

**Water Use Advisory Council (WUAC) Meeting**  
**Tuesday, April 21, 2020**  
**1-3 p.m.**

**Online via Microsoft Teams Hosted by**  
**Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE)**

**1. Welcome and Meeting Logistics**

Laura Campbell, Co-Chair, Farm Bureau, welcomed members and guests and shared the logistics for participation in the meeting. She then took a roll attendance of members and their alternates. Members were individually asked to provide any comments and/or changes regarding the agenda and minutes at this time. The attendance of non-members present was taken by their presence on Teams. Those present via phone were then asked to introduce themselves in order to record their attendance.

**WUAC Members/Alternates in Attendance:**

Christine Alexander, Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)

Margaret Bettenhausen, Attorney General

Bryan Burroughs/Taylor Ridderbusch, Michigan Trout Unlimited

Laura Campbell/Matt Smego Michigan Farm Bureau

James Clift, Deputy Director, EGLE

Scott DeBoe, Consumers Energy

Abigail Eaton, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)

Brian Eggers, AKT Peerless

Tom Frazier, Michigan Townships Association

Mike Gallagher, Michigan Groundwater Association

Dave Hamilton, The Nature Conservancy

Steve Kohler, Kalamazoo River Watershed Council

Doug Needham, Michigan Aggregates Association

Jim Nicholas, Nicholas-H2O

Pat Staskiewicz/Clyde Dugan, Michigan Section American Water Works Association

Jason Walther/Kelly Turner, Agricultural Irrigators

Tom Zimnicki/Grenetta Thomassey Michigan Environmental Council

Frank Ettawageshik, United Tribes of Michigan

Tammy Newcomb, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)

Buddy Sebastian/Mike Frederick, Michigan Groundwater Association

John Yellich, Michigan Geological Survey

**WUAC Members/Alternates Absent:**

Charlie Scott/Jon Scott, Michigan Golf Course Owners Association

Rachel Proctor, Consumers Energy

Rich Bowman, The Nature Conservancy

Jim Johnson, MDARD

Jason Geer, Michigan Chamber of Commerce

Sue Hanf, Michigan Aggregates Association

Kyle Rorah/Nikki Ghorpade, Ducks Unlimited

**Non-members present:**

Hannah Arnett, EGLE  
Jeremiah Asher, Institute Water Research Michigan State University  
Christopher Gothberg, EGLE  
Clay Joupperi, EGLE  
Dave Lusch, MSU  
Jim Milne, EGLE  
Aaron Rice  
Nathaniel Shuff, EGLE  
Christine Spitzley, OHM Advisors  
Andy LeBaron, EGLE  
Emily Finnell, Office of the Great Lakes  
Ralph Haefner, USGS  
Mark Snow, EGLE  
Joel Henry, Golder and Associates  
Jill VanDyke, EGLE  
John Stears  
Laura Doud, MDARD  
Teresa Seidel, EGLE  
Matt Tomlinson, EGLE  
Michael Osier, EGLE  
Bob Ottwell, FLOW  
Elle Gulotty, MDNR Fisheries Division  
Jim Ostrowski, EGLE

**2. Approval of Agenda-Roll Call Vote**

Agenda approved by consensus as presented. No comments/edits received.

**3. Approval of Minutes-Roll Call Vote**

Meeting minutes of February 18, 2020 approved by consensus as presented. No comments/edits received.

**4. Public Comment**

John Stears complimented the WUAC for working to make their meetings inclusive of the public with strong attention to Freedom of Information Act and for making it a place the average person can participate.

**5. Overview of the current status of EGLE and WUAC operations during COVID-19 and Program Staff Update --Jim Milne, MI Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy**

Milne reported EGLE is continuing to function during Covid-19 with most staff working remote except for lab and field staff. All staff have secure Virtual Private Network (VPN) connections and have laptops or are using their desktop computers at home. Most do not have access to their direct work lines and must call in to check their voicemail. E-mails instead of phone calls is the best way to contact Water Use Program staff during this time. Only essential travel is allowed and only while maintaining safe distances from people and wearing protective masks and gloves. Remote meetings such as this will continue to be held as EGLE is still hard at work protecting human health, safety, and the environment.

