



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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## Water 2050 Regional Forum

April 16, 2015

Cook County Conference Room

### Meeting Notes

#### Present:

Janet Agnoletti, Barrington Area COG  
Ryan Anderson, MPC  
Nora Beck, CMAP  
Wes Cattoor, IDNR  
Zoe Chapin, MPC  
Tom Chinske  
Brendan Dailey, IDNR  
Bill DeLoach, World Business Chicago  
Justin DeWitt, IDPH  
Ben Disney, Ameresco  
Jeff Edstrom, Cardno  
Mark Emory, Christopher B. Burke Eng.  
Jeff Freeman, EEI  
John Gage, Greeley & Hansen  
Danielle Gallet, MPC  
Carolyn Grieves, Baxter & Woodman  
Michael Hoadley, Fewzion.biz  
Kyla Jacobsen, City of Elgin  
Martin Jaffe, UIC/IISG  
Kumar Jensen, City of Evanston

Yu-Feng Forrest Lin, ISGS  
Tim Loftus, CMAP  
Edith Makra, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus  
Paul May, Burr Ridge  
Megan McNeill, ICC  
John Mick, Baxter & Woodman  
Cary McElhinney, US EPA  
Peter Nicholson, Foresight Design Initiative  
Tim Oravec, MWRD  
George Roadcap, ISWS  
Ann Rosen, Canadian Consulate General  
Margaret Schneemann, IISG  
Paul Schuch, Kane County (Retired)  
Brent Shraiberg, ANL/MWRD  
Heather Smith, Field Foundation  
Chris Staron, NWMC  
Jason F. Thomason, U of I, ISGS  
Marcia Willhite, IEPA  
Anna Wolf, Alliance for the Great Lakes  
Jodie Wollnik, Kane County

#### Welcome and Agenda

Tim Loftus and Danielle Gallet kicked off the meeting welcoming participants. Danielle then began the discussion by introducing the first speaker: Marcia Willhite, Chief, Bureau of Water, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Marcia presented on the IEPA's latest activities related to water supply planning.

## **Presentations:**

- **IEPA Water Supply Initiatives and Priorities:** Marsha Willhite, Chief, Bureau of Water at IEPA

After delivering a brief background about the scope of her department and the importance that IEPA places on water quality protection, Marsha Willhite described various activities and initiatives currently happening at IEPA, including the proposed source water protection planning rules.

### *Proposed Source Water Protection Planning Rules*

The IEPA is in the outreach phase of the rulemaking process. Drafted language is being discussed with Community Water Suppliers (CWS) around the state. The draft language requires Community Water Suppliers (CWS) to create plans with the following elements:

- Vision Statement
- Source Water Assessments
- Objectives – meeting requirements
- Action Plan
- Submission – the larger the CWS the tighter the submission schedule is to IEPA
- Evaluation & Revision

### *Water Loss Accounting Initiative*

Water loss accounting is a very important issue that CWS face currently. IEPA, in conjunction with the Illinois Water Loss Accounting Steering Committee has provided financial support for training municipalities on the M-36 tool that helps them keep track of and better understand the water loss occurring in their system. Since December of 2014, 25 training sessions and over 189 CWS staff and officials have been trained.

The next step in the process is to offer technical assistance to smaller and more economically disadvantaged communities. Additionally, IEPA would like to identify the CWS that used the M-36 tool so that these communities can share their results and experiences to better understand the usefulness of these best practice tools for the industry. Case studies will also be created. Ultimately the goal is to assess what has been learned and adjust promotional approaches as needed. A summary report and recommendations will be produced to improve understanding of water loss status and opportunities to accelerate adoption of water loss accounting.

### *State Revolving Loan Fund*

The State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) is used for capital and water quality improvement projects for water supply and wastewater infrastructure. In 2014 the SRF funded \$196 million in projects. Common projects funded included water main lining, rehab and replacement as well as water meters. Additionally, water loss control projects are now eligible and IEPA is going to expand the funding to stormwater projects in the future as well.

- **Illinois Plumbing Code Update from the Illinois Department of Public Health:** Justin DeWitt, Chief of General Engineering, Division of Environmental Health, IDPH

Mr. DeWitt began by explaining that IDPH is perhaps taking unprecedented efforts to branch out into the water quality area as it pertains to public health. Traditionally, IDPH has been predominately concerned with water source issues. Justin indicated that IDPH is now thinking about how to use water that is available but less than potable.

