

# STATE COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON GROUND WATER

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Ohio Environmental Protection Agency  
Lazarus Government Center  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-1049

Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
Fountain Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43224-1387

Ohio Department of Health  
246 North High Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0588

Ohio Department of Commerce-SFM  
8895 East Main Street  
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

Ohio Public Utilities Commission  
180 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0573

Ohio Department of Agriculture  
8995 East Main Street  
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068-3399

Ohio Department of Development  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0413

Ohio Department of Transportation  
1980 West Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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## TO PROMOTE AND GUIDE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COORDINATED, COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GROUND WATER PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE STATE OF OHIO

### ABSTRACT

The December 2006 annual holiday meeting consisted of Agency announcements and presentation of the film "Running Dry".

### DATE and LOCATION

December 21, 2006  
Der Dutchman Countryside, Plain City, Ohio

### ATTENDANCE

Ohio EPA: Tom Allen (SCCGW Chair), Michael Eggert, Brian Hall, Bob Knipmeyer, Barb Lubberger  
ODNR: Greg Nageotte, Rick Pavey  
ODH: Rebecca Fugitt  
ODOT: Doug App  
PUCO: Sue Daly  
NRCS: John Armentano  
USGS: Ralph Haefner  
Visitors: Jeff DeRoche, Larry Berger

### AGENCY UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### **Tom Allen, SCCGW Chairman:**

-As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, Ohio EPA's new entrance will be located in the Lazarus Building Galleria, which is located at 50 West Town Street.

- The Ohio Water Resources Council (OWRC) Web site has been updated and includes a link to the Storm Center web site.

- Tom distributed three hand-outs related to OWRC's 10-year vision and 4-year action plan, and which action items may involve SCCGW. One item that will definitely involve SCCGW is "Evaluation of Techniques for Ground Water/Surface Water Interaction". By the end of January SCCGW

members should provide Tom with the list of items they think should be on SCCGW's agenda.

#### **Ohio EPA, Division of Drinking and Ground Waters:**

- The Report of Findings for the Unsafe Water Supply Investigation along Batdorf Road in Wayne County was forwarded to Dr. Greg Halley and Environmental Services Director, Loretta Firis. The investigation determined that high nitrate levels and *E. coli* in domestic well water is caused by discharges from domestic septic systems.

- Another unsafe water supply investigation has been proposed for the Buckeye Lake area.

- Central Office and SWDO staff, with assistance from ODH and the Clark County Health Dept., are preparing to conduct a dye trace study in karst bedrock along the Mad River. This study should be conducted within the next few months, and is intended to refine the SWAP Program's karst delineation methods. An additional dye-trace study may be conducted in northwest Ohio.

- The First Energy Berger Plant has requested a permit to drill a well 8,000 feet deep for carbon dioxide injection. The Agency questions: (1) their request for an extensive open borehole instead of injecting only into discrete zones; (2) the quantity they wish to inject (100 million tons/year).

- DDAGW's GIS staff are completing a series of county maps (2x3-foot format) for the SWAP Secure Web site, which will enable Web users to view SWAP areas at any scale. GIS layers also will be available on this site. However, OEPA is still a few years away from an interactive Internet map server.

- The division also plans to make the ground water impacts database available on the Web in GIS mode.

- This year bills were introduced into both the House and Senate that would take away the ability of local jurisdictions to zone out aggregate mining. This worried many public water systems with wells completed in prolific sand-and-gravel aquifers. The two bills were recently revised into H.B. 433, which appears to remove the language curbing local zoning powers. However, there is language stating that the provisions of the revised bill do not apply to activities regulated by the state, federal or local jurisdictions. What this means has not yet been clarified.

- The task of siting new wells will be transferred to the Source Water Protection staff, probably starting in March 2007. This will require an overhaul of the well siting and approval procedures and some staff training. DDAGW will also look for better ways to notify prospective public water suppliers of the need to apply to Ohio EPA for a permit. The goal is to reduce the number of "discovered" systems already in operation, and possibly improperly sited.

- The Source Water Protection Program will be issuing a questionnaire in January to all municipal water systems, asking what are the most significant contaminant sources in their SWAP areas, what protective strategies they are planning or implementing, and the status of their protection plans. This information will be used to target outreach and technical/financial assistance.

- The Miami Conservancy District plans to provide grants to eligible communities within the Great Miami Basin for source water protection implementation, probably starting this fall. As much as \$120,000 may be made available.

- Kristy Hunt transferred to OEPA's Division of Environmental Financial Assistance (DEFA) at the end of November. Any questions regarding the SWEET program may be referred to Jeanne Russell at ODNR - Soil and Water Conservation or to Linda Slattery or Barb Lubberger at Ohio EPA - DDAGW.

#### **Ohio Department of Health:**

- Regional training of the local health districts is complete.

- ODH is partnering with OTCO to provide State exams for sewage treatment system installers, service providers, and septage haulers in 23 locations around Ohio. Once they pass the exam, they must obtain a surety bond and register with the local health department.

#### **Ohio EPA, Division of Surface Water:**

- The small-flow wastewater treatment systems that were formerly regulated by DSW will now be regulated by ODH (the list is on ODH's Web site). If the local health department agrees to oversee permitting, the system will register for a "general permit" with them. Otherwise, they must apply to ODH for an individual permit.

- Beneficial use rules for fly ash, bottom ash and foundry sands are out for public comment .

