



WATER RESOURCES INITIATIVE

Water Resources Committee Meeting
November 27, 2012

Background

- Three year effort to explore possible role in water resource management
 - Outside of traditional Commission role
- Funded through grants from multiple foundations
- Activities began in April 2012

Water Resources Initiative Outline

1. Characterization Studies
 1. Water resources inventory and characterization
 2. Examination of laws and regulations
 3. Evaluation of expanded Commission role
2. Agency Visits
3. Support of Water Resources Committee Operations

Characterization Study #1

- Water Resources Inventory and Characterization
 1. General characterization of the water resources
 2. Quantify water use and consumption
 3. Inventory of water resources monitoring
 4. Identify gaps in assessment capabilities
 5. Characterize major factors which may significantly impact the sustainable use of water resources in the Basin
- Climate change, natural gas extraction, inter-basin transfers, and increased consumptive uses

Characterization Study #2

- Examination of Laws and Regulations
 1. Inventory existing state and federal regulation of water resources in the Basin
 2. Identify potential gaps in existing authorities necessary to address critical needs
 - ▣ Including inter-basin transfers, water withdrawals, and environmental flows
 3. Evaluate unique water management issues in the Ohio River Basin, including the headwaters region
 - ▣ Identify appropriate mechanisms to address needs

Characterization Study #3

- Evaluation of Commission's Role in Water Resources
 1. Define desired Commission role in water resources management
 2. Identify any expanded authorities necessary to fulfill the desired role
 3. Recommend strategy to achieve necessary authorities and propose sustainable funding mechanism

Initial Characterization Study Results

- Focus to date has been on two main elements:
 1. Inventory of water resource laws and regulations
 2. Quantify water use (and consumption)

Next Steps

1. Agency Visits
2. Governors' MOU
3. Finalize reporting of current topics
4. Next topics

Agency Visits to Build Support

- Visits serve to:
 - ▣ Keep states apprised of the Commission's activities
 - ▣ Build support through demonstration of benefits to the states of an expanded Commission role in water resources management
 - ▣ Advance Governors' MOU
 - ▣ Gather information for characterization reports and other water resources activities

Next Topics

- Inter-basin transfers
 - ▣ Gather data from surrounding basins (e.g. SRBC, Great Lakes, etc.)
 - ▣ Focus on transfers in/out of Ohio River Basin
 - Could look at transfers across sub-basins if desired
- Climate change
 - ▣ Report on existing studies
 - ▣ Look at historical weather trends and shifts in water use (e.g. changes in population, industry, agriculture, and energy demand and production)
- Water resource issues related to shale gas development
 - ▣ Where?
 - ▣ When?
 - ▣ How much?
 - ▣ Forecast for future withdraws?

Funding

Not much change since the last meeting.

Foundation Support

□ Total Budget - \$400,000

Current Foundation Funding Commitments				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Colcom	\$30,000	\$30,000*		\$60,000
Heinz	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$60,000
Mellon	\$30,000	\$30,000*		\$60,000
Benedum	\$60,000			\$60,000
Pulliam	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$75,000
	\$165,000	\$105,000	\$45,000	\$315,000

*Contingent on securing full funding support

□ Funding Gap – \$85,000



Governors' MOU

MOU Background

- Recognizes the Ohio River Basin as a vital, shared water resource
- Serves as States' endorsement of a Commission role in water resources management
- Encourages the Commission to engage in five specific activities previously performed by the Ohio River Basin Water Resources Association

Specific Activities in MOU

1. Provide a forum for States to study and discuss water resources issues
2. Coordinate water resources planning and encourage coordinated and cooperative action by state and federal agencies
3. Provide representation of the regional interests of the Ohio River Basin before Congress and federal agencies
4. Investigate, study, and review water related problems and issues of interest to the States
5. Assist in providing training on effective water resources management

Moving Forward?

- One step forward, two steps back
- Agency visits to NY, PA, VA, WV
- PA DEP recently indicated they will not sign the MOU at this time

- Does this change the game plan?

A horizontal bar at the top of the slide, divided into a red section on the left and a blue section on the right.

Committee Discussion