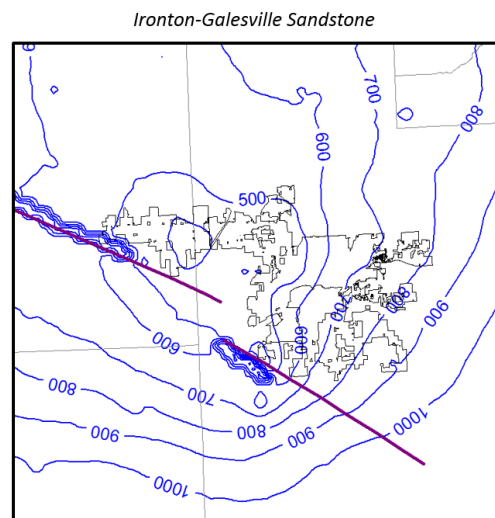
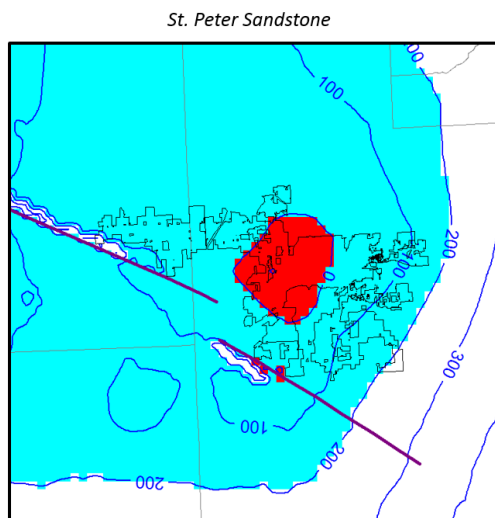
The plumbing code was recently updated, and while IDPH tried to make it “greener” they faced strong political opposition, which Justin described as being unfortunate. However, IDPH has been promoting more green measures during its review of some engineering issues. While this is being done on an ad hoc basis, it is the only way that IDPH can do it at the moment. IDPH is also working with partners on some onsite stormwater management, and they are looking into “toilet-to-tap,” as more and more small projects are looking at this technology, but they are not ready to make any large-scale recommendations. Finally, Justin said that reuse of reclaimed wastewater is in our future.

- **Northeastern Illinois’ Current and Future Groundwater Situation:** George Roadcap, Hydrogeologist, Illinois State Water Survey, University of Illinois

Dr. Roadcap walked us through a presentation of ISWS’ data on the status of groundwater supply in northeastern Illinois, also with a few model simulations about future conditions. Maps reveal the Joliet region’s cone of depression (deep-bedrock aquifer) has experienced a decline in water level by 800ft between 1980 and 2014. The sandstone in surrounding areas has also become desaturated and it is predicted the areas around the wells will become completely desaturated by 2050.