Milne then shared the following:

Program Metrics

- 112 SSRs submitted
- 14 SSR decisions not made ≤ 10 business days
- 14 total SSRs still pending
- 87.5% of SSR decisions made ≤ 10 business days
- Average business days to SSR decision 8.2

Compliance Metrics

Compliance Communications:

Amended registrations 290

After the fact registrations 77

Missing pump information 98

First Violation Notices 23

Second Violation Notices 2

Violations Closed 9

Public Water Supply Pre-Screening Reviews

- Passed: Caledonia Township, City of Hillsdale
- Denied: Village of Mendon increase

**6. Program Update --Abby Eaton, MI Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**

Eaton reported that due to issues with their water use reporting database MDARD is extending the water use reporting deadline to June 15, 2020. If anyone has any questions, please reach out to Abby Eaton or Bob Pigg for assistance.

## 7. Committee Updates

### ▪ Data Collection Committee

#### ○ Bryan Burroughs, Michigan Trout Unlimited

The DATA Committee has met several times to discuss the charges before the committee. The committee spent meeting time reviewing the previous recommendations from the last iteration of the WUAC, as they pertained to both the Environmental Monitoring (EM) and Inland Lakes ARI (IL) committees. All the previous recommendations have been reviewed and discussed. The committee also spent some time identifying new topics, not reflected in the previous recommendations that it should address. It was also noted that all members are welcome and encouraged to participate in committee meetings.

Out of the previous EM and IL recommendations, the DATA Committee is now presenting the following guidance on how it has prioritized these for follow up by the DATA Committee.

Priority	Ranking Previous Recommendation Code/Number
High	EM1.1, EM2.1, EM2.3, EM1.2
High-Moderate	IL2.2a
Moderate	EM2.2, EM2.4, EM2.5, IL1.1
Moderate-Low	EM1.5, EM1.6
Low	EM1.3, EM1.4, EM1.7, IL1.2, IL2.1, IL2.2, IL2.2b, IL2.2a

To summarize these, the three previous recommendations receiving the highest priority, include:

- The strategic acquisition of critical new data (EM 1.1 & 2.3), which includes both streamflow data and what was termed “groundwater data” in the previous report (which we hereby explicitly note to include both verified “groundwater” and “geological” data types that are both necessary in order to better understand groundwater dynamics).
- The other top priority is the identification and development of a data storage, management and use framework that is capable of holding all critical forms of water related data, or facilitating the interlinkages of existing or new databases to this end (EM2.1). On this EM2.2, there is recognition that at present (in contrast to when the previous recommendation was made), there is a need to ensure that development of a water management data system is capable of not only providing utility to “water quantity” management needs but also “water quality” management needs, and that the development of it should address both.

To address these top priorities, the DATA Committee is preparing to address all of the recommendations for strategic acquisition of new data relevant to the program, holistically, by assessing the status of data today, identifying gaps, and prioritizing strategic acquisition of data to fill gaps. The need to address the development of a state water management data platform, is still under discussion within the committee. The Committee is exploring whether funding will

soon be available to develop a contract with appropriate entities to begin conceptual planning and development aspects of this. If funding is found, the Committee will attempt to see what can be done on this recommendation to further clarify it prior to their final report. If however, no funding is available to initiate this project, the DATA committee will attempt to draft a rough conceptual description of the needs and vision, for inclusion in their final report, which would include a financial estimate of the cost required to initiate this work formally.

Many of the other recommendations require the Committee to further review the status and identify the work to complete each, and then execute the needed work to see each is fully implemented. While some may require financial investments in the future, many appear to mostly need the Committee's time to develop proposals for completing each in acceptable manners. As the Committee works through the coming months, its agenda will likely combine time to both work on the larger high priority items, but also to see if several of the lower priority recommendations might be accomplished by the Committee, and presented to the council for implementation.

Discussion ensued including offers by Tammy Newcomb to add the resources and participation of the MDNR who have historically been involved and supportive of these efforts. Buddy Sebastian made similar comments and offers regarding the inclusion of well drillers in order to draw on their experience and expertise. A reminder was also made for all interested members to actively participate in committee meetings.

