

NC Source Water Collaborative May 16, 2012 Meeting Summary

Summary

The purpose of the May 16, 2012 meeting of the NC Source Water Collaborative (SW Collaborative) was to come to consensus on the primary Objectives of the SW Collaborative, prioritize the list of initiatives that previously has been identified and select 2-3 initiatives to begin working on. While we were able to successfully address most of the agenda items, we ran out of time and were not able to completely refine and prioritize the list of initiatives. The following sections provide detailed overview of each agenda item discussion from the May meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

Introductions were made. Meeting notes from February meeting were approved. Purpose of meeting was presented. The following people attended the meeting and introduced themselves:

Amy Axon, DWR
Ed Buchan, City of Raleigh
Lisa Corbett, Mecklenburg Co
Bill Eaker, Land of Sky COG
Jay Frick, DWR
Gale Johnson, DWR
Amy Keyworth, DWQ
Beth McGee, CWMTF
Rick Seekins, Kerr Tar COG
Dale Threatt-Taylor, DACS – DSWC
Julie Ventaloro, DWQ
A driene Weaver, DWQ

Patrick Beggs, NCSU – Cooperative Extension
Melinda Chapman, USGS
Holly Denham, DWR
Julie Elmore, USDA – NRCS
Tom Hill, DACS – DSWC
Evan Kane, DWQ
Jeff Marcus, WRC
Christy Perrin, NCSU – Cooperative Extension
Cy Stober, Piedmont Triad Regional Council
Phil Trew, High Mountain COG
Johnny Wear, Western Piedmont COG

Review and Approval of the Operational Structure Document

The operational structure document had been emailed out to the SW Collaborative participants for review prior to the meeting. No major concerns regarding the document were raised. The group agreed to use the 5-finger scale, as described in the document, as a consensus building/decision making procedure. The document was accepted by the group and is now considered final.

Status Report on Statement of Purpose and Commitment

The most current version of the Purpose and Commitment document was presented. They were reminded to get the remaining signatures in as soon as possible. One misspelled name was noted and corrected. A reminder will be sent out after the meeting to those who have not yet signed the document.

Refine and Prioritize Source Water Protection Initiatives

In preparation for this task, the SW Collaborative facilitators (Jay, Christy, Patrick and Amy) used the list of potential initiatives (gathered during the December 2011 meeting) to create the “*SW Collaborative Objectives and Initiatives*” document. The purpose of this document is to attempt to compile and categorize the initiatives in a way that would allow the SW Collaborative to start efficiently prioritizing them. The initiatives were categorized under four broad Objectives:

- A. Promote Source Water Protection through Education, Outreach and Messaging
- B. Broaden Source Water Protection Understanding through Enhanced Information Collection and Sharing
- C. Forge Partnerships and Create Connections to Leverage Mutual Objectives
- D. Identify and Create Incentives for Source Water Protection

Discussion of Objectives

The SW Collaborative Objectives and Initiatives document was displayed for all to see. The first step was to discuss, revise and agree upon the Objectives. Participants were asked to individually and silently, review the 4 Objectives and consider what was missing and what changes needed to be made. We then opened the topic for discussion. Below is an attempt to capture the majority of the comments made during this discussion:

Question (Q): Is there any money for the SW Collaborative initiatives. Response (R): Collaborative does not have specific money attached to it, however we may be able to identify small amounts for specific needs. It was also noted that for the purposes of this meeting, we would not limit our ideas based on funding availability.

Comment (C): create strategy and initiatives as a way to raise money.

Q: Is focus on ground water or surface water. R: is that the SW Collaborative focus is on drinking water, which is both, surface and ground.

C: We should be sure to include the whole state and anything that feeds into sources of drinking water. Don't limit ourselves at the state border. Consider healthy watersheds initiatives – APNEP model. We are finding opportunities that we are creating in VA that we can copy in NC.

C: Many state agencies have knowledge and many local COGs and others are capable of implementation. Need it to be a 2 way street, bringing info back to the SW Collaborative.

C: The Objectives are not actionable—they are lacking action terms for what to do or what will we do.

C: For Objective B. add resource sharing, remove understanding. Understanding is a key part of it though. Use “broaden” instead of “understanding”. Instead of “source water protection and understanding”, replace with “programming”. Changes in B will help lead to C, which is about forging ahead and doing.

C: Stewardship, it is not in any of the Objectives, yet it is in the Mission Statement.

Q: Do we have problems in the state that need to be targeted? Are there areas of high risk? R: we have done source water assessments which can be used as a tool.

Q: Is someone paying more to clean up their water?

