

Meeting Summary

June 24, 2008

Removing Barriers Subtask Force Committee

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Introductions

Penny reviewed the agenda, no changes were made.

Task 1

Kathy presented a proposed revision of RCW 90.46.120 with Committee attendees Bill Peacock asked for clarification of who has the right to the reclaimed water when it is used for aquifer storage and whether there is a difference between natural recharge storage and artificial storage. Walt asked if those who recharge an aquifer have a right to the water. RCW 98.46 provides an exclusive right to artificial storage for recovery projects but pulling additional water requires another water right.

Lynn explained that if you are recovering the same water, then you would not need a water right. If you store it and use it later you do need a new water right.

Kathy commented that you have to show scientifically that it's the same water to maintain control of it. There are limits to how far the water can go. Walt asked that the revisions be very concise and clear. Kathy asked Walt to help with that.

Jim updated the Committee on the coordinated planning workgroup. The workgroup includes the following people:

- Tim Gates, CTED
- Mike Dexel, DOH
- Bill Zachmann, Ecology SEA
- Lynn Coleman, Ecology WR
- Jim McCauley, Ecology WQP

The workgroup will focus on the latest version of the checklist to make it a working document that assists people with planning under GMA and DOH water supply and Ecology water treatment regulations and guidance. The first meeting is scheduled on July 8. They think they can complete a checklist in about 3-4 months.

Task 2

Harriet led a discussion regarding the Reclaimed Water Program's organizational structure. The bulk of work is currently carried out within the Water Quality Program. The discussion during the last removing barriers meeting included having the reclaimed water lead reporting to a unit supervisor. A suggestion was made to move the position up in the organization so that it has more access to authority for communicating with other programs and agencies. This would put the reclaimed water lead position at a level that allows the person to be a lot closer to the decision making process by reporting either to the Program Development Services manager or to the deputy program manager (currently

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Melody Selby). All regional managers report to the deputy program manager in the Water Quality Program.

Craig asked if the reclaimed water program should reside within Ecology only. Kathy explained that there were a couple of different suggestions. The current system works well but the lead needs more authority. One suggestion was to have an employee of Health work at Ecology. The majority of members leaned toward leaving the DOH functions at Health instead of moving someone into Ecology like we currently do with DOT positions within the WQP.

Bill Peacock asked if these changes would be enough to move reclaimed water to the forefront of Ecology's work load. Kathy said "no, not entirely. It will help. It will be a long time before we are ready for a larger strategy for alternative water programs. We are laying the ground work now, looking at the big picture of the future of water in Washington State."

Removing Barriers members wanted the lead person to have the clout to get things done. Harriet said that a specific recommendation would be helpful, for example, the group could recommend the Reclaimed Water Lead report to the deputy program manager. When asked if the deputy supervises people, Harriet replied yes, but the deputy supervises fewer people. Members agreed that staffing without upper management authority would not be as effective and would not solve the problem for reclaimed water. Craig says that Health's biggest issue is staffing. It should stay where it is in the structure, but elevate the importance of reclaimed water issues.

Kathy agreed that more authority would foster better policy coordination across program and agencies. If the RAC supports this recommendation, we can implement this change within the agency. It would be logical to move it to an individual program if needed. It preserves the option for the reclaimed water program to grow in the future.

Recommendation

- Health keeps the position in the same place in its structure but elevates the importance of reclaimed water program issues.
- Ecology elevates the reclaimed water lead to a level of authority, reporting to the deputy program manager.
- Reclaimed water ultimately needs to be merged into a program with other alternative water programs that cross agencies. The Committee wanted this recommendation included to prepare the legislature for the future.

Task 3

The group looked at the table of incentives. Penny began the discussion of incentives as a way of overcoming barriers.

- Cost of producing reclaimed water is frequently higher than potable.
 - Investment in reclaimed water should be encouraged.

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- Public demand and willingness to pay more for reclaimed water should also be encouraged.
- Public demand for reclaimed water is not well developed. Education, information and branding are needed.
- The public needs to understand the limits of long-term water supplies.

Jim and Kathy propose to rework and redevelop a framework for the incentives list, in part by returning to the original list before they were grouped. Members agree that all incentive barriers fall into one of two categories; *cost and education*. Ecology agreed to re-work the incentives with a focus on the two categories.

Jocelyn suggested that when looking at incentives, it is important to look at who the audience is: state, local or other. Looking at barriers through the lens of community based social marketing, you can identify what actions can be taken to remove these barriers—the incentives or disincentives that will encourage the behaviors you want – use of reclaimed water.

The state could conduct regional focus groups and surveys to find out what the public perceptions and opinions are and if the public would accept and invest in reclaimed water. This would have multiple purposes. The first being the information from the research, surveys, and focus groups could be used to help inform and improve the required public involvement during rulemaking. Second, the information gleaned would be the cornerstone to developing an effective statewide campaign and the related materials that would resonate with the public and accomplish the desired outcome. Additionally, the state could make campaign materials, surveys and focus group results available in an online toolbox for use by local jurisdictions so they could more cost effectively conduct local outreach efforts.

As a variation on this, if funding is limited, the state could conduct the surveys and focus groups (not produce materials or run a full-fledged campaign) and only provide this information to jurisdictions for use in localized campaigns—which are imperative to successful implementation of reclaimed water projects.

Research shows that you can't wait until a facility is built and permitted to begin outreach and education; you must do that early. Public involvement, education and awareness must begin at the early stages and then move to a more community-based social marketing model once you are actually trying to change behavior.

Bill agreed and wants to educate the public first, years and years before a community ever needs a reclaimed water facility. He used the example of Costco advertising in a community years before the store was even built. This established demand long before products are available. This is similar to what the state should do.

Recommendation

Jocelyn said the committee could recommend:

- A statewide campaign

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- Research public attitudes and perceptions and develop outreach/education/awareness campaign—based on the results—to increase understanding of and support for reclaimed water
- Develop outreach/education materials for use by state and toolbox of these materials for use by local governments

- A focus on local public involvement, education, and awareness
 - Require public education in the feasibility study step
 - Use the state as a resource for guidance and assistance

Next meeting tasks will include a look at marketing and money, incentives; and determining whether they are marketing or money barriers. Jocelyn will come back with recommendations that are more specific and examples of what other communities have done, including rough cost estimates.

Attendees

Kathy Cupps	Ecology	Jim McCauley	Ecology
Jocelyn Winz	Ecology	Bill Peacock	City of Spokane
Harriet Beale	Ecology	Clint Perry	Evergreen Valley Utilities
Lynn Coleman	Ecology	Walt Canter	WA Assoc. of Sewer & Water District
Jennifer Busselle	Ecology	Doug Raines	Department of Corrections
Penny Mabie	EnviroIssues	Craig Riley	Department of Health