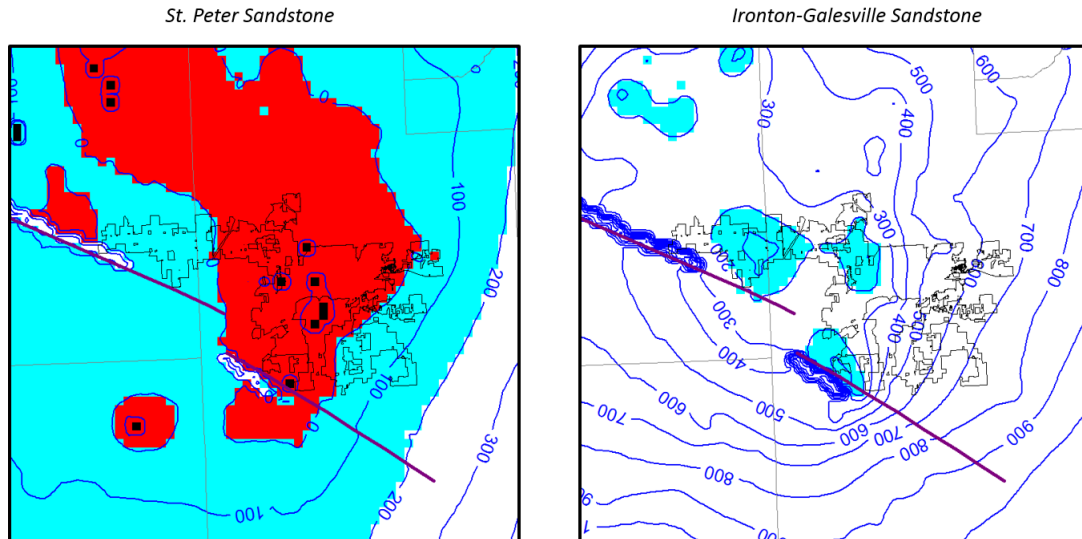
## Model simulations 2014

Red- Partially desaturated sandstone  
Cyan- Sandstone within 200 ft of desaturation  
Black- sandstone is completely desaturated  
Contours- Head above the top of the sandstone unit



# Model simulations 2050

Red- Partially desaturated sandstone  
Cyan- Sandstone within 200 ft of desaturation  
Black- sandstone is completely desaturated  
Contours- Head above the top of the sandstone unit



George stressed that now is the time to conserve and to plan rather than waiting for crisis. Communities with industries and homes around these depleting wells will need to be prepared to explore new options, and should consider the upper and lower aquifer as well as the time it takes for an aquifer to replenish. ISWS and IDNR have begun sharing this information and having conversations with folks in the Joliet region about future water supply issues.

- **Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Status of State Regional Water Supply Planning Funding and Announcement of New Director:** Wes Cattoor, Water Supply Engineer, IDNR Office of Water Resources and Dan Injerd, Director, IDNR Office of Water Resources

Mr. Cattoor broke the unfortunate news that as of March 13<sup>th</sup> all grant funding for regional water supply planning from IDNR has been suspended. He stressed that this does not mean that any funds granted have been recalled, nor is funding being terminated definitively. However, there is not a timetable for when this situation will change, but with the new budget coming up in July he remains hopeful that there will be a resolution.

Wes then introduced Dan Injerd as the new Director of IDNR's Office of Water Resources. Mr. Injerd further addressed the issue of state water supply funding being suspended, and informed the group that despite the hold on the grant IDNR wants to continue to work with regional groups to the extent they have the capacity to do so without funding at this time. Funding for the Illinois State Water Survey for 2015 will continue as planned, as it is funded under a different arrangement.

Dan indicated that he doesn't expect to hear much in the days and weeks ahead, but rather in the months ahead. In the meantime, all efforts will be spent on high-level budget items.

Regarding non-revenue water, IDNR seeks to encourage cooperation with municipalities to identify what is needed, for example, water meters. When asked whether or not a financial impact analysis had been

conducted, Injerd explained it had not, but urged it would be helpful to municipalities and would demonstrate to the EPA that SRF investments in water supply management are essential.

▪ **CMAQ Update on Water 2050 Regional Forums:** Tim Loftus, Water Resource Planner, CMAQ

With the suspension of funding now a reality, Dr. Loftus explained the impacts to his work and that of CMAQ. For the Northwest Water Planning Alliance, Tim must now put his strategic plan implementation support work on hold. This includes the support he was providing to the TAC & EC, data collection and analysis, outreach and education, monthly water-use reporting, and upcoming support for the new part-time intern.

For the Lake Michigan Water Allocation Program, Tim has put development of the Water System Improvement Plan Guidance Document that he was creating on hold. He must also suspend work on a Formal Water Loss/Nonrevenue Water Policy that he was developing in conjunction with the Alliance for Water Efficiency. Other plans, e.g., working with the upcoming IDNR 2015 Water Rate Survey data, outreach and education, and other data analysis have been suspended.

Finally, the Water 2050 Forums scheduled for July and October are now currently on hold, though participants and interested parties are encouraged to hold those dates until further notice: July 16<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Discussions:**

With these presentations and announcements made, the second part of the meeting was designed to address where participants stood with the need for regional water supply planning and what kind of support and initiatives the group might explore to keep the ball rolling and not lose momentum.

Tim Loftus started the discussion out by leading the group through some keypad polling questions. The first two questions were designed to get a better sense of who was in attendance.

