

## **Communication Subgroup**

### **Conclusions and Next Steps**

Conference Call January 11, 2018 10:00 – 11:00 am

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

##### Charge

- The draft subgroup charge is “Educate elected officials, government/professional staff/contractors, business community members and residents throughout Illinois with a clear, coherent message on the Illinois NLRS and opportunities to participate. 1. Write a letter to accompany the report to the legislature. 2. Develop a presentation with a clear, coherent message for NLRS partners to communicate with outside groups. NLRS Sector groups may tailor the presentation for various audiences. Explore a train the trainer model to reach audiences at the local level.”

##### Letter

- The biennial report will be sent to state legislature members.
- A letter that introduces the topic will accompany the report. It may include an offer to hold a subject matter hearing. Illinois EPA will draft the letter.
- Directors of Illinois EPA and IDOA to sign the letter.

##### PowerPoint Potential Audience

- Illinois Assoc. of County Board Members – Hal Sprague will contact
- Illinois Assoc. of County Officials (IACO) – Hal Sprague will contact
- Illinois Water Environment Association (IWEA) – Cindy Skrukrud will contact
- Illinois Environmental Council (IEC) - Cindy Skrukrud will contact
- Illinois Municipal League – Amy Walkenbach and Hal Sprague will contact
- Metropolitan Mayors Caucus – Hal Sprague will contact
- Potential “Train the Trainer” groups
  - SWCDs
  - Point source
  - Floodplain managers
  - Drainage districts
  - Watershed workgroups

##### PowerPoint content

- Needs to include local water quality.
- Will focus on the content in a future call.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- Illinois EPA will draft the letter that will accompany the biennial report to state legislature members.
- Review the PowerPoint and send thoughts to Amy Walkenbach before the next call.
- See above for contact group assignments.

Next call: Wednesday, January 24 10-11 am

Attendance: Mike Chandler, Alec Davis, Carol Hays, Lauren Lurkins, Jean Payne, Cindy Skrukud, Hal Sprague, Amy Walkenbach, Trevor Sample, Eliana Brown, Kate Gardiner, Warren Goetsch, Jennifer Wasik on for Albert Cox

## Discussion

- Background
  - NLRS partners are successfully engaging the agricultural community in Illinois. There has been less success engaging urban community leaders on the strategy
  - Long Term Objective – Educate elected officials, agency staff, business community members and residents in urban communities on the Hypoxic Zone problem, the Illinois NLRS Strategy, and their opportunities to participate
    - Jean – do you think we need agency staff in there or are you referring to agencies outside of water quality?
    - Hal – what I do every day is work with municipalities and counties and most often I’m talking to Public Works (those responsible for stormwater mgmt.) but there are lots of different people within municipal staff. I said “agency” but it could be any stormwater public works group. They are the experts who know how to do some of these things
    - “Government” or “Professional” might be better than “agency” because it picks up private sector as well. Or professional/governmental staff and contractors? Because many municipalities hire out to contractors.
    - Maybe say “throughout the state” instead of “in urban communities” to encompass all those in the state
    - Some people thought this was an effort to make sure that when we communicate and build broader understanding that we needed a clear, cohesive message to do that. Maybe the message is tailored depending on whom the audience is, but thought we agreed we needed something to use so that we’re carrying the same message forward?
    - Jennifer Wasik because they’re already doing this and we only have so much time/work
    - Amy – we need to come up with a combined message so this meeting can be setting the foundation for a program and then when we get into the urban workgroup, we have that foundation that we can take and focus our efforts on the urban aspect very specifically
    - Eliana – why don’t we take “urban” out of the name and add a charge that this group is responsible for coming up with a clear message which can be tailored to different sectors and we are building off the work that has already been done by the agricultural sector
    - Lauren – talking about what our members are doing has been very helpful. I would offer to be part of cross-silo discussions and setting up panels has been successful, though it would be a scheduling nightmare. It is helpful to hear from

each of the different groups working on it in one setting, maybe we could work on bringing that across the state.

- Eliana will send out a sentence to everyone for a charge to agree on
- Today's Objective – Identify action items and a timetable for completion
- Proposed Action Items
  - Develop an NLRs 101 power point presentation
    - Amy and Trevor have something we can look at
  - Reach out to identified organizations to inquire how to get on their respective meeting/conference agendas:
    - Illinois Assoc. of County Board Members – Spring Conference (TBD)
    - Illinois Assoc. of County Officials (IACO) – Spring Conference to be held at Wyndham City Center Downtown, Springfield Illinois, April 9-11, 2018
    - Illinois Environmental Council (State Elected Officials, Green Caucus)
    - Illinois Municipal League (Mayors, Managers, Department Staff)
    - MS4 Contacts and Responsible Officials (IEPA)
    - Water Environment Federation (WEF) – Public Works Directors
    - Other
      - IL Association of Soil and Water Conservation District? Maybe the agricultural community is already covering those.
        - Warren – Soil and Water might be a resource in making presentations to other local officials because the districts are the ones who have those connections and are involved with agriculture, land owners, and practice changes and have connections with the communities beyond just agriculture. Outreach to them might be how we can better equip them to meet those communications challenges that they come into contact with.
        - Hal – Great point, Warren. Those people are some of the most expert people we have in terms of stormwater mgmt.
        - Main thing missing is the second part of the strategy – that we're trying to clean up rivers, streams, and lakes within the state of IL. I think that's a message that will resonate with these groups, that there's work we're doing within the state of IL and not just helping the Gulf downstream
        - Hal – combination of "train the trainer" with Soil & Water districts, possibly including the Drainage districts and floodplain managers. Frustration has been with the urban/stormwater responsible people (particularly MS4) who have to decide whether to invest money into more activities that reduce nutrient loss from stormwater
    - Jennifer – Other watershed groups – these people may be familiar already with the strategy but could be another case where we provide

them updates periodically and presentations, helping them reach out to their stakeholders

- Cindy – on IWEA Watershed Committee, an urban runoff committee, so I can volunteer with that. I can take Illinois Environmental Council also.
- Metropolitan Mayors Caucus – A group of mayors but they don't always show up. Typical scenario where they create these committees but other people are sent in place of the mayors – people from the Public Works, etc.
- Maybe CMAP as well, and other planning agencies like Metro East
- What we're doing today is coming up with a message to send out to state groups who we may not have talked to yet.
- Warren – what is our goal/ask? One way to start would be to send a letter to state legislature leadership with the Biennial Report, introducing the subject and enclosing the progress report.
- If the group is asking all the PWG members to agree to send the legislature something, I think that makes getting a letter approved infinitely more difficult because there are so many interests/priorities
- Write a letter to state senators and representatives
  - To whom is the letter targeted?
    - General Assembly?
    - Staffers?
    - Ag and Env. Committee members?
  - Who authors (signs a letter)
- Discussion
- Next Meeting
  - Wednesday, Jan. 24th 10-11am (Skype Call)
  - Letter first, will have a draft for the meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>
  - Tabling PPT for the meeting after that.
    - If anyone has any questions/asks for the PPT, get those to Amy before next meeting.
- Adjourn