

INTERSTATE COMMISSION ON THE POTOMAC RIVER BASIN

Advisory Committee

for the Comprehensive Water Resources Plan

May 23, 2017

ICPRB – Rockville, MD

Meeting Summary

Welcome, Introduction and Agenda Review

Kristin Rowles (Policy Works LLC) welcomed the Advisory Committee (AC) and thanked them for their participation. Members and guests introduced themselves and are listed at the end of this meeting summary. Kristin reviewed the meeting objectives.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

ICPRB Progress Report

Carlton Haywood (ICPRB) thanked members for attending the meeting. He offered a remembrance of Herb Sachs, Advisory Committee member, ICPRB Commissioner, and long-time advocate for the Potomac River Basin and the Chesapeake. He also credited Mr. Sachs with being a driving force on the Commission for developing this Comprehensive Plan. He then reviewed the schedule and timeline for the Advisory Committee and for completing the Basin Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion of Water Quality Challenge Area

In the next part of the meeting, Kristin said the AC would focus on moving from the vision and challenges list to developing recommendations to address the water quality challenge area. Carlton Haywood presented background information related to the water quality challenge area (his slides are available on the AC webpage). The following is a summary of AC member comments and questions regarding the presentation:

- In response to an AC member question, Carlton offered that information on water quality can be presented by numerous political and hydrologic boundaries.
- Concerning information presented on existing water quality threats, an AC member commented that the information can be misleading in cases where different states and jurisdictions use different metrics for conditions such as impaired stream miles. It was noted that this should be carefully explained in the plan. It was also noted that there are some water quality metrics that can be presented in a consistent manner across the basin.

- An AC member requested additional information on what is included in the emerging contaminants list. At a later point in the meeting, another member read the list of items included from the EPA website. (See: <https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr/third-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule>)
- An AC member cautioned that the presence of a certain substance does not necessarily mean that the water is unsafe. Likewise, areas presented as “no occurrence” may be the result of a gap in sampling instead of a sampling result that did not find the substance. The plan should explain these terms carefully.
- An AC member suggested that a basin-wide “inventory” of efforts related to monitoring and managing water quality could be very useful in as an information resource and to support implementation.
- An AC member commented that the Potomac River Basin is not being managed as a basin, but by multiple state and local jurisdictions. He said he is uncertain about how ICPRB, or the Comprehensive Plan, can move management toward a basinwide approach, but that perhaps it should be considered.
- AC members suggested developing a “state of the watershed” section in the Comprehensive Plan to assist in identifying gaps and priorities and developing recommendations. It was noted that the draft outline for the Comprehensive Plan does include this type of information.
- An AC member cautioned that while it is important to assess conditions and programs related to water quality, the plan may not be well received by member jurisdictions if it is viewed as a report of what various entities and jurisdictions *are not* doing.

At the close of the discussion of the presentation, Carlton offered that the Comprehensive Plan can set a direction for ICPRB in the coming years. He said it is important to acknowledge the roles of other agencies and organization. The ICPRB is not an independent player, but rather works through a network of relationships in the basin. He noted that the plan should include recommendations for improvements in water quantity and quality data collection and management and in education and outreach efforts. He said that the plan can provide an impetus for future actions by the ICPRB and others.

Next, Kristin asked the AC members to consider recommendations for this challenge area. Several members noted the difficulty in developing recommendations without specific goals and a comprehensive assessment of needs. Kristin noted that members should be comfortable with making recommendations about the planning process as well as recommendations that address the challenge area directly. She noted that they were being asked to provide their professional opinions on what is missing or what could enhance water quality management, particularly at the interstate level. She noted that, to date, in discussions with members, the discussion of recommendations has tended toward a focus on improving data and research information to support improved management. She asked the members to jot down recommendations individually, and then she assigned small groups of three members each to share their individual recommendations with each other and come to agreement on recommendations (up to three) to share with the full group.

At the conclusion of the small group work, the groups presented the sets of recommendations listed in Table 1. One of the groups offered several additional recommendations about the planning process:

- To develop water quality recommendations:
 - What are the goals for the Basin?
 - What do the data tell us about progress toward those goals?
 - Are the current efforts enough to attain those goals?
 - If not, what is missing or need to be enhanced to meet the goals?
 - Develop specific plan recommendations based on above.
- Assess the degree to which what is being done is enough. Then assess what is missing and needs to be enhanced.
- Need to agree on what we want to achieve “to do what?” What are the measurements we use to assess?
- Need to see what the data are showing in terms of where we are then move to where we want to be.

The recommendations listed in Table 1 were presented by the groups on flip chart pages around the room. Kristin asked members to identify priority recommendations from those presented during the lunch break using stickers to mark their top three. The number of stickers for each recommendation is listed in Table 1.

Discussion of Water Use and Supply Challenge Area

Heidi Moltz presented background information related to the water use and supply challenge area (her slides are available on the AC webpage). The following is a summary of AC member comments and questions regarding the presentation:

- An AC member asked if impacts to snow pack as a result of climate change have been studied and how water availability may be impacted.
- An AC member reminded the group that water quality and quantity are linked. Heidi reported that a “synthesis” chapter is being included in the Plan to address integrated water resource management linkages.
- Kristin said that AC members made a number of specific recommendations for the water use and supply challenge area during the one-on-one interviews conducted by the facilitation team in April. She provided some examples. Next, Kristin asked the AC members to consider recommendations for this challenge area. She asked the members to jot down recommendations individually, and then she assigned small groups of three members each to share their individual recommendations with each other and come to agreement on recommendations (up to three) to share with the full group.

