

Coordinating Committee
Regional Water Supply Planning
May 3, 2006

After introductions, the committee heard updates from each of the technical committees.

Climate Change committee: The charter has been accepted by the committee. Its goals are general. The work plan has more flexibility and may change over time. The committee is developing a list of 12-14 “building blocks” to describe the state of climate change knowledge. These building blocks have been discussed, vetted, and are being modified. The committee has also developed a list of 14 questions needing to be prioritized and answered. Some of these may not be able to be answered within the deadline. Some of the topics will need guidance from the coordinating committee are:

- What is the geographic scope of this effort? Several options exist.
- What is the planning horizon?
- How best to interact with other regional study efforts (i.e. Puget Sound Partnership)?
- Different levels of comfort on issues. May need outside expertise.
- Agreement on sources of acceptable science. Starting with the 2001 report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as basic source of information.
- How best to incorporate existing science?

The climate change committee intersects with efforts by the Tributaries, Demand Forecast, and Supply Alternatives Committees. Will need a critical path outline so they will know when their work will be needed by others. They are not yet ready to identify funding needs; although did suggest funding work outside the geographic scope of King County.

Discussion by the CC:

- On the issue of geographic scope and timeframe, best for the technical committee to make recommendations to the coordinating committee. Include confidence intervals and the pros and cons of each option. Also, tell the CC what decisions need to be made today and which are not time sensitive.
- Does there need to be a formal link to the Puget Sound Partnership? Discussed the number of individuals represented on the PSP and decided that the informal connections will probably be sufficient.
- What is the timeframe for the committees to do their work? Sooner rather than later, but it depends on the work needing to be done. Need real work schedules to get a real appreciation of the work needed to be done. Level of discretion on the schedule is not open-ended.

Reclaimed Water Committee. The committee charter and work plan should be finalized this week. The committee is also identifying what the final product will be. It will likely be a three-phased report: 1) identify reclaimed water sources in King County system; 2) identify potential users; and 3) identify barriers. They have added to their charter the development of a tool to evaluate full benefits and costs of potential projects. They do not intend to evaluate current reclaimed water projects, only future projects. They need to find a source of information on self-supplied users (who are not on utility records). They expect to complete their work sometime between October and December. As to guidance needed from the Coordinating Committee, they identified a need for general feedback.

The reclaimed water committee intersects with work being done by the Demand Forecast, Source exchange, and tributaries committees. The reclaimed water committee will take the lead on source exchange opportunities for using reclaimed water.] The reclaimed water committee will take the information provided by the tributaries committee and incorporate it into their efforts.]

On funding needs, they suggest bringing in technical expertise. They discussed bringing in Dr. Rauscher for the evaluation of different water sources and other experts from elsewhere in the country who have experience with water and wastewater managed by separate governmental entities. They estimated \$20,000 to bring in this expertise.

Discussion by the Coordinating Committee:

- Dr. Rauscher would be a good independent reviewer. He would provide feedback on more than just reclaimed water. Could provide advice on conservation, new sources, and existing sources. Also suggested involving the Woods Institute at Stanford. This feedback would also be useful input for the work of the supply alternatives committee, the source exchange committee, and the tributaries committee work.
- Wondered how best to bring in these experts to provide advice across the various committees. Need a contractor selection committee to help identify cross-committee needs for funding and advice.
- Need to get Dr. Rauscher's paper out to all. Need to evaluate the social and environmental costs, but need to suggest ways to bridge the gaps identified. How to bring pieces together to make it work.
- Indicated that the group at Stanford had the ability to bring solutions to the table. Thus, having several consultants on board may be necessary. Any consultant needs to be viewed as credible and independent.
- Even with this kind of evaluation, at the end of the process, each entity will still need and be able to assign its own values to the equation.
- The challenge with the Dr. Rauscher information is that one size does not fit all. Overhead costs are different across different utilities. But still might be helpful on the environmental issues. May be more consistency and thus acceptance.
- Need to be organized about making funding decisions. Will need to act quickly. Suggested organizing a committee comprised of the executive committee plus key committee leads. They will need to identify the overlaps and best approaches. They will review the proposals put forward by the technical committees for funding.

Small Water Systems committee. Still working on the draft of the charter. Should be finalized at the next committee meeting (May 16th). The committee has been focusing on getting a common understanding of the problems needing to be addressed. The committee meets every three weeks and expects to be done by the end of August. The committee may need guidance from the Coordinating Committee on deadlines. They are attempting to set a schedule based on their work plan.

The paramount issues being discussed are:

- What are the incentives/disincentives to creating a new water system versus hooking up to an existing system. How can these be changed to foster better water management?
- What are the operating and receivership issues?

- How to best address the timely and reasonable service issue (and definition)?
- How to best address the duty to serve issue?
- How to transition from anecdotal stories about problems to relying on data to tell the true story? May need funding to help interpret the existing data about water systems.

Discussion by the Coordinating Committee:

- The committee deadlines are not set in stone. Need to be flexible, but realistic. We are trying to get work done by the end of the year. There is some interplay between committees. Need to push to get the work done. Be reasonable with time expectations.
- Will exempt wells be included in the work plan? Answer: Need to get a handle on the data regarding exempt wells. The scope of the committee work is all group A systems with less than 100 hook-ups; all group B systems; and individual wells (including irrigation wells.)

Source Exchange committee. The committee charter and work plan are currently being reviewed by the committee. The committee struggled with the approach to the work plan until a decision-tree (flow diagram) was created (distributed to the coordinating committee).

