

Draft Minutes
Subcommittee on Ground Water Meeting/Teleconference
Monday, June 15, 2015

Participants: Bill Cunningham, Bob Schreiber, Lauren Schapker, Brandon Kernen, Cary Betz, Mary Musick, Pat Lambert, Greg Oberley, Tom Patton, Daryll Pope, Gary Rowe, Mike Wireman

Agenda: Agenda was approved without revision.

Previous Minutes: Minutes from April 20th and May 18th meetings were approved without revision.

Announcements: Bob mentioned he had the opportunity to meet with CIDA on recent travel and enjoyed meeting Jessica's team.

Status Report NGWMN Cooperative Agreement: Daryll provided a progress report on the status of creating the competitive grant program and noted the building blocks are slowly, but surely coming in to place for a long-term program. In particular, the program has received its CFDA number (#15-980) and the program announcement has an estimated release date of late August, pending approval from the Office of Management and Budget. If the release date holds, proposals would be due at the end of October, with a targeted date for awards in early 2016. The SOGW discussed questions over the particulars of the program announcement, including when the funds would come through to the states, which would likely take place in early spring. The competitive grant process would be open to all states.

In terms of the non-competitive agreements with existing providers, progress has been made in forming agreements with four states: Utah, Montana, Texas and Illinois. Several additional states are working with USGS to get agreements in place, including OR, AZ, DE and SC. USGS targeted "low-hanging fruit" by talking to existing pilot states and others who have solid networks in place.

Bill noted the number of behind the scenes activities that have been underway to get a strong foundation for the program in place and commended Daryll for his efforts.

Bob asked for clarification on the proposals that South Carolina and Delaware's Department of Agriculture are submitting. The Delaware proposal could be the first for the NGWMN that links impacts of irrigation to the network. South Carolina's proposal would provide more regional diversity for the network and could provide both quality and quantity data.

Bob suggested the SOGW consider a future agenda item to discuss those entities that may be interested in applying for funding but have not or may not fall into the traditional model of an applicant (i.e. State agency). Current candidates for discussion are:

- Cape Cod Commission
- State of Florida's Water Management Districts (noting Rick Copeland's FDEP/FGS-based statewide network)

Status Report Water Quality Pilots: Greg provided an update on a recent meeting with Wyoming, where they continue to make progress with site selection. He provided them with the draft tip sheet on the issue and noted that Greg Bowden with WY USGS is also involved. They have both water level and water quality available.

Daryl asked the New England office for an update on their pilot and reported that they're in the middle of their first sampling event. He also discussed Utah's progress, where they have undergone multiple rounds of sampling. Greg clarified that Utah is on either its fourth or fifth round of sampling.

The SOGW discussed Wyoming's pilot, noting there are some challenges with getting water quality data on the portal. Bill suggested having a separate call with Greg and Mike Wireman to discuss this issue further.

Status Report NGWMN Portal: Daryll filled in for Jessica and provided an update on improvements to the portal made during a May release. The portal now has separate attributions for well construction and lithology, and there are filters to discern springs from wells and to differentiate between confined and unconfined wells to help understand drought and climate impacts. Jessica's team also cleaned up the interface on the portal and will be adding the tip sheets to the portal during the next update. Daryll also noted that a tip sheet is being created to help data providers learn the basics on setting up web services.

Tom Patton asked about concerns over delays between log-in and accessing data on well points, and it was determined that the recent upgrades released at the end of May should have cleared up any problems. Daryll also let the SOGW know that the portal has a link to contact the web administrator if there are issues with the portal.

Bob suggested the SOGW discuss on a future call methods for communicating with data providers on upgrades to the portal.

ACWI Annual Meeting & SOGW In-Person Meeting: Bill provided an update on planning an ACWI annual meeting and let the SOGW know that the ACWI is targeting August, but a date has not been chosen. Bill proposed that the SOGW work to schedule a meeting for a similar timeframe, in the hopes of coordinating with the full ACWI. The SOGW also discussed the possibility of hosting a meeting in a location other than Reston in the event coordination with the full ACWI is not possible.

Lauren, Bill and Bob will put together a list of invitees and a Doodle poll to begin planning the best time and location for a late summer ACWI SOGW meeting.

FY2016 Appropriations Update: Lauren gave the SOGW an update on the status of the FY2016 Interior-Environment Appropriations bill. She reported that the House Appropriations Committee press release associated with the bill spoke favorably of the NGWMN, but did not list specified funding amounts. The Senate bill has not yet been released. She also discussed the number of policy riders associated with the bill involving controversial issues like the Clean Power Plan, endangered species, and Waters of the United States that could trigger a veto threat from President Obama. However, if a bill is not able to pass before September 30th, the NGWMN would likely receive funding at the same level as FY2015.

Outreach Report: Gary Rowe arranged to have the SOGW receive a briefing from Ken Belitz at the August meeting about the NAWQA Liaison meeting. He also mentioned the National Monitoring Conference set for May 2-6 in Tampa in 2016. There has not been a session planned on the NGWMN and suggested a panel be put together on the topic. Lauren will circulate info

to the group about arranging a session, and Bill, Bob, and Lauren will meet to plan the SOGW response/approach.

Tom Patton discussed the AASG meeting that he and several other SOGW members are currently attending. Bill gave an overview of the panel on the NGWMN that he will be participating in with Tom, Dave, and John.

Mary provided an update on the GWPC Annual Forum in September, letting the SOGW know that currently no abstracts on the NGWMN have been submitted, though there is one panel planned on groundwater monitoring. She suggested someone from USGS submit an abstract to discuss the funding side of the NGWMN. Daryll Pope will submit an abstract.

Mike Wireman let the SOGW know that his editorial on the NGWMN is currently running in the latest issue of NGWA's Groundwater Monitoring and Remediation Journal.

Brandon mentioned the 2015 ASDWA conference in Fort Worth, which Lauren will add to the agenda for future SOGW calls.

Adjournment: The SOGW adjourned at 1:00pm ET with the next meeting scheduled via teleconference on July 20th, 2015