TABLE 1: Water Quality Challenge Area Recommendations from AC Small Group Exercise

<u>Group</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Number of Stickers</u>
A	1) Identify common water quality goals for the Potomac River main stem	4
	2) Identify beneficial goals to prioritize	0
	3) Establish potential roles and actions by entity that would best work toward goal (ex., ICPRB coordinate streamlining of BMP permit process across basin)	4
B	1) Develop an inventory of roles, responsibilities, areas of authority and how effectively being carried out	9
	2) ICPRB to convene water quality experts (on an on-going basis) to share data, assess completeness and gaps, and provide recommendations and priorities	3
	3) ICPRB to evaluate and comment on major infrastructure (proposed) projected with potential basinwide water quality impacts	2
C	1) Plan would provide a linkage to a source for available information	5
	2) Recommendation to evaluate TMDL implementation	0
	3) Identification of influences outside of EPA (Clean Water Act) (e.g., NOAA)	0
D	1) Establish data frameworks that show progress/no progress over time; ex. ICPRB – shared data framework to coordinate multiple jurisdiction data	6
	2) Monitoring and providing data on interstate waters	0
	3) Address areas of uncertainty to assist states in resource management	0

At the conclusion of the small group work, the groups presented the sets of recommendations listed in Table 2. Discussion of these recommendations included the following additional points and suggested recommendations:

- Promote and support a more active focus on groundwater recharge in management in order to provide for greater system resilience.
- The agreements referenced in Recommendation #1 from Group B are currently in review by ICPRB, per a recent decision by the Commissioners to do so.
- Consider an alternative name for the comprehensive plan that envisions a slightly different and more information resource role for the document, such as “Resource Management Guide.”
- Develop and prioritize a groundwater availability tool and groundwater monitoring to support local communities in planning.
- Are ecological flows evaluated in a consistent manner across jurisdictions?
- Water use and supply recommendations were slightly easier to consider and suggest because it is not complicated by the existing web of programs that are driven by the federal mandate. It is also easier to see the impact of quantity management than quality management.

Meeting Wrap-Up and Next Steps

At the close of the meeting, Carlton offered that ICPRB will provide some draft sections of the Comprehensive Plan for the AC to review and discuss at its next meeting (September). He thanked members for making the effort to attend the meeting and commented that the recommendations and input from today’s meeting would be extremely helpful in developing the Plan. Kristin thanked the AC for their commitment and contributions to a productive meeting. She reminded members that presentations and meeting summary will be provided to members in the coming days. The next AC meeting will be held via conference call on September 8, 2017. The meeting was adjourned.

TABLE 2: Water Use and Supply Challenge Area Recommendations from AC Small Group Exercise

<u>Group</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Number of Stickers</u>
A	1) Coordinate consistent/standard evaluation methods for water use	0
	2) Report on basinwide water use, projected demand, and consumptive demand	7
	3) Plan should include a description of potential changes in flow due to climate change at priority locations in the basin	2
B	1) Examine the efficacy of existing agreements (Low Flow Allocation Agreement and Water Supply Coordination Agreement) to determine if they need to be updated	2
	2) Examine alternate water supply options (both operational and structural) basinwide including localized areas of water stress	1
	3) Evaluate competing water uses including water supply, recreation, industry, etc. as they relate to ecological flows	1
	4) Protection of groundwater from contamination and overuse (study, advise, etc.)	1
	5) Also assess data, roles, implementation, resources, etc.	1
C	1) Recognize lack of understanding on water uses that fall below state water thresholds and need for additional studies/data	6
	2) Use same metrics/model across basin to estimate future impacts of climate change	2
	3) Recognize limitations on controlling unregulated consumptive uses (particularly in drought conditions)	1
D	1) Develop an inventory of roles, responsibilities, areas of authority and how effectively being carried out	5
	2) ICRPB to convene water use and supply experts (on an on-going basis) to share data, assess completeness and gaps, and provide recommendations and priorities	2
	3) To develop water use and supply recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the goals for the Basin? • What do the data tell us about progress toward those goals? • Are the current efforts enough to attain those goals? • If not, what is missing or need to be enhanced to meet the goals? • Develop specific plan recommendations based on above. 	1

May 23, 2017 Advisory Committee Meeting Participation

Members:

Donald Schwartz
Willem Brakel
Tom Devilbiss
Marty Gary
Mark Guise
Adam McClain
Mark Peterson
Mark Symborski
John Wirts
Jennifer Orr
Scott Kudlas for Sara Jordan
Charlie Bennett (by phone)

Observers:

Curt Thomas (VA)

Staff:

Carlton Haywood (ICPRB)
Heidi Moltz (ICPRB)
Jim Palmer (ICPRB)
Claire Buchanan (ICPRB)
Kristin Rowles (facilitator)
Mark Masters (facilitator)