# **STATE WATER PLAN TASK FORCE MEETING**

## April 15, 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, Terra McParland

ISWS: Laura Keefer, Glenn Heistand, David Kristovich, Dan Hadley

IEPA: Jeff Edstrom, Christine Davis, Scott Twait

IDPH: Brian Cox

IDOT: Brian McCoy, BJ Murray

IWRC: Yu-Feng Forrest Lin

IDNR – ORC: Brian Metzke,

IDOA: Brian Rennecker

IDNR–OMM- Vicki Broomhead

Agencies not in attendance: DCEO, IPCB, IEMA

**Non-Members Present:**

USGS: Kelly Warner

Consor: Guy Carpenter

**Welcome:**

Loren opened the meeting at 1:32 pm. Loren noted that the State Water Plan Task Force codification bill is continuing its way through the General Assembly. A bill is being drafted currently in the Wetland and Small Streams Act that is being pressed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). They are calling for the creation of an advisory committee but then they decided that the SWPTF may be the better entity to name in that legislation. There is also another piece of legislation that was focused really on the Kankakee River; everything from sedimentation to economics, to job loss, to flood flows. That sponsor agreed to put that on hold. So the SWPTF is growing. We are getting greater recognition and acknowledgement.

**Minutes**:

Approval of minutes from the last quarterly meeting. No comments or edits. Terra McParland motioned; Laura Keefer seconded. All approved, none opposed.

Legislative Updates:

Loren spoke about the legislative updates, starting with the SB 2743 which is the codification of the SWPTF and passed without opposition in the Senate and is now headed to the House for approval hopefully in early May. That would put it before the Governor in late June or early July. Terra asked if there is current funding requested in place, but Loren says that they wanted to code it first and ask for appropriations second.

One of the different recommendations was an idea of developing a state revolving loan fund for storm water and along with that strengthening the IL Mitigation Advisory Group (IMAG). This Act makes federal dollars available through FEMA. It is a revolving loan fund and they are moving forward on a positive path but they are introducing it in conjunction with FEMA, IEMA, and the Illinois Finance Authority. The amount of money that could be involved could be 10-15 million for the State of Illinois.

Wes asked did anyone have any other legislative updates or questions. Glenn say that IWIC is coming along and a presentation is being presented May 6 with NPI and SWS. Laura Keefer says IWIC is being discussed in broader groups now with improved geology.

Loren says that he also wants to mention there is legislation that has passed out of committee relating to the National Floodplain Insurance Program (NFIP). Communities are required to have ordinances to have floodplain management, but the State is also required to under an Executive order, but now FEMA wants a state ordinance.

Guy Carpenter asked about the status of HB 3046 about removing the prohibition of water reuse. Loren says it is probably being endorsed by the UofI CHI who is trying to get water reuse more on the map, and that there may be pilot programs being introduced but he does not know where it sits in the legislative process. Wes asked Chris for EPA for her input. Chris says as far as she knows she is not aware of anything tracking currently. Loren asked for clarification of the HB and he said he would check with IDNR legal team about.

Quarterly Reporting & Duplicates:

Wes says that there is active movement on keeping the SWP progressing. Legislatures are interested; now that its been published, what are we doing about it? As we grow and codify, we need to make sure recommendations are being updated and sent in to see that tasks are updated.

Wes says he is starting to see large overlaps or duplicates of some of the tasks and different percentages being completed. Should those being duplicated be eliminated, or any strong opinions on what to do with these extras? Laura suggested those who are mentioned as the duplicates, get together off line and discuss if the goals are the same and see if we can eliminate the duplicate. Brian Metzke says there are some duplications and asked if Wes could send the table out so they can get together to decide how to proceed. Wes will send after the meeting.

**SWP Recommendations Status:**

1. *Water Quality*- Jeff says IEPA is working on nutrient loss production strategy and analyzing how things are going with the nutrient levels in the water. Several funding sources/grants are being pursued.

