

Minutes
Subcommittee on Ground Water Teleconference
Tuesday, February 17, 2015

Participants: Bill Cunningham, Cary Betz, Brandon Kernen, Mary Musick, Dave Wunsch, Janice Hiller, Dave Larson, Jessica Lucido, Greg Oberley, Tom Patton, Daryll Pope, Lauren Schapker, Bob Schreiber, Mike Wireman, John Yellich

Agenda: Agenda was approved without revision.

Previous Minutes: Minutes from January 20th teleconference were approved without revision.

Introduction of new participant:

Mike Wireman introduced Greg Oberley to the group, as Greg will be serving as the new Region 8 EPA representative on the SOGW. Wireman noted that Oberley has been with EPA Region 8 for many years and was quite involved in the EPA study on hydraulic fracturing. He also has experience working with USGS. Oberley expanded on his work in Region 8 for the group, noting his responsibilities include coordination with the labs in Utah and Wyoming. He noted he looks forward to working with the group and would like to receive contact information of SOGW participants.

Action Item: Schapker will circulate participant contact information to the ACWI SOGW and will look in to getting updated contact information on the website.

President's FY2016 Proposed Budget

Lauren Schapker provided an update on the President's budget, noting a \$1 million increase in funding was requested for the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network. The total proposed in the budget is \$3.6 million in FY2016. She noted that because the budget is only a suggestion and Congress must appropriate the funds.

Bill Cunningham highlighted the proposed restructuring of USGS water programs beginning in federal FY16. The seven existing water programs are being restructured in to three new programs. Groundwater Resources will not exist beginning in FY2016. The three new programs are: Groundwater Surface Water Information Program, Water Availability Use Program, and the National Water Quality Program. Cunningham noted that despite the restructuring, there should not be any major changes.

Action Item: Schapker will arrange a separate call with interested non-federal parties to discuss a letter of support for the NGWMN.

Status Report—NGWMN Cooperative Agreements

Pope gave the SOGW an update on the status of developing NGWMN cooperative agreements with the states, noting the number of requirements for the Paperwork Reduction Act and privacy assessments

have been time-consuming, but are in progress. Many details on the cooperative agreements remain before RFPs can be issued to the states. The SOGW discussed how much time states may need to evaluate and respond to the RFPs, while giving USGS sufficient time to issue awards before the end of FY2015, particularly considering this will be the first time states are applying.

Additional details will be hashed out prior to the SOGW's next meeting.

Status Report—Water Quality Pilots

Wireman noted little action has taken place in Wyoming since the last conference call. He met with the WY Department of Environmental Quality, and they have decided to pursue joining the network.

Wireman will follow-up again to ensure their entry is moving forward. He also updated the SOGW on Utah, noting all is going well with EPA lab. Utah will sample 75 sites this year—all 57 sites sampled last year and 18 new sites.

Report on NGWMN Portal

Jessica Lucido provided an update on the portal. She reported she has been meeting with existing data providers to make sure data is getting to portal and that data providers are satisfied with the process. She is also in the process of updating the mediator for the portal, which will ensure new data providers can be updated easily. Her work with the mediator update is almost complete.

Outreach Report

Bill Cunningham highlighted several forthcoming outreach efforts, including the NGWA Summit during which multiple members of the SOGW will have presentations related to monitoring. Participants in the Summit will coordinate details on presentations via a separate conference call immediately following the ACWI SOGW call.

Other participants noted upcoming outreach opportunities like the GWPC Annual Forum in Oklahoma City, scheduled for 9/27-30 and an upcoming article on hydroinformatics that Jessica Lucido is working on in collaboration with Natural Resources Canada.

Mike Wireman noted his editorial on the network will be published in the next edition of GWMR, though exact timing has not been identified.

Other Business

Dave Wunsch brought up the issue of data security around the portal, noting the framework document was written without specifically mentioning the impact of hacking threats. He noted the framework may need to be updated to reflect these threats and mention may need to be made in the RFP.

Action Item: Cunningham will investigate with USGS and report at the next meeting on existing security protocols and firewalls, and the expectations on data providers.

Next meeting Monday, March 16th, and those participants attending the Groundwater Summit will meet in person in room Travis C/D.