

National Ground Water Strategy Committee

Date Authorized/ Reauthorized: Grandfathered until April, 2009/ *

Current Status: Active

Purpose:

The Purpose of the National Ground Water Strategy Committee is to provide an organized venue that:

- Improves and refocuses water resource protection and management by strengthening ground water programs and initiatives at all levels of government;
- Addresses the implementation of the Recommended Actions described within the GWPC Ground Water Report to the Nation: A Call to Action and identifies activities and products that further their implementation; and
- Evaluates the need for a coordinated, national plan of action emphasizing the protection and sustainable use of ground water, and providing for adequate support to state, regional, and local ground water protection, management, and conservation programs.

Priority Activities:

1. Status of Government Efforts - Update existing information on GW programs and provide analysis of common themes and elements among states and regions with regard to both quality and sustainability.

Write up what's happening and not happening, analysis and presentation of existing programs and efforts with regard to both quality and quantity. Utilizing existing information to identify what's working and what's not and identify common themes or effective elements of successful state, regional and federal ground water protection programs. Existing information includes:

- GWPC-NGWA Survey (2006)
- Not a duplication of GW Report information - would be fleshing out specifics of particular program elements, more than case studies
- Previous state fact sheets (2000 GW Report to Congress and 2002/2003 latest updates from GWPC) and potentially revise template for 2008-2009 updates to reflect GW report and programmatic info we are looking for

2. National Policy/Strategy for Sustainable Ground Water Management* - Develop positions to suggest as a model national water strategy inclusive of ground water, including but not limited to working within the EPA strategic planning process.

- Work with ECOS, ASIWPCA, and WSWC regarding coverage of ground water in the CWA, the proposed Clean Water Restoration Act. This committee could draft positions for consideration by the GWPC Board.
- Develop comments and a position statement suggesting a model national water strategy inclusive of ground water.
 - Define what the committee considers to be elements of effective national-level leadership in ground water protection. Consider and utilize 1990's EPA documents already comprehensive on the subject and finding from Priority Area #1.
 - Prepare and submit comments to include ground water in the EPA's Water Strategy through the State Steering Committee, as invited by EPA.
 - Emphasize the following areas in a white paper/position on a national water strategy inclusive of ground water:
 - Discuss the critical importance of ground water as a component of watersheds/ecosystems from all the relevant aspects including: hydrogeological, ecological, economical, public health, energy, agriculture, mining and other industries etc.
 - Discuss integration of the CWA and SDWA
 - Emphasize that ground and surface waters are one and the same resource thus should not be separated in any national strategy to protect watersheds. Some committee members feel the national strategy should be based on 3-dimensional watersheds. Some prefer to emphasize aquifers as entities in need of protection and effective management.
- *GW Management – This term does not mean the same thing in all states or parts of the country. In the title for this priority area it is meant to be inclusive of both protection of water quality and sustainable management of water quantity (including conservation). One suggested task for this committee is to better define and bring more consensus to what is meant by GW management and identify the key elements of effective management.

3. Coordination across related programs and efforts - Coordination across related programs and efforts – Identify, develop further, and advocate for coordination recommendations including those addressing sustainability and ground water allocation; surface water – ground water interaction; use of existing ground water data to manage differentially; the role of ground water in energy production; and remediation programs operating under RCRA, CERCLA, and state voluntary cleanup programs.

- Availability and Sustainability
 - Discuss roles for GWPC to increase coordination between GW protection (quality) programs and ground water appropriation (allocation) agencies at state level.
 - Analysis status of coordination between state ground water quality and quantity programs.
 - For GWPC Annual Forum 2009, develop entire track on Availability and Sustainability and what states are doing.

- Encourage a management approach that considers and promotes sustainable use of ground water resources.
- Surface Water – Ground Water Interaction (These also fit with #2 Strategy/Policy)
 - Discuss GWPC's role in enhance working relationships with surface water counterparts and suggest recommendations regarding comprehensive management.
 - Encourage the identification of the role of ground water in ecosystems and its contribution to, and interaction with surface waters at the national, state, and local levels.
 - Demonstrate the ground water contribution to surface water to enhance EPA's understanding of the vital role and importance of ground water in federal Clean Water Act (CWA) programs and encourage the development of tools that recognize interaction.
- Emphasize use of existing ground water data to manage GW differentially. (define Mike W, by use and by vulnerability)
 - There have been numerous efforts e.g. by USGS, the NWQMC, currently by the ACWI Subcommittee on GW, and others. This committee should provide input, contribution and/or support to these efforts.
- Emphasize the role of ground water in energy production. – This may be included in a strategy/policy.
- Remediation programs operating under RCRA/CERCLA/state voluntary cleanup programs. There is a great deal of variation in how ground water resources are valued even within the same agencies and having a more coordinated effort would at least allow for more consistency within a state or agency.

4. Messaging and marketing ground water – Identify methods and tools to market ground water protection for use by GWPC and other GW advocates.

- Discuss effective means for this committee to play a role in “selling” ground water protection and improving public understanding of the role and importance of ground water. There are already numerous tools and organizations out there doing this, e.g. GW Guardian, NGWA and others. This committee should determine GWPC's particular roles and activities with funding and staffing realities in mind.

Members:

Kevin Frederick, State of Wyoming, Chair
 Dave Terry, State of Massachusetts, Co-chair

Work Products/ Accomplishments:

* Working committees must be reauthorized by the Board annually