

New Hampshire Water Sustainability Commission Implementation Subcommittee

March 7, 2012

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Virginia Battles-Raffa, Kris Blomback, Marcy Lyman, Bob Beaurivage, Tom Burack and Cliff Sinnott.

Guests: Sarah Pillsbury and Jennifer Rowden

I. Follow-up from February 14th Commission meeting

Discussion from the last full Commission meeting included the need to rework the perspective for recommendations and issues using a lens of sustainability. Virginia introduced the concept of social-ecological resiliency for the subcommittee to consider as another framework possibility. Additional comments from subcommittee members included:

- It is alright that at this point the Commission and subcommittee are still struggling with how to frame all these questions, issues and recommendations because we are trying to see the problems from a different perspective, the perspective of sustainability.
- The bigger task for this Commission may be to simply add value to work and recommendations to what the past water-related commissions have already done or suggested.
- One of the Commission's main charges is to prioritize what the other commissions have recommended in order to sustain the state's water resources.
- One of the items that still need to be finalized is the vision statement, which was worked on last summer, but never completed.
- One of the Governor's main charges for this Commission is to help get the message across that water is essential and that we need to invest in our water resources in order to maintain our environment, public health and economy.

II. Next steps for implementation

Based on the charge to convey a message about water, the subcommittee brainstormed several ways to brand a message as a source of unification for the Commission's work. Suggested "brands" for Commission's goal to develop a constituency for water resources in New Hampshire include:

- New Hampshire floats on water – needed for business, needed for fun, needed to live.
(needed for life)
- A [New Hampshire] plan for clean, abundant water for today and generations to come. (From the Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework tagline.)
- Water Matters
- Water Sustains New Hampshire
- A sustainable future in New Hampshire depends on water –
- New Hampshire lives on water – with a sustainable plan.
 - planning for today and tomorrow.
 - planning for good, abundant water for today and tomorrow.

The subcommittee elected to focus on one slogan as a starting point: *New Hampshire lives on water – planning for today and tomorrow*. The second half of this slogan can be changed out to include questions that can be used to introduce various issues/topics. The following initial questions were developed:

- What is water worth to you?
- What is water's value to you?
- How do we keep it clean?

- Will it... be clean? be available? be affordable? be accessible? be safe? support our (future) economy? be enough?
- Can it support ... fish and wildlife? families? businesses? recreation? food production?
- Who owns the water?
- Who will have access to it?
- Will I be safe from flooding?

Action item: Subcommittee members will identify those questions that would serve as introduction to the various issues/topics the Commission has been discussing. If none of the questions fits for a particular issue/topic, alternatives will be suggested. The subcommittee members will e-mail their questions and how the issues/topics fall under those questions to Virginia by Wednesday, March 14th.

The subcommittee discussed the need to develop a logo, something simple and graphic, to go along with this initiative to build a constituency for water. The logo needs to be something that is easily discernable to people and can be used for a variety of purposes. Ideally, the Commission would have something prior to the public engagement sessions. The logo should include something similar to the graphic Maureen Hart utilizes (see graphic).



Action item: Tom indicated that DES could contact the Department of Resources and Economic Development's tourism office to see if, pending resource availability, the staff there may be able to assist in logo development. Virginia and Marcy also offered to inquire with some of their contacts.

Additional discussion on the idea of having the Commission's work start an initiative to better manage water in the state included the following comments:

- The only thing the Commission can do in the time it has remaining is to be a catalyst for starting such an initiative.
- A major need is to convey the message that if nothing is done to the current system then the results may look like X.
- The Commission needs to show the connections between the environment, society and the economy, and show the consequences if these issues are left in their current state. What do we lose if we do not do anything?
- Using stories, examples and testimonials will be needed to get individuals to understand how this all relates to them.
- What is really needed is to get people talking to one another about the issues and the solutions.
- Per Marcy, in order to run such an initiative, the first step is to build public awareness and engagement and then to establish concrete actions and timeframes.
- Tom mentioned the need to be able to measure whether or not sustainability is being achieved or to assess progress using metrics.

The subcommittee members discussed whether or not the Commission actually is charged with creating recommendations or if they are just to prioritize past commissions' recommendations or consolidate them if overlapping. Cliff also asked if the plan was to use a format like the one suggested by DES as a way to get more into the details of the various issues and actions, with the questions and visions being the umbrella.

For the next full Commission meeting, subcommittee members will submit their questions and issues to Virginia who will summarize them as stated in the Action Item above.

The next Implementation Subcommittee meeting will be established at the March 20th Commission meeting.