

Meeting Minutes
Subcommittee on Ground Water Teleconference
Tuesday, February 16, 2016
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston VA 20192

Participants: Bill Cunningham, Lauren Schapker, Cary Betz, Jill Dean, Mary Musick, Dave Wunsch, Jeff Davis, Pat Lambert, Jessica Lucido, Greg Oberley, Tom Patton, Daryll Pope, Mike Wireman, Kathleen Fultz, Joe Fillingham, Dave Larson, Sandy Eberts, Marian Singer

Agenda: Agenda was approved without revision.

Previous Minutes: Minutes from January were approved with revisions. SOGW members will be given until the March meeting to approve minutes from the ACWI SOGW Face to Face meeting in October.

Announcements: Bill announced the White House will be holding a Water Summit on March 22nd. However, no additional details are being made available yet.

Joe Fillingham gave a brief introduction to WelIntel, as he and his company are new participants on the call. He said WelIntel makes individual, cloud-based sensors for users that can be accessed on an online interface, allowing information exchange between different users.

Kathleen Fultz with the Water Quality Association also introduced herself, noting she handles regulatory and government affairs for the trade association which represents water treatment.

Status Report: Cooperative Agreements: The program announcement closed on January 19th for new data providers, seeking to add water level or water quality sites to the portal. The program announcement allowed for new participants to become a data provider or for existing data providers to receive maintenance funding.

Ten proposal were received, with one declared ineligible. Four proposals were received from new data providers and five were maintenance funding proposals.

Given the number of participants on the informational webinar about the program announcement, Daryll was surprised more applicants did not submit proposals, so he conducted a survey afterwards. He learned many were hoping to apply for funding of other activities, the timing was off for some who may be rebuilding databases, and the matching funds were also a challenge for some.

The Program Board will evaluate the nine proposals to determine what should be funded.

Moving forward, preliminary discussions are underway to issue another program announcement with different items funded.

Update on Program Board: Dave and Daryll are co-chairs of the Program Board, and they have arranged a webinar for February 17 to go over the proposals. The Board will be asked to review and rank proposals before coming to the meeting, but these can be changed through discussion. Dave will provide some guidance information for the Program Board, as well.

Dave noted that although he'd like more states to participate, the lower number of proposals is a good distribution for the initial trial run.

SOGW members offered suggestions for video conferencing or chat functions on the webinar in order to ensure conversation flows and all participants are heard. Daryll said they may incorporate video conferencing for future meetings.

Jill asked about expectations for each proposal lead during the webinar. Daryll explained that each proposal lead will summarize the discussion around each proposal with a deadline of Friday for folks to get things proposal summaries in. David Wunsch said it is like giving a brief presentation on the proposal you're the lead on, where you go through the strengths, weaknesses etc. and then have some discussion. It will be helpful for proposal leads to record points and counterpoints during discussion will be helpful.

Daryll noted he may call on Jessica in advance for any technical questions, and Mike Wireman expressed interest in making sure Jessica's opinion on the systems all of the proposals are equipped to handle the data.

Status Report NGWMN Portal: Jessica agreed to do a walkthrough of some of the features of the portal on a future call. Jill wondered if it could be open to a broader group too because she's been talking to folks throughout EPA who might be interested beyond what Jill & Greg can talk to them about. In particular the regional folks might also be very interested in help to get word out to state and local agencies.

Jessica suggests two items: 1) a "what's new" slot on a future webinar for SOGW members 2) a separate webinar focused on broader stakeholder outreach with more of a general overview etc

Regarding stakeholder outreach, Dave W. also suggested also utilizing events like the Summit to get interest from new people.

Action: On next call, Jessica will do update on new capabilities of the portal.

Action: Separately, a longer update will be arranged and will work with Jill etc. and it will be opened up to anyone interested so that we can get more folks engaged.

Regarding portal updates, no new features have been added since our last call, but will have a new release soon with improved significant figures, basic statistics on water level, and data provider information for web services.

She is still testing new TX WQ service and revised TX well construction service has been corrected. She also worked to separate website content from the code base so that its easier for Daryll and Jessica to update content.

Up next Jessica will work on calculating monthly water level statistics similar to Groundwater Watch so that information is displayed in tabular form with a new page for each water level site. It will also include a map like GW Watch.

Mary asked whether monthly statistics are for individual wells or aquifer level. Jessica said it's a record of water level for individual wells. She said the data displayed on the map will be much like GW watch, with the goal to have a status map as compared to historical water levels.

Bill said that details for the map and the way the data is displayed should be discussed as a Subcommittee, and the changes will not be released any time soon. Bill said the immediate question is over basic statistics for individual wells and no SOGW members expressed concerns over including those.

Action: On a future agenda, we will discuss the next phase of statistics for the portal to address Mary's concerns and discuss as a group.

Status Report: Survey of federal and state monitoring programs: Because this was raised by Tim Parker, who was not able to join today's call, a broader discussion will be tabled for another time.

Dave Wunsch offered to get involved, since it has been quite some time since one has been conducted, though the challenges associated with having the SOGW lead the survey remain.

Mike Wireman informed the group that the University of Arizona is also doing a survey focused more on governance of groundwater, but it will go out to a few different levels of government. The survey will include some questions on monitoring, which could pose an opportunity to address the group's questions.

Outreach Plan for Promoting NGWMN and Portal Changes: The topic was addressed during the discussion of the portal, but Lauren offered that NGWA would potentially host the webinar, as a work-around for some of the hurdles federal agencies have in hosting webinars.

Status Report: FY2017 Appropriations: Lauren reported that the President released his budget and overall, USGS saw an increase of \$1.2 billion, with the Water Resources Program seeing an increase of

\$17.3 million over FY2016 levels. The Groundwater and Streamflow Information program saw an increase of \$1.4 million.

House and Senate leaders seem committed to moving appropriations bills forward, however election year politics will create complications.

Lauren also reported that a subset of non-federal SOGW members met to discuss strategy and put together a letter of support.

Outreach Report: Bill reported that he presented at the Water in the West workshop in Palo Alto, California. His presentation was focused on lessons learned and will be made available to SOGW members. Attendees were receptive.

Lauren reported on the NGWA Fly-In, noting 50 participants had over 80 meetings with House and Senate leaders in support of the NGWMN, among other issues.

Bill discussed plans for the NGWA Summit, taking place in Denver. A variety of monitoring presentations will be given, including some from Daryll, Bill, Dave W., Scott Andres, and Joe Fillingham.

A session on the Network has been arranged for the National Monitoring Conference in May in Tampa with four presentations scheduled. Jessica will also be presenting on the portal.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will take place on Monday, March 21.