

STATE WATER PLAN TASK FORCE MEETING

April 10, 2023

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Web-Ex Meeting Minutes

Task Force Members Present:

IDNR–OWR: Loren Wobig, Wes Cattoor, Terra McParland, Megan McKinney, Rick Pohlman, Steve Altman, Tara Jagadeesh

ISWS: Laura Keefer, Walt Kelly, Trent Ford, Glenn Heistand, David Kristovich

IEPA: Jeff Edstrom, Christine Davis, Gary Bingenheimer, Todd Rettig, Michael Brown, Michael Summers

IDOA: Michael Woods

IDPH: Brian Cox, Gerrin Cheek-Butler

IEMA: Zachary Krug,

IDOT: BJ Murray, Brian McCoy

IWRC: Yu-Feng Forrest Lin

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

Non-Members Present:

Will Klingner- UMMRA

Zackary Becker - Missouri DNR:

Welcome:

Meeting began at 1:22 pm. Loren welcomed everyone to the April 10 meeting. Loren stated that we're really getting down to the business and implementation of what we've put together in this plan. He's been able to reference it a few times now including an inquiry from the Governor's office. Michigan also asked us to put something together very quickly and he was able to clearly reference certain sections of the plan.

Loren steered things toward the morning of April 19 where we will be at the IL State Museum for a quick legislative breakfast and briefing with the elected officials. The Task Force will then move over to the Capitol rotunda with our display board to answer and legislative questions. The EPA and IDNR directors will be there for sure. Anyone can join. Loren turned it over to Wes.

Minutes:

Wes brought up the minutes from the last meeting and opened the floor to any corrections or comments, Michael Woods moved to approve the minutes. Chris Davis seconded. Meeting minutes approved.

Outreach:

Wes began discussing the SWCD Roundtable and other outreach.

Wes restated that all topic leads are invited to the legislative breakfast as well as agency directors to provide comments or quick overview of the State Water Plan and what it contains. Michael says that invitations have been sent, and responses are starting to roll in. After that presentation, we will move to the Capitol Building for the remainder of the morning. Wes asked Loren if there were any other details Loren would like to add. He said there could be just a few senators to several. There has been a request to do something similar up north. Michael Woods said that the request is out there and there has been some interest from the rural districts.

Past events were given to U of I on 2/3 and UMRBA on 2/28. Steve says he presented 3/29 at the IL River's Coordinating Council.

Future events are the IL Groundwater Association 4/14 and the Legislative breakfast on 4/19. The Soil Water Conservation District on 7/17 or 7/18.

SWP Recommendations Status:

There were 147 total recommendations. 26 have been started, 29% average progression has been started. 6% average progression overall, with 10 sections reporting. Each topic lead provided a brief report for the group.

1. *Water Quality*- Michael Brown did not have anything new to add.
2. *Climate Section*- David with ISWS said things are progressing slowly. Due to a lack of state funding to support efforts, there has been little progress except for initial discussions, working on progress and especially on seeking funding.
3. *Integrated Water Management*- Loren says the Lt. Gov's office has suggested taking more ownership and beginning discussions with her office and having her office advance the Integrated Water Information Center (IWIC). Steve Altman says it is good for the coordinating council to have a place for those people to go begin asking questions. Loren says we are in the beginning stages of getting an executive order or legislative recognition for the State Water Plan so that we could start having appropriations given to us. DNR is working on interviewing and hiring staff and getting those recommendations moving. Wes said defining critical funding is vital. This would be excellent going forward to help garner support.
4. *Long Term Funding*- Todd stepped in. There were two recommendations, and the same problem is with both. We may not have the ability to mandate. We are trying to find resources to accept data in electronic form and storage and retrieval but is running into some delays with Dolt. Wes stepped back in and said that as we progress, we may find things that are no longer valid that they might need updated to include legislation changes to help mandate or they could be stricken entirely.
5. *Water Sustainability*- Wei is in training during today's meeting but they are making good progress. New contract with SWS that will address some of the recommendations. A new GIS web interface is being developed with Walt Kelly.

6. *Lake Michigan*- Ania isn't here, Loren says he doesn't have much. Ania will update soon. Loren stated we do have some new staff coming on that are going to start addressing some of these issues. We are also updating the rules. The implementation of water allocation fees did end up being a bill and is now going forward. It did show who was in support of those fees which will help us identify and work with those groups who are advocating and working with those who are more adversarial.