The issues being discussed:

- What is the driver for source exchange? Originally thought it was the ROE for Lake Tapps water right. However, that doesn't deliver water for 20 years. Therefore, the committee realized the scope needs to be broader than just Lake Tapps. Need to look at other supplies. So, what are those sources? Is there potential for projects?
- What is the committee's work product? It will be informed by the Tributaries committee. The role of the committee will be to find sources to address these impaired streams. How to implement? Through a pilot project? Negotiated by specific sources rather than the committee? The pilot will be a way of identifying issues and strategies with broader ramifications.
- Reclaimed water will not be specifically evaluated by this committee. The Reclaimed Water committee needs to take the lead on this issue, with coordination between the source exchange and the Tributaries committees.] What are the incentives that will get a utility to participate? How to better articulate the environmental benefit. Need some agreed-upon analysis or process to evaluate the environmental benefit.

As to guidance needed, the source exchange committee asked for the coordinating committee to articulate what result it wants to see from this committee.

The source exchange committee identified a funding need for work to show what the environmental benefit is and how to value that benefit. This could be a hydrologist to, for example, identify the benefit of resting a well.

Discussion by the Coordinating Committee:

- Why isn't the tributaries work addressing impaired streams in Snohomish County? Discussed the composition of the current committee and that it doesn't include Snohomish County interests.

Tributaries Committee. The committee's charter is complete. The committee's work is scheduled to be completed by June. The committee is working on:

- A matrix to rank flow-impaired streams that are critical for salmon. It is currently evolving.
- Evaluating "bang for the buck" in terms of benefit to salmon. When will water show up when a well is retired or rested.
- A conceptual framework. Discussing how much detail the source exchange committee will need.
- Mapping. Utilities are somewhat reluctant to show distribution grids (for public safety reasons). The committee may need help on this hurdle.

The committee identified the mapping issue as one needing some guidance. A potential area for funding is a hydrologist to help identify "bang for the buck" issues. Another issue is whether this work product is just a prioritization for purposes of the King County-Cascade effort or whether it is the beginning of all adaptive management to follow up on the shared strategy efforts? The comments suggested getting as much information as the committee can.

Discussion by the Coordinating Committee:

- Will the matrix have enough specificity? Yes, and it will prioritize streams that will benefit from flow restoration.
- Mapping needs to be sensitive to the post 9-11 security issues. It was suggested that King County probably already has the grid map. It was also suggested that rather than mapping the grid, just ask the utilities whether they have the ability to deliver substitute water to specific impaired areas.
- Is this tool transferable to other areas? It is the goal of the committee to have a tool that has broader applicability.
- Will the tool be tested? Yes.

Demand Forecast and Supply Alternative Committees. There have been no changes yet made to the work plans. The schedule anticipates a demand forecast in 12 months. The Supply Alternatives effort will take longer and is dependent on the Demand Forecast. The committee has not yet identified any paramount issues nor any guidance needed from the Coordinating Committee. The committee does not anticipate needing any of the legislative funding.

The Demand Forecast committee has been focusing on organizational issues. There is no one designated as chair yet. Much of the work has been and will continue to be focused on gathering information so that all committee members are on common ground. Margaret Norton-Arnold will be facilitating the Demand Forecast effort.

The Supply Alternatives Committee is also in the organizing phase, since each committee has only met once so far. The draft criteria from their work plan are currently being evaluated.

Dates for meetings of these committees are on the Forum's website:
www.watersuppliersforum.org

Discussion on the “clarifying statement”

The group discussed the three options put forward (original submitted by Auburn and the two alternatives). The revised final version reads as follows:

Synthesis Regional Water Supply Planning

Multiple agencies and organizations are voluntarily participating in a regional water supply planning process for the purpose of identifying, compiling information on, and discussing many of the key issues that relate to or may affect water resources of the region. The goal is to develop the best available data, information, and pragmatic tools that the participants may use, at their discretion, to assist in the management of their respective water systems and resources, and in their water supply planning activities. Information developed by each technical committee is advisory only and development of that information in no way expands or limits the authority of any entity. All information generated will be shared among all those interested in receiving it. The planning process is not required by statute, but is expected to provide useful data that may support other processes that any participant may use to address water resource and water supply issues. Each of the participants is free to accept or reject the results of this process.

Miscellaneous Issues.

The group agreed that it is OK to turn on the website. It should link into the Forum’s website. Summaries of meetings will be posted on the website after approved by the appropriate committee. Committee charters and work plans, once finalized, will be posted on the website. Also, the committee agreed to send a thank you note from the Chair to Senator Fraser using the new letterhead.

The committee decided that the best way to evaluate funding potential proposals is to create a funding committee that will evaluate proposals from the technical committees that wish to submit. The facilitators will solicit proposals from these technical committees and convene the funding committee (comprised of the executive committee, the leads for the technical committees, and any other interested Coordinating Committee members). The proposals should identify scope of work, deliverables, times, and costs. No need to bring the funding decisions back to the coordinating committee. The proposals should be prepared by the end of May, with a funding committee meeting in early June.

The committee was briefed on the decision not to have a technical committee on the municipal water law issues.

The committee discussed and agreed on two new ground rules: 1) all materials must be distributed to the coordinating committee ahead of time; and 2) refrain from speaking for others.

The Committee asked the facilitators to put together before the next meeting an overall chart or road map that shows where the critical points, links to work of other committees, and deadlines are.

The next Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 28th, 10 am to 12:30 pm.