



CHAPTER 8: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

8.1 Public Participation

The EPA's Guidance on State Source Water Assessment and Protection Programs emphasized the importance of public involvement in the development of SWAP plans. To meet this requirement, MWCOG, working under contract to the ICPRB, convened and provided staff support to a Citizens Advisory Committee, solicited additional public comment on the draft Plan and provided coordination with the public outreach efforts of SWAP development in neighboring Maryland and Virginia. MWCOG also hosted several public meetings during the course of the assessment. These meetings were held to update the stakeholders on the status of the program and to receive feedback on the direction and progress of the assessment.

8.1.1 Citizen Advisory Group Efforts

MWCOG sent letters soliciting interest in helping to develop the District of Columbia's SWAP Plan to more than 100 individuals. These people included all of those who attended a public meeting on drinking water issues in Washington, D.C., held by EPA Region III in March 1996. It included other representatives of civic and environmental organizations in the city, the chairs of the 29 Advisory Neighborhood Commission subdistricts in the city, and representatives of various city government agencies or other organizations involved in drinking water and public health issues.

Twenty-two people attended an organizational meeting for the Advisory Committee held November 17, 1998. The group received background information on source water protection efforts in general and plans for developing the District of Columbia plan. The participants agreed to form an advisory committee and discussed funding and communication issues. (A roster of those who subsequently attended Committee meetings or expressed an interest in continuing to review Committee materials is attached as part of Appendix D; the roster includes members of the ICPRB's Technical Advisory Committee, staff from EPA Region III and MWCOG staff.)

The Committee held additional meetings on December 17, 1998, and January 20, 1999. The Committee reviewed a draft outline and a portion of the Plan text at the December 17 meeting and further discussed funding and communications issues. At the January 20 meeting, the Committee provided comments on the full draft of the Plan, which was originally distributed to members on January 8, 1999. (See attached meeting summaries in Appendix D for a record of Committee comments.)

Comments on technical aspects of the Plan by individual Committee members are addressed in the body of this Plan or in Appendix D. In addition to these comments, the Committee as a group endorsed the recommendation that its role



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in providing public input into the source water assessment process should continue during the actual Assessment phase rather than end with submission of the Plan to EPA. The Committee also supported a continuing role for ICPRB and MWCOG in the project, as well as having the US Geological Survey involved in technical aspects of the Assessment.

8.1.2 Public Involvement

In addition to the Advisory Committee efforts, MWCOG and ICPRB made the following efforts to obtain public input on the draft Plan:

- MWCOG issued a press release on January 7, 1999 to publicize the developing Plan and invite comments on it at a public meeting January 20 (to be held in conjunction with the Advisory Committee meeting).
- MWCOG distributed a flyer advertising the public meeting to all branch libraries in the District of Columbia along with Advisory Neighborhood Commissions and District of Columbia government offices.
- Copies of the draft Plan were made available for review at public library branches and the MWCOG Information Center prior to the public meeting.
- Copies also were available through e-mail, in response to a recommendation from the Advisory Committee.
- The ICPRB also posted the draft Plan on its World Wide Web site at: www.potomacriver.org.
- An initial public meeting was held on January 15th , 2000 to notify the stakeholders of the scope and progress of the SWA.
- A second meeting was held on September 9th , 2001 to report mid-project status and take input from the stakeholders on the direction and progress of the project.
- A website was established with the DC DoH to provide general information on the SWAP. An interactive map with information on NPDES facilities and their spatial relation to subwatersheds and receiving waters was provided to the general public to search and query.



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8.1.3 Technical Advisory Committee

A Technical Advisory Committee was formed to advise on the more technical aspects relating to the preparation of this Plan. The membership included representatives from the following entities:

District of Columbia, Department of Health
Washington Aqueduct Division of the Corps of Engineers
District of Columbia, Water and Sewer Authority
US Geological Survey
US Environmental Protection Agency, Region III
Virginia Department of Health
Maryland Department of the Environment
Fairfax County Water Authority
Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

Members of the Technical Advisory Committee participated in the advisory meetings organized by MWCOG, and they submitted comments on the written drafts of the Plan.

8.2. Final Presentation of Results

A final meeting to present the results of the assessment was held in May 2003.