7. *Flood Damage Mitigation*- We are trying to get the rainfall modeling updated with a contract with ISWS and that is in process. State Water Survey is building and developing a database for survey data next year, and we hope to add SWS models and be able to add OWR models in the future. Glenn says he is just getting started talking with FEMA about ISWS coordinating to provide support for 2D modeling. Terra says inundation mapping is coming along and we are trying to get funding and projects moving for the Structures at Flood Risk (SAFR) website. The rest of the items will require a committee meeting.

8. *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat*- Brian was unable to attend

9. *Water Use Laws and Regulations*- Steve says a reuse bill just passed the house and we had a good conversation with IEPA about crossing some hurdles about getting this bill passed. It could need to be simplified and allow IEPA some more time. Loren says there are two avenues for the water reuse: non-potable water and potable water. There is some opportunity for further discussion

10. *Navigation*- Brian McCoy- BJ says the infrastructure highway freight program was just announced at \$200 million and 30% of that can be used for 6 intermodal rail port projects. There is a ferry boat plan coming about. They want to do another capital needs assessment to determine what additional projects that they haven't been able to fund. Brian joined us. He is part of marine transportation. Two of those tasks are completed 100%, the rest are ongoing. They have published a report in Nov. 2022 about the beneficial use of dredge material. BJ says there is ongoing coordination with districts regarding bridge heights.

11. *Erosion and Sedimentation*- Michael says will provide updates in the near future.

12. *Data Management*- Laura from ISWS- They are pulling together a team to assess stream gaging and figure out the scope and how to proceed with formulating proposals and assessments and reaching out to other folks who may need this. Then they need to determine who is going to fund this.

13. *Recreation*—no one is on for that section.

Terra asked Wes to scroll back up to Long Term Funding, Item 6 (adopt technology for efficiency). It is not just IEPA, it is all the Agencies that need to implement this recommendation. While IEPA is the lead, all agencies need to consider different ways to be more efficient using technological advancements and coordinate those advancements with the IEPA lead.

She also reminded the group that while one agency might be the lead, please remember that other agencies and stakeholders are involved so committees with those members need to continue meeting to implement the recommendations.

She also was curious how some people filled in funding needs, whether we were noting which FY funding is needed or denoting if its annual or one time funding as your developing these needs. She said internally, she will need a bigger table to help her track funding needs and reminded leads that funding

might be required for more than one agency. Wes was thinking if the funding is there, we don't really need to ask for it. If it's a new funding, then we need to list it.

Laura recommended adding a priority column to the table. We know we can't start everything at once and it might help the public see what may happen first or why something is happening first.

Wes asked if you can, add a percent completion. If you have estimated completion date, add that as well. Wes used his own example where he went out about 8 years as that's the designed ending point where the State Water Plan would be evaluated again.

Schedule:

Future Meetings: **July 10 @ 1:30-2:30pm- virtual**

 Oct 16- 1:30-3:30 pm- in person (virtual will still be available) at Department of Ag Building

Future Agenda: *Connectivity Exhibits

 *Make the SWP Dynamic/Updateable

 *Add-on reports

Laura suggested extending the meetings a bit to also allow inter-agency collaboration about upcoming projects. Michael Woods is going to reserve the meeting room at the Department of Agriculture Building for Oct. 16 with Oct. 2 as a fallback date.

General:

- Loren said there is pending legislation out there to students to recruit engineers. He'd be curious to see what other enticements or enhancements are out there.
- There is also outstanding pressure about levee regulations and how we regulate levees and floodwalls and the environmental impacts.
- BJ asks that were was some public use of waterways conversation a few meetings ago. Loren says it didn't make it out of committee, but those spearheading it have not given up, we are likely to hear from them again. Loren also reminded the group that the SWP has a recommendation for a public access program for non-motorized boats called the Outdoor Access for Recreation (OAR) program

Wrap Up:

Loren thanked Wes for walking us through the agenda and as he mentioned at the beginning of the meeting trying to get more of an executive order to formalize what we are and really have that support behind us. We appreciate everyone's continued support of the Task Force and hope that the one voice approach will help all of our agencies. Also, the hope is to make state government a little more effective and efficient, at least in the realm of water.

Meeting adjourned at 2:38 pm