

Michigan Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council
Meeting Summary
August 22, 2006

August 22, 2006 GWCAC meeting attendees:

Council Members

Jon Allan	Suhmed Bahl
Rich Bowman	Jim Cleland
James Clift	Jon Coleman
Michael R. Gregg	Fred Henningsen
Rod Mersino	Michael Newman
Bill Pearson	Scott Piggott
Paul Seelbach	

Guests

Dan Aager, Potato Growers of Michigan
Jon Bartholic MSU/IWR
Jim Bredin MDEQ-OGL
Mary Ericson National Wildlife Federation
Ed Everett
Patricia Fouchey DNR
Dave Hamilton MDEQ-LWMD
Lyndon Kelley MSU Extension
Jim Nicholas USGS
Dave Regalubo, Golder Associates

Organizational business

The agenda was reviewed and revised. Introductions were made. Jon Allan informed the committee that he had recently spoken with the DEQ Director Steven Chester about the progress of the GWCAC. He also indicated to the director that the subcommittees have been formed and have been meeting.

Project Funding

Paul Seelbach, Jim Cleland and Jon Bartholic discussed project funding. Paul Seelbach informed the council of the \$500,000 allotted by the Legislators to implement the assessment tool. \$300,000 was provided to USGS for development of the tool. Paul also stated that \$40–50,000 will be used by the DNR for the fish modeling portion of the tool with the rest going to MSU for development of the public interface.

Jim Cleland informed the Council that DEQ received funding of \$500,000 and that the funding will not be available until Oct 1, 2007, for fiscal year 2007. The funding is for implementing the three modified water withdrawal statutes, for support and maintenance of new groundwater data bases and for contracting.

Jon Bartholic informed the Council that a Star Grant application has been submitted to the EPA requesting \$300,000 to be used over the course of 3 years for development of sustainability criteria and indicators. EPA approval might not occur until late February.

Legislative Report Outline/Structure

In late January or early February the Council would like to present an update to the Legislature. It was suggested that before the final report is given to the Legislator a public meeting be held in Lansing. Jon Allan will contact Senator Birkholz's office to indicate our preference.

Jim Nicholas lead a discussion on the components of the July 2007 Council Report. The introduction will be similar to the GWCAC 2006 Report including a listing of the members, the guiding principles, processes followed, and the peer review process. After the introduction information, the report will identify how the assessment tool works, how it should be used, and the assumptions and limitations. The third section will cover implementation costs, Annex 2001 conformance, Act 177 progress, legal issues, and mitigation.

Since the report will be geared for the Legislature it will be a non-technical report with technical references.

Subcommittee Updates

Legal Subcommittee - James Clift informed the Council that the legal subcommittee held a brainstorming meeting where scenarios were discussed. Clift plans to put together a number of scenarios discussed by the subcommittee members. He will send them out to the Council members for review and then send the scenarios out to colleagues to try to identify additional issues. These opinions will be discussed by the subcommittee members then presented to the Council by early November.

Mitigation Subcommittee - Tom Newman discussed the June 26 subcommittee meeting on mitigation. This subcommittee plans to work closely with the legal subcommittee.

Sustainability Subcommittee - The Sustainability Committee strategy was discussed by Jon Coleman. A STAR Grant from the EPA is being requested. The committee doesn't expect approved before February. The committee will review its backup plan to make sure they'll still have enough time to come up with a report if the Star grant is not approved.

Assessment Tool Subcommittee - Jon Allan gave a report on the Assessment Tool Subcommittee. The Assessment Tool Subcommittee has met twice since the July GWCAC Meeting. A time line has been developed. The group is currently exploring the various components of the tool and how they fit together. The group will develop a conceptual model for showing this relationship.

Regression Statistics for Stream Flow

The Council was provided an update on index flow using standard textbook procedures by DEQ staff. The Subcommittee's goal is to have index flows developed by end of September working with USGS.

Annex 2001 Update

Jim Bredin provided a brief overview of Annex 2001, an agreement between all of the Great Lakes states and providences. The Agreement provides for a ban on diversion of Great Lakes water with certain exceptions. The Council of the Great Lakes Governors is developing draft compact implementing language. Jim agreed to provide a draft update of the annex 2001 process to the Council for their consideration for the final report

GWACAC Webpage

The Council members discussed the GWACAC Website (<http://www.michigan.gov/dnrgwacac>). The Council members to review the Website and any question comments should be sent to Pat Fouchey who will direct the question to the correct council member.

Groundwater Impacts on Stream Flow

Jim Nicholas discussed groundwater withdrawals and the assessment tool. He stated that the assessment tool will have 3 models within it; one on groundwater pumping, one on surface water flow, and one will be a fish model. To better understand how the models link together a diagram will be put together and brought to the next GWACAC meeting.

Guiding Principles

The Council, lead by Jon Allan, discussed the development of guiding principles. Copies of the Guiding Principles from the earlier report were distributed. All members agreed that the Guiding Principles helped focus the committee members. The Council members agreed that there may be a need to develop guiding principles that reflect their new assignment. All Subcommittees are asked to discuss guiding principles at their next meeting.

Scheduling future meetings

The schedule of future meeting is as below:

September 20, 2006, 10:00 to 3:00 in Grand Rapids (Prein & Newhof facilities)

October 25, 2006, 10:00 to 3:00 in Roscommon (DNR RAM Center)

November 30, 2006 10:00 to 3:00 in Grand Rapids (Amway Grand Plaza)