

Minutes
Subcommittee on Ground Water Meeting/Teleconference
Monday, May 18th, 2015

Participants: Bill Cunningham, Bob Schreiber, Lauren Schapker, Brandon Kernen, Cary Betz, Chris Carlson, Mary Musick, Dave Wunsch, Jeff Davis, Pat Lambert, Dave Larson, Jessica Lucido, Greg Oberley, Tom Patton, Daryll Pope, John Yellich, Mike Muse, Beth Moore, Bill Bates

Agenda: Agenda was approved without revision.

Previous Minutes: Minutes from April 20th meeting will be postponed until June meeting for approval.

Announcements: Bob asked those new attendees to this call, Beth Moore and Bill Bates, to provide brief introductions to the group. Beth, a hydrogeologist at DOE, noted she is interested in tracking development of how NGWMN information contained in the portal could be utilized by existing public databases at DOE. Bill, a geologist in EPA's OGWDW who focuses on underground injection control, is interested in learning more about how his office could utilize the NGWMN.

Status Report NGWMN Cooperative Agreement: Progress on the Paperwork Reduction Act requirements continues, as the first 60 day comment period passed without comment. Daryll Pope is now working on crafting the program announcement, which will also be subject to an OMB review and comment period. They are on track to have it completed by late summer.

He also noted that progress continues in defining scopes of work with pilot states in order to begin funding additional work. With regard to expanding the network for both FY2016 and beyond, Daryll reported he is beginning to scan existing networks of those who may be interested in participating in the network in future years.

The SOGW participants asked for a status update on the RFP for new providers, and Daryll reported that the RFP should be completed later this fiscal year with awards announced early in the 2016 calendar year.

Dave Wunsch asked whether feedback could be given on the program announcement, and Daryll replied that the Paperwork Reduction Act requires a 30 day comment period after the OMB approval of the announcement, but it is unclear whether or not the announcement can be revised after approval.

Specifics of the awards were also discussed, but Daryll highlighting that they will likely be two-year agreements with the second year of the award focused on maintenance of the program. He also reminded the SOGW that there is an opportunity to carry-over unused portions of the \$2.6 million into FY2016, but the aim is to obligate as much of the money as possible.

Status Report Water Quality Pilots: Greg Oberley gave an update on Wyoming's pilot, noting he has a meeting arranged to evaluate criteria for well selection. With Utah already on board and collecting water quality data, he hopes Wyoming will be on board soon.

The SOGW discussed capabilities to get water quality data from the pilots into STORET. Greg noted the funding does not exist to get water quality data directly from the tribes into STORET, but they currently use a contractor to upload this data. Greg and Jessica Lucido agreed to

discuss possibilities offline to identify easier ways to upload small amounts of data into STORET. However, uploading large amounts of data pose different challenges.

Bill Cunningham followed up on Greg's report by highlighting efforts of the SOGW to get more tribes involved in the NGWMN. He discussed a past meeting with tribes in North Dakota and believed there is potential to increase engagement with tribes and the NGWMN.

Status Report NGWMN Portal: Since the last call, Jessica Lucido reported that well type and aquifer type filters have been added to well registry and will be released soon. This will allow for distinction between wells and springs and confined and unconfined aquifers. New attribution features will also be pushed out with release. Jessica also noted that filter/map interfaces are being improved, and links will be added to the portal's splash page that will link to the tip sheets.

Jessica also discussed efforts to ensure the portal is compatible when accessed outside of the United States. An interoperability experiment is currently set conclude in September, after which working group could be created to explore the issue further. Jessica will keep the SOGW posted.

Several other initiatives are in progress to improve the portal's function including: documenting sensor observation services, imposing a download limit of around 500 wells through the interface to preserve the performance, and expansion of construction information reported to include casing information. (Note that data from more than 500 wells could be retrieved through the NGWMN web service.

Mary Musick asked whether or not voluminous amounts of real-time data have posed challenges to the portal yet, but Jessica reported that we are currently only providing daily values, so this has not been a problem to date. If the Subcommittee believes that it's important to provide hourly or more frequent data, we'll need to re-evaluate.

Tip Sheets for NGWMN Data Providers: Daryll reported he is processing comments on the water quality tip sheet and thanked the volunteers for their feedback. He noted that the tip sheets will be added to portal and ACWI SOGW home page so that they will be easily accessible for new data providers. The tip sheets will be posted as PDFs for the time being and will be dated at the bottom for version control. Further down the road, the tip sheets may be moved to an HTML format.

Better Acronym for NGWMN: Bob asked the SOGW for opinions of the NGWMN name and whether or not the SOGW should consider developing a name that is more easily pronounce. After soliciting feedback from the group, several SOGW members noted that the name is somewhat well-known among stakeholders and Capitol Hill. The SOGW concluded that the NGWMN name should remain in order to preserve its name recognition.

ACWI Annual Meeting & SOGW In-Person Meeting: Bill reported that Wendy Norton is planning to organize an in-person meeting of the ACWI for August and that an in-person SOGW meeting will also be arranged – perhaps to coincide with the ACWI meeting.

Outreach Report:

NAWQA Liaison Meeting: Chris Carlson provided a few highlights from the recent NAWQA liaison meeting on May 8th, noting the third phase of the program will have more of a focus on

groundwater. Gary Rowe will provide a more comprehensive overview of the meeting on the next SOGW call.

Bob reminded SOGW participants to consider nominations for the various NGWA awards. Nominations are due by June 1st.

Mary informed the SOGW that the deadline for submitting abstracts to the GWPC meeting has been extended to May 29th, and she encouraged SOGW participants to consider submitting. The meeting will cover topics like UIC, induced seismicity, and oil and gas development. Mary also offered to arrange meeting space if discussions on the NGWMN with states or tribes in attendance could be useful.

Dave Wunsch highlighted the AASG upcoming meeting in Flagstaff, AZ, and several SOGW participants noted they plan to attend. Two pilot states will also be presenting during the meeting.

Brandon Kernen noted ASDWA is meeting in October in Fort Worth, TX, and he will provide information on the meeting to Lauren, who will circulate to the SOGW.

Action: Lauren agreed to send out information about all the meetings by email to the SOGW.

Adjournment: The SOGW adjourned at 1:00pm ET with the next meeting scheduled via teleconference on June 15, 2015.