- OEPA has requested that the Ohio Environmental Council et al. withdraw their 2002 suit against the agency, which alleged that OEPA was dragging its feet in completing TMDLs. At that time DSW announced a goal to complete 50 TMDLs by 2007. However, they have already completed 56 TMDLs, significantly exceeding their goal.

- Recently new rules have been issued for

- use designations
- land application management plans
- NPDES permit requirements

- DSW is developing water quality standards for nitrate and phosphorus.

#### **Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Soil and Water Conservation:**

- Glen Alexander will remain as interim director of ODNR through the transition.

- The Ohio Nonpoint Source Management Plan 2005-2010 was approved by USEPA in August 2006.

- A major effort to digitize all of Ohio's 88 county soil surveys is nearing completion. The soils staff will transition to providing technical services to the Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

- Contracts for watershed coordinators went out yesterday. There are 20 new contracts, and nine renewed. The majority of the watershed groups (21) have state-endorsed watershed action plans and are focused on actively implementing them.

- The OWRC recently loaded the updated agency directory on its Web site (<http://www.ohiodnr.com/owrc/>). Revisions should be provided to Greg Nageotte as needed (greg.nageotte@dnr.state.oh.us).

- As part of the OWRC's Strategic Plan implementation, ODNR's Division of Water and USGS will conduct a gain-loss study to obtain information on stream-aquifer interaction within the Darby Creek watershed.

- The OWRC's metadata site is being transferred to ODNR.

- An OWRC advisory committee meeting is scheduled for January 26<sup>th</sup>.

**United States Geological Survey, Ohio Water Science Center:**

- USGS still does not have a budget and is operating on a continuing resolution. Until this is resolved, they cannot make major purchases or commitments of funds.

- Recently a staff complaint about the agency's rigorous peer review process came out in the national press as the Administration's effort to "stifle science".

- USGS' annual report will no longer be issued hard copy. Instead, it will be accessible on-line.

- Ralph recently attended ODNR's Applied Research Conference in Athens, Ohio. The focus was acid-mine drainage and Harry Payne, recently retired from ODNR, was the keynote speaker. He noted that the rules for restoring mined areas have been largely driven by the coal companies, and currently Western companies are complaining that all the funds are being used to clean up sites in the east.

- Ralph noted that in terms of area impacted, acid mine drainage is the number-one water quality issue in Ohio.

- The Water Management Association of Ohio (WMAO) plans to partner with the Ohio Water Environmental Association on a Spring Conference. The focus will be watersheds and a request for papers will go out soon.

- Field work will be conducted in the Spring for the gain-loss and temperature studies on the Little Darby River. Denise Dumouchelle is the contact.

USGS is conducting QA/QC on its Stream stats program, a point-and-click system that runs statistics for any watershed in the state.

- USGS recently published the following reports:

- *Assessment of the Use of Selected Chemical and Microbiological Constituents as Indicators of Wastewater in Curtain Drains from Home Sewage-Treatment Systems in Medina County, Ohio* (Scientific Investigations Report 2006-5183)
- *Simulation of Streamflow and Water Quality to Determine Fecal Coliform and Nitrate Concentrations and Loads in the Mad River Basin, Ohio* (Scientific Investigations Report 2006-5160)
- *Evaluation of Nitrate Concentrations and Sources in the Elk Creek Watershed, Southwestern Ohio, 2003-2004* (Scientific Investigations Report 2006-5223)

All of these reports are available on-line at the USGS web site (<http://pubs.usgs.gov>)

**Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey:**

- The new state bedrock map is out and will soon be available on-line. This is the first update in 86 years.

- Larry Wickstrom is acting chief of the Division.

- Mac Swinford is acting assistant chief.

- At this time, approximately 25% of the OGS staff are new-hires.

**Public Utilities Commission of Ohio:**

No updates.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service:**

- The agency is operating on a continuing resolution until February 15<sup>th</sup>.

- There have been many staff changes recently, including retirements of three field staff and the following central office staff:

- John Warmer - ASTC - Programs
- Art Brate - State Engineer
- Charles Loggins - Soil Conservationist

Also, Tom Perrin has been reassigned from ASTC-Field Coordinator in Medina to ASTC-Programs.

Michelle Lohstroh has been reassigned from ASTC-Administration to ASTC-Special Operations.

John Wilson has been reassigned from ASTC-Field Coordinator (Findlay) to acting ASTC Administrator.

- NRCS' Easement Hazardous Material Form, which must be completed to obtain an easement, has ballooned to a 60-page document requiring literature searches, personal interviews, and on-site investigation. This is in response to an incident in another state, where inadequate information caused an easement to be sited over a Superfund site.

***Ohio Department of Transportation:***

No updates.

***Ohio EPA, Directors Office:***

- Joe Koncelik submitted his resignation as Director, effective December 29<sup>th</sup>. There is still no word from the Governors Office on who will replace him. The Agency is not filling the vacant deputy director positions at this time.

- An update was provided on the status of Ohio EPA's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). Also, an overview was provided of statewide preparations for the possibility of a declared pandemic.

**FUTURE SCCGW MEETINGS**

February 15<sup>th</sup>: USGS

April 19<sup>th</sup>: Ohio EPA, new Conference Ctr., room A

June 21<sup>st</sup>: USGS

August: Horace Collins site

October: Horace Collins site

December: TBD

**REMINDER:** Meeting agendas and final meeting summaries will be posted on the SCCGW Web site.

<http://www.ohiosccgw.org/>