections. Section 1 is a letter from the Task Force Chair-Loren. Section 2 is Agency Support; these ideas have been vetted thru the entire taskforce and the lead

agencies. Section 3 is the introduction. Section 4 describes Social and Environmental Justice. Sections 5-17 are the 13 critical topics as narrowed down by the Task Force. Section 18 provides recommendation and cross cutting impacts. Section 19 summarizes the conclusions. Appendices are at the end.

Wes brought up an example section. Each section starts with an overview and most have 2-4 pages. Each section has a recommendations table listing the issues, recommendations, lead agency, which types of funding is required and what action is required: progress, study, policy, etc. Wes turned it over to Terra McParland.

Terra said the report is supposed to be concise and specific. She wanted to point out we can't put every single thing in there, there is more work coming but these committees that are part of this have narrowed it down to these higher priority issues and recommendations. Committees will continue to meet; progress is likely to follow.

Out of all these 13 topics, we came up with 144 separate recommendations. 112 require funding, and 23 require legislation. There should be more collaboration between agencies and sharing of information so that two agencies aren't pursuing the same information when they could be working together to get that information.

Terra gave examples of key items which were suggested by multiple agencies. When Wes talked about funding needs, we added up all the different types of funding. 27 needed 'one time funding', the highest was 'needs new annual funding' and was 48. 33 need 'increased funding'. We then looked at the different actions. 89 are tied to programs, allowing a program to be expanded and/or development of a new program. 28 require new studies. 23 need new legislation. We've assigned a lead agency to each one of these recommendations. They are just in charge of making sure that work gets done. 71/144 belongs with IDNR in total, not broken up between IDNR offices. There are other agencies involved and collaborating with IDNR.

The report will be posted today. There is a google doc form where we would like public response. You can fill it out online or email it to us. Forms and review comments should be submitted by 9/30/2022.

So, what is the State Water Plan's future? The Task Force is there to continue on with progress. It does not diminish other issues, but these are the ones we chose to focus on at this time. One of the recommendations is that the State Water Task Force is funded and that the General Assembly funds the recommendations. Work will continue updating the website. The status of each recommendation will be provided using internally defined measurable results. Some recommendations require that the General Assembly passes needed legislation.

So now we ask for your help. Provide feedback to the draft report. Share this with others. Reach out to legislatures to fund and support recommendations.

Remaining schedule:

- August- Public meetings
- Sept 30- close public comments
- Sept 19- SWPTF meeting
- Oct TBD – SWPTF meeting
- Nov 2022- publish report

Search INDR State Water Plan; there are other opportunities to participate.

Loren thanked the Yorkville Public Library for allowing us to use their facility. Thank you to the public. Thank you to the stakeholders who have come to us with their plans and ideas for their issues and the critical topic committees.

Questions:

1. An audience member asked about forever chemicals, different communities which had high levels of forever chemicals in their drinking water in Aurora and Kane County? Are forever chemicals covered in your plan? Are we addressing forever chemicals in the water plan?
Response: Within the water plan itself, water quality was one of the key focus areas. That section of the water plan aims toward those issues. IEPA is the lead agency for issues with water quality. The Plan does try and spotlight issues such as PFAS and where our focus should be with respect to water quality. Loren brought up that Christine Davis who is from IEPA and attending virtually has heard the question. Christine Davis from IEPA states that water quality monitoring is happening but we are a 'slow moving body'. We first have to find the money and the staff and the guidance on how to accomplish that. Our timeline for the State Water Plan was 5-7 years. The question originator asked if the outreach component would also be further out? Christine was talking more about water quality monitoring. She doesn't expect that public outreach will be as long. Christine suggested putting the request through in writing to route it to the correct person to get a more specific answer. Wes pointed out during the first and second outreaches that for one reason or other agencies could not support some of the ideas or if it wasn't able to be accomplished in the 5-7 window we're working with. We do have limited resources and staff. We don't want to overwhelm the report.
2. Do we have any industrial people involved in this study at all? *Response:* The water sustainability section has subcommittees which report to a chair and funnel all this information up and down within the task force to industries, local businesses; they were incorporated into that administrator group. Loren said this region of the state has a lot of focus on water supply.
3. Does the plan have any recommendations that include legislation? *Response:* Absolutely. Each agency has its own legislative links but as a Task Force we are beginning that outreach to legislation of "hey this is coming to your desk". We're preparing them. We need legislative champions for some of these recommendations so that will be a big part of moving forward on progress. We do have some scientists and engineers in the General Assembly. They've made environmental justice a key element of their platform. They are ready to advance that. Wes pointed out that Loren has had meetings with the Governor's staff about the State Water Plan and they know about it. We started the State Water Plan update during the previous Administration and the current Administration has been very supportive.
4. Does the integrated water information center already exist? How do you access it? *Response:* It exists in part. It was introduced in the 1994 plan as well but it did not come to fruition. It does not currently exist in a building form, no. U of I has drafted some legislation to find a sponsor to make that happen. Which also leads to building and funding. Terra said we envision more of a hub with links to all these places of where water resource information is located. This will be more of a clearing house.

