



Water Committee Conference Call

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

Meeting Notes

- I. Welcome and Self-introductions – Tom Easterly (IN), Chair
- II. Election of Committee Vice Chair –
 - The position of Vice Chair of the Committee remains in flux while several members make further determinations on their ability to travel to meetings in 2009
- III. Partnership Council of the Office of Water and States report– highlights of comments
 - Concerns were raised that the charter appears to deviate from the original intent of the Council in that it doesn't stay at a higher policy level and drills down too far into individual programs and projects. ASIWPCA and ASDWA already address the program issues.
 - The higher level issues should be budget, strategy, planning.
 - Subgroups should not be formed because it would present reporting problems for the participating organizations.
 - Need to keep co-regulator issues as the focus of the Council – policy and process.
 - Aim is to improve partnership with EPA through discussion of budget, strategic planning, national program manager's guidance, and regulatory agenda-setting.
 - How will the Council overlap with the Water Committee? Committee Chair and EPA Water Deputy will head the Council.
 - Does the Charter have to be formalized through the ECOS process with the Commissioners? Yes, this will be addressed at the March Water Committee meeting.
 - There could be resource concerns from the states participants
 - The agenda currently reflects the focus of the Council better than the Charter
 - The partnership is a good opportunity for states.
- IV. Economic Recovery Package – status of SRF funds
 - Senate bill is \$2 billion less than the House; amendments will be offered to increase that amount.
 - EPA invited ECOS to sit on a stimulus workgroup to work through problems – how states apply for, receive and get the money out in the tight timeframe – 30 days.
 - ASIWPCA is calling for maximum flexibility for states to decide how in what form they want to disperse their funds (grants, loans, principal forgiveness, etc.)
 - Other problems for states include possible Davis-Bacon prevailing wage provision mandates (already in the House bill)
 - After today's call, the Water Committee will get a copy of the chart showing the amount each state likely will receive under the stimulus allocation formula
- V. Discussion of topics, speakers, resolutions for March 23rd Meeting
 - Draft agenda includes netDMR – a presentation on this will be made at the ASIWPCA meeting so there is no need to duplicate at the ECOS meeting
 - Invite the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Water or the acting AA

- Panel with one House and one Senate staffer is fine
- Stimulus speaker will be needed...depends on timing of passage of the jobs recovery act.
- Add the Partnership Council of the Office of Water and States (PCOWS) to the agenda – discussion of and vote on the draft Council Charter.
- The revised PCOWS documents will be sent to the Water Committee

VI. Other Business

- Where are we on Clean Water Act jurisdiction issue?
- Steve Brown met with Senate minority staff the third week in January and will meet with the industry group the first week in February. The bill has not been reintroduced this session; have high expectations that when a bill is offered, it will reflect very closely ECOS' preferred language.

VII. Next Conference Call – February 25, 3:00 – 4:00pm Eastern

- Agenda items: economic stimulus/SRFs; PCOWS meeting (report from 2/13) and charter; final approval of draft agenda for March 23