*2. Climate Section*- Dave says he doesn’t have any major changes at this point. Many recommendations are looking at external funding and that continues.

*3. Integrated Water Management*- Loren says other than what was already discussed in the beginning, they are talking about water improvement plans being discussed with communities and trying to get those recommendations moving.

4. *Long Term Funding*- Nidhan is not currently present. Jeff Edstrom says he noticed long term funding for technology was mentioned and trying to figure out the efficiencies on this duplicate. He will discuss with others regarding clearing out that duplicate.

5. *Water Sustainability*- Wei is on another meeting. Wes says the most recent update is they are progressing well and they may be entering into another contract with SWS, so there is progress. Loren says the Deputy Governor is wanting to move some of the recommendations to the Governor’s office.

6. *Lake Michigan*- Meg says she and Ania had a public interest session for the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency study and had 85 participants and gave feedback. Ania says in the past we have been limited and now that there is some new staff onboard, we may be able to move forward. Grants have been found for a few of the recommendations and federal funding is being pursued for some of these others. Ania says they have noticed that some of the recommendations are actually hard to track currently and they may need to alter their recommendations into something more trackable. Wes says that recommendations can be changed but just to let him know what they are. There is no formal process.

7. *Flood Damage Mitigation*- They have updated the rain fall data contract and should be finished in about 6 months and that will be helpful projecting new information and being able to predict future rainfall.

*8. Aquatic and Riparian Habitat*- Brian Metzke said there is legislation being suggested to protect wetlands that are not currently in the Climate Act. That bill has been through a few different amendments, and it is currently SB 771 as of this writing. The premise is that wetlands that are not already protected will be protected after this and will help develop administrative rules. This will likely go to vote in the spring session. Loren says subcommittees could be formed in the future for this.

9. *Water Use Laws and Regulations*- Steve is not on the call today. Steve’s notes say that there is legislation being passed through, that Loren spoke on earlier. Groundwater regulations are being discussed in regard to the Water Use Act of 1983 but is it specific enough? Is it doing enough?

*10. Navigation*- Brian McCoy says that the Clean Ports Program is coming out from the US EPA . There is coordinated effort to increase the success of awarded funding for IL waterways through US DOT Maritime Administration grants. IDOT is working to quantify the progress made in the State Water Plan Navigation section. IDOT is looking at options to make improvements in marine education and to increase outreach to stakeholders.

11. *Erosion and Sedimentation*- Brian Rennecker there was a SB 1701 about soil health and it was passed last year. There is now funding for that. There are 2 grants currently being spent to build conservation pipelines so they are currently working on building up staff. Those staff have since transitioned to other Agencies. There is a cover crop technology with drones under consideration now and they are working with IEPA working to reduce greenhouse conduction. Loren says they are currently looking forward to the IL State Fair and asking if Ag has anything they want to add or help volunteer during the fair with the IAFSM stream table or anywhere else in our climate change driven tent. Brian says they are supposed to have a rainfall simulator over at the State Fair. Terra asked if Brian could tie some of these grant opportunities and progress directly with his SWP recommendations for the next meeting. Plus provide a summary of the new grant to be shared with the rest of the group so that others may seek funding.

12. *Data Management*- Laura would like to coordinate with Brian regarding grants. She thinks this could help with her stream gaging.

13. *Recreation*- Seth is not on today. There is no one to speak for recreation.

New Business & Public Comments

Wes opened up the floor for new business or public comments. Loren says there is update regarding Guy’s question earlier, that bill has passed both the house and senate and IEPA is still offering some comment of concern. This may begin to bring in water reuse with drinking water. And secondly, we were approached by an off shore wind company that does off shore floating platforms in Lake Michigan and they are being suggested again. There is no one here from the general public. There could be a discission at the next meeting about the due to the codification of the SWPTF about assigning officers, developing voting rights and such.

**Closing:** The meeting was ended at 3:01 PM.

**Schedule:**

Future Meetings: **July 8, 2024- 1:30 PM- virtual**

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

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