5. An online question was asked "who are some of these legislative champions you're excited to work with, hoping will advocate for water legislation in future administrations? *Response:* We have a number throughout the state. We have State Representatives on the Fox River that focus on recreation for Chain of Lakes. Representative Foster is an engineer by trade, so he has a strong understanding of public use in our waterways. Since the critical issues and recommendations vary throughout the state, we expect many different champions depending on the issues.
6. Are you doing anything with the Great Lakes as a whole? *Response:* Yes, one of the main topics is Lake Michigan. Loren is on the Great Lakes Commission and works with neighboring states about Lake Michigan and endangered species. The group is also looking at a rapid growth in the cruise industry and tourism and what harbors could we develop? How does that tie into a grander scheme in tourism?
7. Who approves the Plan? Does the Governor? *Response:* Loren will write a letter addressing the Governor and the General Assembly bringing it to their attention as it was written by the Administration's professional staff for their consideration and that we are trying to advance this Plan. We're not really asking for their approval. Basically, here is this Plan and here is what we need to develop. There's a similar plan for energy within the state of Illinois. Approval comes with appropriation requests and legislative changes. Terra added that this is a blueprint or a roadmap. The original plan had 130 recommendations. Back in 1994, when they reviewed the status of those 130, 120 of those had some sort of action taken. The idea is we can advance the plan with emerging and changing goals. So, we can start moving, instead of just talking about it.
8. An audience member said that she has heard discussion about rerouting the Mississippi River and giving water to the arid states in the West? *Response:* It is included in the water plan in the regulatory section. We are not going to provide water to Arizona or the western states. This is from the Great Lakes Compact passed by the Great Lakes states and 2 provinces in Canada. We are actively protecting our water. IL, because we have the largest population, we get our water from a Supreme Court decree. We have about 8 million people. People from Lake Michigan and that area are all part of that Compact. We also have the UMRBA which are the 5 states above the upper Mississippi River. We actively regulate who gets to use the water out of the Mississippi River water. In addition to water availability issues, we get into a biological aspect where a biologist would say "that's a biological Armageddon". That there are tons of organisms that are not in the Western watershed. You can't just put Mississippi River water in the Colorado River.
9. Have we heard the rumor that people from the west are moving back to the Midwest because industry is running out of water? *Response:* Loren answered yes, we've heard that. Come here, we're not going there.

It is currently 2:34 pm. No new chat questions. Loren thanked those who participated online and in person. Hopefully this outreach helps people understand more about the State Water Plan, the Task Force's efforts and how they can help. We're looking forward to receiving your feedback.

End of meeting 2:35 pm

Attendees (Partial List):

BJ Murray, Ashish Sharma, Wes Cattoor, Brian Metzke, Carlie Leoni, Chloe Salk, Christine Davis, David Kristovich, Jack Curfman, Loren Wobig, Terra McParland, Vanessa Horton, Steve Altman, Joanna Colletti,

Joseph Slevnik, Matt Asselmeier, Mawa Iqbal, Paul Ruscko, Gary Bingenheimer, Rachel Birkhahn-Rommelfanger, Rick Twait, Andrew Billing, Paul Caswell, Ania Bayers, Jeff Guerrero, David Banaszynski, Anand Rao, Mary Richardson, Jodie Wollnik, Andrea Podraza, Yu-Feng Forrest Lin, Lou Ann Patellaro, Pam Goede, Richard Munson, Melissa Brown, Iyana Simba, Bruce Hill

Meeting No. 2 - August 25, 2022, 6:00-8:00 pm. John A. Logan College, Ivy Room (Rm. 104), 700 Logan College Dr, Carterville, IL 62918

Meeting Recording: [Link](#)

Meeting Minutes –

See narrative from Meeting No. 1 for general presentation discussion. Note, there were a few technical difficulties with losing audio at times.

