

Ground Water Luncheon Roundtable

Advisory Committee on Water Information

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Herndon, VA

Participants:

1. Bob Schreiber, ASCE – luncheon roundtable leader
2. Emery Cleaves, AASG
3. Bill Cunningham, USGS
4. David Denig-Chakroff, AMWA
5. Bob Hirsch, USGS
6. John Jansen, NGWA
7. Sue Lowry, ICWP
8. Darrell Osterhoudt, ASDWA

Scribe:

1. Chris Reimer, NGWA

Work Groups:

Potential Organizations and Entities to Reach Out for Work Group Volunteers:

- **Water Utilities:** Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies is composed of large water utilities. While many use surface water, many also have ground water wells for back-up. It is important for utilities to know local conditions. It would also be helpful if utilities had information on what is available and what other people are using in the way of models. David is willing to help in outreach to AMWA and may be able to get involvement of individuals from Wisconsin. Ken Bradbury was mentioned as someone who is working in Wisconsin that may be beneficial to ask to participate. Other suggestions in the water utility area for outreach include: American Water Works Association and National Rural Water Association.
- **State Involvement:** Darrel indicated that he hoped to be able to recruit some state people. Ground water systems are typically small. It is important for someone to put information together to assist them as their resources are more limited. SOGW can serve a useful purpose and it would be beneficial for the states to work with the Subcommittee.
- **Agriculture and Manufacturing:** Luncheon roundtable participants suggested others to involve including high capacity well users, e.g. agriculture and manufacturing. Possibilities raised in the agriculture area are ground water management districts, but these may not cover all areas. The Irrigation Association was mentioned. They include individuals involved in agriculture and landscape irrigation.

- Modelers: A general suggestion was to involve individuals with expertise in ground water modeling. Where modeling has been done, it may help identify where there is a problem. Potential users of ground water modeling information may also be potential funding sources for development and maintenance of the models.
- Energy Sector: A question was raised about the potential interest of state oil and gas agencies. The Ground Water Protection Council, which is an active member, has representation in this area. The petroleum geologists (AAPG) might also have an interest.
- Other: The American Ground Water Trust was mentioned as a possible participant.

Outreach Ideas

- Suggest wait for blurb to come to undertake outreach efforts to potential volunteers
- Very helpful to have one page fact sheet on what work group is going to do. Possible components of fact sheet are:

Goal
Value – direct or indirect
End product
Timeline or time commitment involved in participating in work group
Identification of conference calls or required trips

Potential Issues, Questions or Approaches to Work:

- Look at water use, with the idea of focusing monitoring to where water is being used.
- Is water rights a topic that will or should be covered? Will research on how states administer or regulate ground water be part of this project?
- Water rights are a major dividing line. May want to put out to side and come back to.
- Contact Western States Water Council – recollection is that they did a report a couple of years ago summarizing state water rights systems.
- Is the SDWA's wellhead protection and source water protection programs a driver in getting data? Comment made that source water protection may not necessarily

trigger data collection. Additionally, the data may be very locality specific. The data may be very good in certain parts of a state.

- Wyoming is trying to get ahead of the curve by looking at areas where withdrawals are having an impact and proactively manage in those areas.
- In Kansas, they are trying to buy back water rights in areas that are over allocated.
- Subcommittee should look at drivers as there may be different monitoring needs or approaches based on those differing drivers.
- Ecology in some cases is driving monitoring because of the effects on surface water flow from ground water withdrawals. Volume of available ground water may be less relevant than its impact on surface flow. Florida may be a source of potential participants in this area as the state is looking at impacts on stream flow.
- Wisconsin has formed an advisory council looking at how the state should manage ground water. The Wisconsin effort is a good example of coordination among groups and people.
- Focus should also be on ambient quality of “major” aquifers rather than localized ground water quality data.
- Important to define and identify aquifers.
- Consider whether to narrow down work to areas of major demand, e.g. population, major water use, eco-system impacts, instead of addressing whole nation.
- Accessibility to data may be different among states and some groups may be reluctant to provide data.
- Important to have a good goals and objective statement defined for each work group. After this is drafted, then charge them to refine that statement.
- Suggestion made to narrow down inventory gathering to those water quantity networks that have at least five wells and that have data publicly available on internet. A caution was raised not to put too many limitations on inventory effort, such as restricting inventory to only those with data available on web. A lot of data is held currently in non-electronic form.

Inventory Efforts

Outreach List:

- A potential list of organizations to contact regarding inventory, either that they may have or know who to contact, include:

USGS

USEPA

State Geologists

Western States Water Council

Association of State Drinking Water Administrators may not have data but would know which agencies to contact

ICWP – developed a list of state water quality and quantity contacts and also interstate contacts.

Municipalities

- Regulatory Drivers to Data Generation:

Regulatory programs identified that may trigger monitoring include:

SDWA

UIC

Office of Surface Mining

Superfund

RCRA

UST

Note: The last three were viewed as providing localized data or very limited amounts of data that may be stored in a file cabinet with little organization.

- Inventory Gathering Process

Suggestion made that burden of gathering information should be on work group rather than on state agency. If a survey is done it should be no more than one page.