▪ **Implementation Strategies Committee**

○ **Douglas Needham, Michigan Aggregates Association**

Co-Chair Needham reported the Committee narrowed past recommendations from 70 to 35 items. The 35 ranked items in the HLH and HHH categories in the Impact/Effort/Urgency column (H = high, L = low). The following is a summary of the voting:

- 5 votes – TU2.2, TU7.1, EM2.1
- 4 votes – TU.3.1, EM2.4
- 3 votes – TU1.1, TU1.2, TU1.3, TU1.3a, TU1.3b, EM2.2, EM2.3
- 2 votes – TU6.1, EM1.6
- 1 vote – EM1.2, EM1.1, TU4.1, EM1.3, TU4.2

Recommendations and costs were provided for the top five ranked items. Initial considerations for implementation include cost, available funding and availability of SOM staff. The availability of \$100,000 in CMI funds was asked. Seidel reported that it is unknown at this time whether the funds will be approved for this purpose.

The Committee is currently focusing on past recommendations per 12/12/14 Final Report and will need input from other committee's regarding both past and current improvements. Needham posed the following questions on behalf of the Committee for the WUAC to consider:

- How many items do we want to address?
- How much funding are we seeking?
- What other factors should we consider?

- **Models Committee**

- **Dave Hamilton, The Nature Conservancy**

Co-Chair Hamilton shared the Models Committee will coordinate with the Implementation Committee by prioritizing their recommendations. This will be done after they have a better handle on which recommendations, they will have ready for this year.

The Committee recommends an update to the Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool (WWAT) user interface to display registration information. This is a relatively small project that will make more information available to the user through WWAT's interactive map interface. This will result in time and cost savings for EGLE staff. Cost estimates will need to come from the Department of Technology Management and Budget (DTMB), who will do the work on this State database. The Committee anticipates there will be other projects that will also need to be completed by DTMB. The Committee plans to bundle several projects together before requesting cost estimates from DTMB.

There was discussion about using Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI) dollars for implementing some of the council's recommendations.

John Yellich also discussed trainings for well drillers on describing the geologic units encountered in their drill cores and cuttings in their well logs.

A workgroup Chaired by Jim Nicholas, prepared draft comments on the Aquifer Test Guidelines and will continue working with EGLE staff to develop better and clearer guidance.

The Committee is discussing projects to update storage coefficients and transmissivity used in the WWAT. There is a need to identify areas where this would be scientifically appropriate and would result in more accurate streamflow depletion calculations.

The group shared for information purposes their process to update the Water Withdrawal Assessment Process (WWAP) and Screening Tool. The Committee's draft document reviews the statutes and original documents that created the WWAP and Screening Tool to find guidance regarding the appropriate processes necessary to modify the overall process or tool. The key language is summarized, and an initial assessment is made of how these apply to the changes considered by the Models Committee.

- **New Topics Committee**

- **Pat Staskiewicz, MI Section American Water Works Association**

Co-Chair Staskiewicz reported no new topics have been referred to this committee. A meeting is planned for May 5, 10am-11am to discuss Water Users Groups. An additional meeting will be held either later in May or in June to discuss Water Conservation and Efficiency. It was suggested the Committee reach out to Office of the Great Lakes regarding water conservation efforts.

## **8. Open Comments**

John Stears shared concerns about the priority of spending money on some of the council's recommendations given the potential for an economic downturn. He also suggested we turn to society's youth for innovation and ideas for the answers we are seeking to the current problems and issues facing the WUAC. He believes the three priorities are 1) obtaining funding from fines from compliance and enforcement; 2) a transparent database for measurements and other data; and 3) more transparency regarding water use.

## **9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for June 23, 2020 at 1 p.m. The meeting will be held either in Lansing, MI or online in a format like today's meeting.

The remainder of WUAC 2020 meetings are scheduled as follow:

- August 18, 2020, from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Greenstone FCS
- October 20, 2020, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Constitution Hall in Lansing
- December 15, 2020, from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Constitution Hall in Lansing

## **10. Motion to Adjourn**

There being no further business, Co-Chair Campbell called for a motion to adjourn. There was a motion to adjourn with support. Meeting adjourned by consensus.