C: We have natural issues and manmade issues with few resources available. Tie in benefits of clean water initiatives to water plant. Must remember that chemicals are cheap- WTP can take care of spills. Technically, we can clean just about any water we have – on some cities and plants.

C: We need case studies on economic and health based concerns.

C: Concept of sustainability/stewardship is missing from the discussion. Quantity is and will be a huge issue.

Q: We could start anywhere, the whole state needs work. Any start will be helpful, but where are SW Collaborative priorities? There is outdated infrastructure in lots of towns, drought. How do we create guidance for ourselves for where to start? R: Go to Rural Center, they create list each year.

C: I think these are broad enough that we can make these work.

C: We should keep using the broadness of source water protection – it is actually novel that it is so broad.

C: I think understanding leads to programming

Q: Is one about research and gathering information and other about getting it on the ground?

C: Protection might be better called stewardship.

C: I think the four objectives are about outreach, data, partnership, incentives.

Q: What if you kept Objective B as “data and understanding” and Objective C as “broaden programming and mutual partnerships and programs”?

C: If we are going to be a collaborative, one thing we can do along data lines is to analyze what is available and how it is done. Identify the challenges of different regions.

C: Objectives A, B, C and D have an increasing amount of complexity. There is an advantage to that since we can build on the success of A, for B, etc. This could help us have a better reputation among partners and others. That increasing complexity can work to our advantage.

C: As we think about prioritizing, it would be good to think about concrete things that we can get done in a timely manner. Trying to tackle all of it simultaneously won't work. Let's pick discrete achievable things to do first to get recognition.

Q: Should there be a 5th Objective: Develop a system to prioritize and implement source water protection issues?

C: We should strategize to try to reach the highest number of people with least amount of effort. Work on efficiency.

Q: Can you send out a survey to find out what is needed? It would be good to have all that info in one place. Response: The Environmental Finance Center may be able to help with a survey, they do an annual survey on rates. I think that is one of the Initiatives.

C: Like the idea of building understanding. We need to get support. Need to build partnerships. We need to do these things first.

C: Good to let them know we aren't threatening them, that we want to work with them . (THEM = any agencies, maybe regional water system, DWR, etc. just the people doing the work out there.)

C: I feel like the projects will come as we move forward with education. We are going to get a lot of information as we go out and begin education and outreach. We need to incorporate feedback into our outreach.

Based on the great discussion and ideas put forth, the group worked to revise and agree on a new version of the Objectives. The group agreed upon the Objectives A, B, C, D as written below:

- A. Promote Source Water Protection and Stewardship through Education, Outreach and Messaging
- B. Enhance Information Collection and Sharing to Support Broader Source Water Protection and Stewardship
- C. Create Connections and Partnerships that Leverage Resources to Support Mutual Objectives
- D. Identify and Create Incentives for Source Water Protection and Stewardship

The group also felt we should have a fifth Objective, which relates to developing a system to prioritize and implement source water protection issues. However, we ran out of time and were unable to come to consensus on the wording of the Objective and what initiatives would go with it. Developing language for the fifth Objective will put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Discussion of Initiatives

The purpose of this discussion was to start prioritizing the 28 initiatives and to ultimately pick 2-3 initiatives that the SW Collaborative would start to work on. Jay asked the group to consider selecting **#25: explore/develop an awards program as an incentive for Source Water Protection**. He explained that momentum is already growing for an awards program due to outside funding that allowed us to purchase award materials. Also, this initiative holds the potential to be a low hanging fruit project that draws attention to the SW Collaborative. Finally, the Source Water Protection Program is going to move forward with this incentive program and would like the support of the SW Collaborative.

The group supported this idea and initiative #25 was accepted as one of the first initiatives that the SW Collaborative would start working.

Ranking A

Participants were then asked to look at the list of Initiatives and to write their top 5 on a note card. The votes were tallied and shared with the group. A comment was made that #20 and #6 are the same and should be combined. The below table contains the results of this exercise.