Questions:

None.

Attendees:

Michael Woods, BJ Murray, Steve Altman, Brennan Caputo, Christine Davis, Peter Wallers, Kevin Kothe, David Kristovich, Greg Chismark, Rick Twait, Michelle Gibson

Meeting No. 3 - August 25, 2022, 10:00 am-12:00 pm. Department of Agriculture Administrative Building, Auditorium, 801 E Sangamon Ave., Springfield, IL 62702

Meeting Recording: [Link](#)

Meeting Minutes –

See narrative from Meeting No. 1 for general presentation discussion.

Questions:

1. Are we covering drilling into aquifers in the river bottom of Jersey County? *Response:* Keep in mind that this plan is on a statewide level, focusing on statewide issues so you might not see specific recommendations for a specific region or location. If you have a specific water supply question, please reach out directly to Wes Cattoor (wes.cattoor@illinois.gov). Similarly, for other specific questions, reach out to the lead or agency in charge of that issue. All topic lead emails are on the State Water Plan website.
2. Are all three public outreach sessions identical? *Response:* Yes, the presentation will be the same and each meeting is being recorded and will be uploaded to the website. However, the question and answer sessions will vary.
3. An individual brought up a different way of looking at measuring progress. By making it more a measurable priority system, such as the % of things it affects. *Response:* we didn't prioritize them that way because we didn't want topics competing. These all are the top issues. One of the first steps of the committees will be to prioritize their implementation based on funding,

support and resources. We need to prioritize for instance: disadvantage communities. Wes points out that we can make very specific recommendations but not that specific. Each topic may have a specific webpage that goes further into depth.

4. When do you propose the State Water Plan will go into effect? *Response:* We plan to give it to the Governor's office in November 2022 as a final published document so it will be effective upon publishing. Lots of initiatives are currently underway such as IWIC.
5. Are you interfacing with the Corps relative to the IL River sedimentation resulting in watershed erosion? *Response:* Wes said yes, we do have a working relationship with the Corps. The Task Force meetings are open so many times federal representatives attend so they can provide input and see where we are in the process. We are interfacing with a lot of Agencies on a federal level. Also, at a local level we have regional partners, CMAP for instance.
6. Can you please provide more insight into the proposed regional water supply committees to be established throughout the state? What kinds of issues will they address? This initiative has already started but had a slow start. The reason it is on the list is to emphasize the continued need for support for this effort. Unfortunately, there are some areas of the state where there has not been interest. So part of the task is to evaluate progress to date and see how it can be applied throughout. Perhaps expand to other issues besides just water supply. Plus some of the recommendations about water data and how to disseminate that information in a clear way will help communities have a better understanding of their supply. Ideally we want them to see who has adequate supply and who does not so they can start to develop a plan to address shortfalls.
7. Is there a draft available online? *Response:* Yes.
8. Does this plan address lead pipe removal? *Response:* Mike Brown from EPA says we have a newly passed Act requiring lead-based pipes to be replaced at a rate of 2%-7% a year but it is not specifically addressed in the State Water Plan.

Gabrielle suggested technical assistance to those who struggle with website or online forms. A phone number would also be a good idea so they could just call. Or a chat option.

Attendees (Partial):

Wes Cattoor, Terra McParland, Megan McKinney, Michael Weaver, Dave Kohn, Drew Podlewski, Patrick Keck, Bruce Hill, Gabrielle Reed, Gary Bingenheimer, Abel Haile, Colleen Ruhter, Lauren Lurkins, Brian Metzke, Deborah Williams, Jenny Whidden, Doug Splitt, Gene Felchner, Keith Alexander, Patty Wetli, Deanna Doohaluk, Jennifer Wasik, Deanna Durica, Ania Bayers, Betsy Liggett, Jennifer Gunter, Daniel Achtel, Matt Newell, Ray Lees, Jeff Sheldon, Brian Valleskey, Moses Amidei, Alana Bartolai, BJ Murray, Christine Davis, Michael Brown, David Kristovich, Wei Han, Trevor Sample, Shannon Whalen, Kelly Thompson, Dave Fuchs, David Kristovich, Dominic Kallas, Zachary Krug, Jeffrey Thompson, Oluwajen Vojo, Rick Twait