<u>Professional Affiliation</u>	<u>Responses</u>	
Local Government	6	16%
County Government	2	5%
Special District Government	3	8%
State Government	6	16%
Private Industry	7	18%
Research / Academia / Education	9	24%
Advocacy / NGO	2	5%
Other	3	8%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100%</b>

<u>Source of Drinking Water</u>	<u>Responses</u>
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Lake Michigan	24	63%
Groundwater	13	34%
Fox River	1	3%
Kankakee River	0	0%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100%</b>

Following these demographic questions, the participants were asked the following key pad polling questions to better understand how well prepared our State is to handle water supply issues. Each question and answer result was followed by a short discussion about reactions to the questions and answers.

1.

Illinois has enough data about surface and groundwater availability to begin making informed, cost-effective decisions regarding future water supply planning.



A majority of participants believed that Illinois has enough data to begin to make necessary decisions about water supply issues and considerations. Many believed that waiting for “perfect” data would not be useful or responsible given the water supply concerns we face today. A key word/phrase in this question for respondents was “begin making ...”

2.

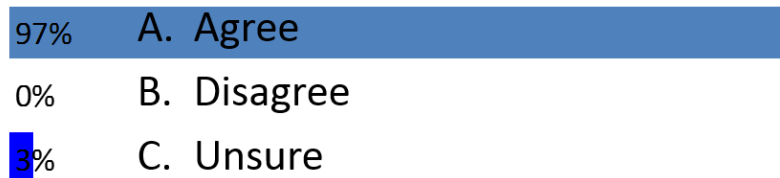
Our State is prepared to handle conflict and competing uses for water supply when the next drought occurs.



A significant amount of participants did not believe Illinois is prepared to handle conflict and competing uses for water supply when the next drought occurs. The group felt very strongly that establishing protocols and policies for handling future droughts would be critical for the State.

3.

Water loss and general infrastructure conditions are a growing issue for our communities.



Overwhelmingly the group believed that water loss and crumbling infrastructure are a top issue for communities; many voiced concerns about needing to keep this issue top of mind for elected officials going forward and that resources to assist utilities are necessary.

4.

Illinois communities are addressing water rates and asset management from a full-cost of service perspective to ensure long-term viability of their drinking water systems.



A large majority of the group also believed that water rates and asset management are not being addressed to the necessary level to ensure long-term viability of community drinking water systems. The results of many of these keypad polling questions raise the need for regional water supply coordination to help improve community water supply systems. The need to urge the State to continue to support these efforts is important in order for Illinois communities to be assured long-term sustainability of our water resources and services.

In order to keep the conversations going, Ms. Gallet asked each small group table to engage in a conversation about what initiatives might be useful for the group to look into in order to continue to drive momentum about regional coordination on water supply, and drive awareness at the state level about the importance of these efforts. Each table had a participant facilitator who was given a discussion sheet:



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## WATER 2050 REGIONAL FORUM TABLE DISCUSSION:

Based-off our group discussion about state and regional water supply planning: *do you believe coordination is important? If so, for what reasons?*

What kinds of activities could be beneficial in continuing to support regional water supply needs in Illinois?

Potential ideas to brainstorm:

- Letters to Governor and IDNR urging the need for funding regional water supply planning
- Summary piece for elected officials outlining the need, logistics and cost for implementing statewide regional water supply planning in Illinois
- Research how other states fund regional water supply planning initiatives
- Is a bottled water tax to fund regional water supply planning a viable option?

What other ideas might you have for keeping the ball rolling? Let's brainstorm!



Following these small group discussions, Danielle asked each table facilitator to summarize the ideas their group discussed. Following is a synthesized list of some of the ideas and recommendations reported out from these groups:

- Engaging locally elected officials is important; water supply issues need to be clearly communicated and addressed with suggested solutions;
- Using the public-private partnership model for funding is a key component to addressing long-term asset management and infrastructure funding issues;
- Framing water supply concerns (with metrics) as a consumer/voter issue, and educating the public at the municipal level is key to driving support for good practices;
- Use of the SRF or other funding mechanisms for water supply planning would be good to understand and explore;
- Consider the balance/threshold between conservation of water as a resource and—from the municipal perspective—maintaining the ability to provide/pay for the service;
- Convening and keeping the private sector and industry aware and educated about water supply issues could help drive the use of the market to assist with solutions.

## **Meeting Adjourned**