

# STATE WATER PLAN TASK FORCE MEETING

July 8, 2024

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Web-Ex Meeting Minutes

## **Task Force Members Present:**

IDNR – OWR: Loren Wobig, Wes Cattoor, Megan McKinney, Rick Pohlman, Ania Bayers, Meg Kelly, Erin Conley, Steve Altman, Tara Jagadeesh, Wei Han,  
ISWS: Laura Keefer, Glenn Heistand, Trent Ford  
IEPA: Jeff Edstrom, Christine Davis, Nidhan Singh, Michael Brown  
IDPH: Gerrin Cheek-Butler  
IDOT: Brian McCoy, BJ Murray  
IWRC: Yu-Feng Forrest Lin  
IDNR – ORC: Brian Metzke,  
IDOA: Brian Rennecker,  
IEMA- Zack Krug  
Agencies not in attendance: DCEO, IPCB,

## **Non-Members Present:**

USGS: Kelly Warner, Amy Russell  
Jeff Thompson

**Welcome:** Loren opened the meeting at 1:31 pm. Loren spoke about Tropical Storm Beryl and its effects on Illinois and East St Louis.

**Minutes:** Loren moved to approve the meeting minutes from last quarter. Brian McCoy had sent some comments and Wes has incorporated those. All approved, none opposed. Minutes pass.

Some new legislative updates, the SWPTF has been codified and has passed the House and Senate and will be signed into law by the end of July 2024. That does a few things, by codifying it into law we can now seek appropriations for each Agency's participation and implementation. The National Floodplain Bill has also passed the House and Senate and will be signed by the end of July. These have to have an ordinance for each community and therefore we had to have our ordinance for the State of Il that might be doing any work in the floodplain. We will then begin working on administrative rules on how to carry that out.

Wes asked if anyone else has any other legislative updates? Chris Davis from IEPA spoke up and she says Director Kim has put in his retirement paperwork, James Jennings will be the acting director until a new one has been placed.

Steve says Bill 3046 with Water Reuse and will also be signed this month. Loren asked what does that bill do? Steve says it allows reuse now and it will go to EPA now for administrative rules.

**WATER USE ACT OF 1983-** Loren began with there needs to be a governance of water use laws and it needs to be there to flag others for the use of that water. But it gave us the opportunity to take a second look at how we're using the water use act and the Soil and Water Conservation District for monitoring groundwater withdraws . Based on the recommendations, we're looking at updating/amending the Water Act of 83 to really reflect the reporting and into State Water Survey and then to IWHIP for monitoring, this would look at registering water withdraws that would be more than 1,000,000 gallons per day and if you have or are pulling more than 100,000 gallons per day you would need a permit from us. We're building off of that and how to house that within DNR and collaborate with State Water Survey and Dept of Ag. The Joyce Foundation recently funded a groundwater survey in the great lakes basin and it was very telling that 5/6 of the states involved are already regulating water impacts. Wes says Loren has pretty much covered most of it, the current water use act doesn't really have anything for current water loss for large water users. That will help us evaluate if they are meeting IWIP regulations.

Brian R spoke up with Ag and said there is a chapter under Agriculture and Animals and it gives each Soil and Water Conservation District sign off authority. Those water wells that are capable of producing more than a hundred thousand gallons of water per day and when there are triggers from EPA for a high capacity well, letters are sent and then shipped to the Soil and Water Conservation District. Wes mentioned that right now essentially you have 97 different regulatory entities signing off on this and there may not be consistent decision across the 97 communities. This could solve that. Brian R says they also have high turnover at the Districts and that institutional knowledge may not be passed down. Wes mentioned that in water supply planning where its handled more at the regional level and then when they looked at nearby states, there wasn't a common practice amongst them either to evaluate water withdrawal at a county level. Brian R mentioned that there are exempt counties such as Lake, McHenry, Cook, DuPage, Will, and Kane but as Wes pointed out those are the Counties that have the biggest issues. Cook County also did until they switched off of groundwater and went back to Lake Michigan allocation. It basically needs to be studied to see if what we're doing now is working or not.

#### **SWP Recommendations Status:**

We have completed 11.5% of the 147 recommendations. Please continue to make updates.