Votes Received	Initiative
21	Explore/develop an awards program as an incentive (25)
8	Develop an education package that can be personalized at a local level. (4)
7	Collect information on projects funded due to priority points available from existing source water protection partners (i.e. CCAP, EQIP, CWMTF, CWSRF). Show the outcomes of these efforts. (15)
6	Educate local planners on what they can do to promote source water protection. (6)
6	Determine the information needs of public utility managers with respect to source water protection. Respond to those needs. (14)
6	Align the SW Collaborative's efforts with existing successful approaches (e.g., the storm water education outreach program, etc.). (21)
6	Identify or develop source water protection cost benefit analysis tools. (24)
5	Disseminate unified messages from the SW Collaborative that demonstrate broad support and spark education and action. (1)
5	Identify and connect with existing landscape-based conservation programs. (19)
5	Cooperate with NC American Planning Association to target local planners to promote source water protection. (20)
5	Participate in, support and/or initiate local source water protection plans. (22)
5	Identify and publicize "shining stars" in source water protection. Use them as examples of success and publicize/promote them as templates to similar demographic groups. (27)
4	Increase awareness of the location of drinking water sources through use of signs. (13)
4	Make ground water data more available. (17)
4	Identify and publicize positive outcomes of source water protection. (28)
3	Develop a specific message for local planners regarding ways to approach source water protection via land-use management. (5)
3	Develop/distribute outreach materials for use by public utilities designed to help educate their customers. (12)
3	Improve data collection regarding the quantity and quality of groundwater supplies. (16)
3	Include source water protection information in Consumer Confidence Reports that are sent out annually by public water systems. (18)
2	Package source water protection messages for use in local political campaigns in terms that appeal to the public (e.g., public health, cost/benefit, eco. development, etc.). (9)
2	Create an instantly understandable and recognizable source water protection motto (i.e. many do not understand source water protection term) (10)
2	Support ongoing efforts to collect unused/unwanted pharmaceuticals (23)
2	Identify a strategy to engage residential well owner.(26)

1	Address the “source water protection awareness problem” to generate buzz (2)
1	Promote source water protection as the solution to multiple problems (e.g., over development, water availability, habitat degradation, etc.). (3)
1	Link the source water protection message to job creation.(8)
1	Target school-aged kids for education and promotion, i.e. have a source water protection poster/essay/project competition. Use winners for state-wide promotion. (11)
0	Likened the source water protection message to the needs of an industry (public utilities need quality source water to produce affordable, safe and abundant drinking water). (7)

Ranking B

We were running short on meeting time, so without discussion, the participants were asked to identify at least two initiatives from the top tier that they would be willing to work on. The results are shown below.

Initiative	# Selected	Who Made the Selection
Develop an education package that can be personalized at a local level. (4)	8	Lisa Corbitt, Christy Perrin, Holly Denham, Dale Threatt-Taylor, Cy Stober, Beth McGee, Evan Kane, Partick Beggs
Collect information on projects funded due to priority points available from existing source water protection partners (i.e. CCAP, EQIP, CWMTF, CWSRF). Show the outcomes of these efforts. (15)	7	Rick Seekins, Julie Ventaloro, Adriene Weaver, Tom Hill, Beth McGee, Ed Buchan, Julie Elmore
Disseminate unified messages from the SW Collaborative that demonstrate broad support and spark education and action. (1)	5	Rick Seekins, Adriene Weaver, Cy Stober, Beth McGee, Evan Kane
Explore/develop an awards program as an incentive. (25)	4	Lisa Corbitt, Julie Ventaloro, Phil Trew, Christy Perrin
Identify or develop source water protection cost benefit analysis tools. (24)	4	Tom Hill, Beth McGee, Amy Keyworth, Julie Elmore
Educate local planners on what they can do to promote source water protection. (6)	3	Phil Trew, Jeff Marcus, Cy Stober
Identify and connect with existing landscape-based conservation programs. (19)	3	Jeff Marcus, Amy Keyworth, Julie Elmore
Align the SW Collaborative’s efforts with existing successful approaches (e.g., the storm water education outreach program, etc.). (21)	2	Holly Denham, Julie Elmore
Participate in, support and/or initiate local source water protection plans.(22)	2	Rick Seekins, Cy Stober
Identify and publicize “shining stars” in source water protection. Use them as examples of success and publicize/promote them as templates to similar demographic groups. (27)	2	Dale Threatt-Taylor, Julie Elmore
Improve data collection regarding the quantity and quality of groundwater supplies. (16)	2	Melinda Chapman, Julie Elmore
Promote source water protection as the solution to multiple problems (e.g., over development, water availability, habitat degradation, etc.). (3)	2	Julie Elmore, Patrick Beggs

Determine the information needs of public utility managers with respect to source water protection. Respond to those needs. (14)	1	Ed Buchan
Support ongoing efforts to collect unused/unwanted pharmaceuticals. (23)	1	Julie Elmore
Identify a strategy to engage residential well owner. (26)	1	Melinda Chapman

Adjournment and Next Steps

At the end of the Ranking B process the meeting adjourned quickly due to lack of time. We agreed that there would be a few remaining items that would need more work before and during the next meeting. Items for follow up are:

1. Finalize the selection process of a handful of Initiatives that the SW Collaborative would begin developing.
2. Better define the 5th Objective.
3. Address some of the suggested Initiative consolidation.