Collaborative Approaches to Source Water Protection Plan and Stormwater MS4 Implementation
Issues:

Community water systems develop source water protection plans and often struggle with implementation.

Communities are falling under more scrutiny to implement and enforce their NPDES permits for stormwater.

What stands in their way?

- Time
- Staff
- Knowledge
- Money
Challenge: Large Number of Community Water Systems
Challenge: Staff Resources

PA DEP Regions

PRWA SWP Staff
The “Old” Way to Plan

• Build a relationship with the system
• Form Steering Committee and discuss issues/risks
• Lengthy process to delineate sources (and $$) and identify all risks – detailed process
• Plans may take multiple years to develop
The Results?

- Small number of plans annually, high quality products
- Systems had attention beyond plan completion
- Implementation had a high success rate, even to date
- Long-term, substantial partnerships formed
Fast Forward to 2014...
The New Way to “Plan”

- PA still has money to pay for delineation work – full plans are still being developed
- PRWA and other partners have been offering a more informal “hands-on” SWP approach to reach more systems
- New in 2012: SWAP Assist
- “Evaluate” the system and offer site specific potential solutions
A New Approach... Collaboration
“Implementation is Hard!”

- Myth: “I don’t have the time to implement my plan”
- Myth: “Implementation takes a lot of money”
- Myth: “I need to create something new to implement my plan”
Strength in Numbers

The Situation

- Nearly 200 “approved” plans in PA
- ~400 other systems that have a plan in place or some acknowledgment of implementation
- 600 v. 9 – only so much attention to each system

The Answer (for now)

- Some counties had many of the “big” systems with approved plans in place
- More systems in conjunction with limited time, resources, and staff needed a different approach
- Good relationships with county agencies + a willingness to lead
Current Coalitions
Why Coalitions?

- Utilize existing education and enforcement programs
- Rural systems are comfortable at this level of cooperation
- Approved plans require an annual report submitted to PA DEP – cooperation delivers a mechanism for systems to actually implement their SWP plans and submit this report
Why Do They Work?

- Define a mission/vision
- Create a logo
- Meet regularly (quarterly most common)
- Have strong County support
- Have strong PA DEP support
- They DO something
Success Stories: Source Water Protection
Potter – Tioga Partnership

- Focus on emergency response – began in 2012
- Very rural areas; just integrating GIS into their 911 systems
- Overlay known SWP areas with existing GIS coverages
- Establish line of communication between the County, PA DEP, and public water suppliers
- Obtained grant monies to publish maps and distribute to systems
Eastern Lancaster (ELANCO)

- 4 Primary PWS that had SWP plans approved in 2012
- Source Water Collaborative support in 2013 – held a workshop for Amish and Mennonite farmers
- Great deal of local support from agencies and local government
- Expanding focus on businesses and other smaller PWS
Lower Susquehanna Region

- Six County regional effort
- Primary themes include SWP, Stormwater, and Emergency Response
- Agencies, PWS, Associations, EMA
- Primary niche is information sharing – meet 2/3x per year
Success Stories: Stormwater/MS4
Stormwater Primer

- Municipal stormwater falls under US EPA’s NPDES permit program (DEP enforces the program in PA)
- Implemented in two phases (Phase I – 1990, Phase II – 1999) for specific urbanized areas
- Essentially, municipalities are responsible for and have a permit for their stormwater
- 5-year permit cycles; 6 minimum control measures
- Annual reports and some very specific required activities
Source Water vs. Stormwater

Similarities

- Need sound science and data to make more informed and better decisions
- Strong emphasis on public education/outreach – changing a culture
- Very few are willing to go “above and beyond” alone
- Allow creative and new solutions to solve problems
- The implementing groups and expertise in the field don’t always match up
- Lack of funding for implementation
2010 Pennsylvania MS4 municipalities
Berks County MS4 Steering Committee

- 36 MS4 municipalities
- Collaborative with County Planning, Conservation District, and Berks County Conservancy
- Members pay to be a part of it
- Group works to meet Public Education and Outreach requirements, as well as general permit guidance
York County

- 37 MS4 municipalities
- County Planning office is driving a County-wide approach
- Other requirements beyond the permits – Chesapeake Bay, TMDLs, etc.
- Full support from PA DEP, Center for Watershed Protection
- Researching the possibility of a County-wide stormwater authority/fee
Altoona MS4 Coalition

- 13 MS4 municipalities
- Parts of the City of Altoona are a Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) – needs to be removed
- Have worked with outside groups – Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Center for Watershed Protection
- City of Altoona has been very active in encouraging the public to get involved in helping them with identifying illicit discharges
Expanding on Success

- Create “Water Supplier Coalitions” – not just SWP
- Use the “big guys” to pull in the “little guys”
- Sustainability
- Capability Enhancement
- System Efficiency
- Overall Coordination amongst CWS in a County/region
- Learn from each other – increase/encourage communication between groups
Thank You!

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