1. *Water Quality-* Jeff E. says they have been reviewing 319 proposals and those are moving forward. The integrated report is out for public comment and what is the status of the waters in the State? The surface water section has been going out and doing a lot of monitoring and updating technology.
2. *Climate Section-* Trent says Dave is out of town. They are working on monitoring extreme weather and a weather tool kit for weather projection. They have revised bulletin 75.
3. *Integrated Water Management-* Loren says he mentioned the legislative updates already. There is redevelopment for the IMAG group and discussions have continued to be had to develop State Long term funding with stormwater. Loren asked Glenn if there was anything new about IWIC? Glenn H says that May 6 there was a conference that was discussed about groundwater aquifers. There was some legislation approved to move it one step closer.

4. *Long Term Funding*- Nidhan says the fiscal year has just ended June 30 and there are intended use plans (IUP's) and that list is now available that includes grant funding. There are lots of projects that have funding reserved until Dec 31.

5. *Water Sustainability*- Wei says they have worked with State Water Survey to have the supply water demand assessment released and was published recently. There are 5 out of 10 regions that have conducted planning activities and they will continue to work with Heartland Water Conservancy. HWC has expressed an interest in water supply planning for the bottom region. [Illinois Water Budget Vista: WSP-Supply And Demand \(arcgis.com\)](#) Grants are being explored. There is also a study of evaporation impact due to climate change and funding will start next funding cycle. Wei also pointed out that item number 7- improved water use accuracy was under Walt Kelly who has since retired and Laura said she will endeavor to find out and more to report next time.

6. *Lake Michigan*- Tara and Meg are both covering Lake Michigan today. Meg says that the Coastal Program in Chicago has been looking to work with several partners with up to \$6 million dollars. They can submit up to 3 letters of intent and they are looking for partners and ideas on what that might look like. They plan on opening a notice of open funding on a rolling basis to use some more of the federal funds. <https://www.lrd.usace.army.mil/Mission/Programs/Article/3646559/great-lakes-coastal-resiliency-study>

There is a coastal resiliency plan for the northern part of IL near WI and this is a soft launch, this is not finalized. Tara in Chicago says there has been engagement in terms of tourism and recreation <https://i-shore-idnr.hub.arcgis.com/>

Loren says there is discussion about expanding the Coastal Management staff and we are making headway there. We have been lacking a new piggybank for Water Resources; this is allowing us to develop just Water Resources matters. The governor's office has us asked to develop legislation for fees and collecting revenue for Lake Michigan water. There has also been a request to have wind energy in the Great Lakes region and some of the other states have offered their experience on how that fared in their state.

7. *Flood Damage Mitigation*- Terra is out, no new updates. There is some flooding of the Mississippi near Rock Island.

8. *Aquatic and Riparian Habitat*- Brian M had no significant updates.

9. *Water Use Laws and Regulations*- Steve says this has been touched on earlier but it could be a pathway to making sure the money from updating the Water Use Act of 83 and Lake Michigan stays within OWR.

10. *Navigation*- Brian McCoy says there are ongoing efforts supporting the navigation recommendations. They are moving forward with their study on the ports and there will be more to update at the next meeting. Planning grants are ongoing for resiliency planning and there is a grant coming thru the next award cycle. BJ just got a draft document with the Mid America Freight Coalition and IDOT provides money to them for different projects. Thru this draft they're looking to see which ports could be grown and giving electricity to some ports.

11. *Erosion and Sedimentation*- Brian R. says the main tool for deployment in their proposed funding was reduced about 48% so they're looking for new funding thru IRA funds. Also, during spring session, there was a request for new funding and it was granted.

12. *Data Management*- Laura says she has no recommendations at this time.

13. *Recreation*- Mike is not on the call, so no updates at this time.

#### New Business & Public Comments

**Closing:** There were a lot of duplicate recommendations. IDOT and Lake Michigan have resolved theirs and it is now part of Navigation. The recommendation is to look at duplicates and see if those can be tweaked. Laura says Kevin O'Brian has left SWS and Laura is currently the acting. Chris D. says she has been hearing others are feeling like they are being left out of the process. Each topic has a subcommittee and they are welcome to join the subcommittees, but we hold membership to State of IL Agency representatives. Once we are more formally organized, perhaps there can be more specific language laid out.

Loren invited the others to the Illinois State Fair in August and spoke about what will be in the tent. The meeting was ended at 2:49 PM.

#### **Schedule:**

Future Meetings: **October 21, 2024- 1:30 PM Hybrid- IDNR Lake Level A**

**January 6, 2025- 1:30 PM- virtual**

**April 7, 2025- 1:30 PM - virtual**