

ACWI Workgroup on USGS Monitoring Challenges in a Shrinking Budget Environment Teleconference

25 Nov 2013, 1:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Peter Evans, ICWP	Mike Yurewicz, USGS	Marie Garsjo, ACWI-SOS
Wendy Norton, USGS	John Wells, ACWI-SWRR	Chris Reimer, NGWA
Ben Pratt, SRBC	Darrell Osterhoudt, ASDWA	Pixie Hamilton, USGS
Brandon Kernen, ASDWA	Judy Campbell Bird, ACWI-NLC	
Dave Carlton, ASFPM	Bob Schreiber, ASCE	
Mary Musick, GWPC	Tony Willardson, WSWC	

General Discussion

We do not yet have a draft PowerPoint for use at the ACWI meeting; we need clarity on what we want to include in the verbal report to ACWI. We have a lot of information to cover, since we've held 30+ meetings and have assimilated a lot of information about the USGS water mission in general and water monitoring programs specifically.

Question: Do we expect that we will make further revisions to our report, based on the reaction from ACWI? Answer: there will be some discussion at the ACWI meeting that may result in revisions to the final report. The report's final form needs to also consider the needs of USGS and DOI.

The report to ACWI needs to include at least 1 hour for Q&A and discussion. The full presentation (including Q&A) would probably take half a day. We would also be wise to pre-brief ACWI members prior to the ACWI annual meeting, and to make sure that ACWI members receive a copy of the report ahead of time. Wendy will talk with Anne Castle during development of the ACWI meeting agenda, to figure out how much time we want to allocate to this topic during the meeting.

ACWI nominations are still being vetted by the DOI Office of White House Liaison, and we cannot hold a meeting until that process is complete. At this point, we're looking at the possibility of having an ACWI meeting during February 2014.

Review of Draft Outline for Workgroup Report & Ideas Provided from the Workgroup

We started with the November 4 version of the report, which was distributed to the workgroup on November 5 via email.

We ended last session with a discussion and rewrite of Recommendation 12. Upon further consideration, the earlier version of Recommendation 12, which directed ACWI/USGS to make a clear commitment to establishing a process to consult with stakeholders to ensure that we're not neglecting new ideas and new technological innovations, was restored. These innovations should, ultimately, result in cost savings (though we need to define what constitutes cost savings).

Question: Does this need to focus just on USGS, or also on other agencies/organizations that invest in water data collection and water science? Answer: An ACWI subcommittee established to address the need for innovation can/should address all of them, and not just USGS.

Subcommittee on Sedimentation has some projects that mesh well with this innovation concept, so maybe the topic could be better handled by existing ACWI subcommittees, rather than by establishing a new subcommittee. We should acknowledge that we have not looked at how much the existing ACWI subcommittees are dealing with this issue or coordinating among themselves regarding this issue.

We know that SOS and NWQMC are looking at leading-edge technologies and techniques in hydrologic monitoring, but we don't know the extent to which other ACWI groups are doing this, or the extent to which the Federal and State agencies who collect water data are dedicating resources to innovation. We need to make sure that a specific ACWI focus on this doesn't dilute the targeted efforts already underway within the current ACWI subcommittees. Each of the ACWI subcommittees needs to make a targeted effort in this area, first reviewing their Terms of Reference to make sure that this issue falls within their scope.

The workgroup concern for innovation is also related to the agency opportunities for attracting new talent. Workgroup participants sense that the federal agencies have not done a good job of attracting new talent into the sciences. We can suggest a general approach to this topic in our report, and let ACWI figure out how to implement it within the ACWI subcommittee structure, according to the type of work each subcommittee is already doing in this area.

Make sure our recommendation says that USGS needs to include input from other agencies and non-Federal stakeholders, to share in discussions about innovation in monitoring. Also, may need to provide incentives (financial?) for people to bring in new technologies.

Maybe at the next ACWI meeting we can have each of the subcommittees showcase the type of work they are already doing to address the need for innovation.

Maybe the workgroup report should emphasize the **reasons** why we feel it's necessary to have an innovation subcommittee (or task force, whatever), rather than prescribing **how** the innovation subcommittee should be formed/implemented. Then ACWI can decide the best method for establishing this group.

See attached draft for write-up that resulted from the discussion outlined above.

Next steps

Do we need to meet again? Perhaps when we have a PowerPoint for ACWI that we can walk through?

The current version of the report will be sent to the full workgroup, along with the minutes from this meeting and the potential graphic (hydrologic cycle).

Marie Garsjo and Bob Schreiber have volunteered to help Peter with the first draft PowerPoint presentation for ACWI. A first **draft PowerPoint will be sent to the whole workgroup in the middle of December. Next meeting will be January 6.**

The ACWI meeting may not occur until February, so we have that long to finish putting together our presentation.

Adjourn