

Workshop Report:

Arizona Water Settlements Act Planning Workshop II

Background:

On December 7, 2007, the second in a series of Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA) Planning Workshops was held at the Grant County Administration Complex in Silver City, New Mexico. The purpose of the workshop was to refine and extend efforts from the first workshop toward the development of an informed, inclusive and transparent planning process supporting the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act. Specific goals for the second workshop included:

1. Review results from the first AWSA workshop;
2. Establish consensus goals for the planning process;
3. Agree on a structure for the AWSA planning; and
4. Identify broad topic areas for studies to be conducted in FY09 in support of AWSA planning.

A total of 34 people participated in the workshop representing a broad range of interests in the Gila/San Francisco Basin (see Appendix A for the participant list). Below we discuss the principle outcomes of the workshop followed by recorded details from the various discussions and breakout groups.

Outcomes:

Workshop participants successfully reached consensus on all four workshop goals listed above. Below we address workshop outcomes according to each of the specified goals.

Review of Workshop I: Outcomes of Workshop I (held on October 26-27, 2007) were reviewed. The primary result of this effort was a reaffirmation of key project issues to be addressed by the AWSA planning process. The five issues identified in the first workshop were once again adopted:

- Establish an organizational structure and scope for the decision process that promotes trust.
- Conduct comprehensive base-line studies to identify current and future water supply and demand conditions. Also, determine the consequences of each.
- Identify a broad and balanced range of water planning alternatives that close the gap between supply and demand and evaluate each with a common and agreed upon set of criteria.
- Define the desired future condition (and conditions that are to be avoided) in terms of assets, supply and demand.
- Clarify the legal and regulatory framework and how it applies to water use in southwestern New Mexico.

In addition, another issue was identified:

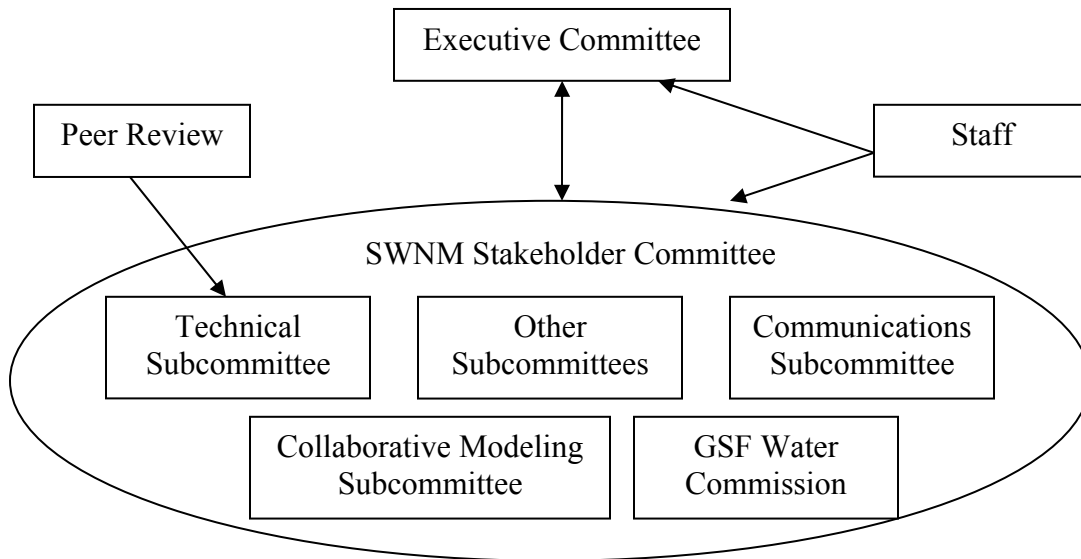
- Coordinate AWSA planning efforts with other water planning authorities and initiatives (e.g., State Wide Water Planning, municipal water planning).

Consensus Goals: Key to any planning process is a set of clearly articulated goals. Toward this need participants came to consensus on an overarching goal for the AWSA planning process.

- Utilize the AWSA in a cost effective manner to balance historical and future demands against uncertain supply while protecting the environment.

The team also decided that the focus of their efforts was to be the four county region of southwestern New Mexico (Grant, Luna, Hildalgo, and Catron Counties).

Planning Structure: (Note, **highlighted** items require discussion by the broader team) Building on efforts initiated in the first workshop, participants developed a broad framework for the AWSA planning process. Prior to creating this structure, participants developed a list of criteria that the planning structure must support (e.g., transparency, inclusive participation), which is given in the notes below. The agreed upon structure has the form of an executive committee responsible for implementing the planning program, which is advised by a broad stakeholder group. The general structure is given below:



The Executive Committee is responsible for implementing the planning process. The Executive Committee will develop and oversee AWSA planning related studies and analyses, which are consistent with direction provided by the Stakeholder Committee. Membership of the committee includes a representative from the NM Governor’s Office, NM Interstate Stream Commission, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, NM Game and Fish, and US Fish and Wildlife Service, two members from the GSF Water Commission, two

members **Gila Basin Irrigation Commission**, and two members representing environmental interests.

The Stakeholder Committee is responsible for setting the overall direction for the AWSA planning process; specifically, this will involve setting the goals, vision and alternatives on which planning will be predicated. Membership in this committee is open to any resident of Southwest New Mexico. In efforts to effectively address critical planning issues, various members from the Stakeholder Committee will be organized into subcommittees. Specifically, there will be standing Technical, Communication, and Collaborative Modeling Subcommittees and other standing/interim subcommittees as needs necessitate.

The Technical Subcommittee will be made up of technical staff from local, state and federal agencies, universities, environmental NGOs, and others as useful expertise. This group will provide technical leadership and assist in developing scopes of work for studies supporting AWSA planning. This team will be subject to periodic review by external peer review. The Communication Subcommittee will be responsible for supporting internal and external communications for the ASWA planning process. The Collaborative Modeling Subcommittee will continue to develop decision support tools to aid the AWSA planning process. The Gila San Francisco Water Commission will be responsible for facilitating the contracting of AWSA water within southwestern New Mexico.

The overall planning process is to be supported by a small number of staff. This would include a meeting facilitator, an administrative assistant to handle logistical issues, and **additional staff as necessary to conduct day-to-day operations of the project (an executive director?)**.

One of the first orders of business for the planning team is to adopt a set of ground rules defining operations of the group. In particular, how decisions are to be made (e.g., by consensus, majority, or some hybrid), specific responsibilities of each committee and subcommittee, and lines of communication must also be specified. However, a few desires have already been communicated. That is, all meetings are to be open with prior public notice, meetings are to be professionally facilitated, and the planning structure should be flexible allowing for use of temporary subcommittees to address specific issues for a defined period of time.

FY09 Studies to Support AWSA: Consensus was achieved on broad topic areas for FY09 studies to support AWSA planning. The identified topic areas will form the basis of language to be submitted to the New Mexico Legislature in support of appropriations for ASWA planning activities. The identified topic areas were (not in priority order below):

- Ecologic
- Hydrologic – surface and groundwater supplies within the four-county area
- Demand management/conservation
- **Demographics, and**

– Economics

- Multi-stakeholder planning process – administration/public involvement

Development of detailed scopes of work for each of these topic areas will be the subject of future efforts of the planning team.

Next Steps: A report will be prepared and vetted with workshop participants. Additionally, the group will meet again on January 5, 2008 in Silver City at the Grant County Administration Building to refine and to begin implementing the new AWSA planning structure.

Workshop Notes:

The following agenda was followed at the meeting.

1. Introductions (name? from? Affiliation?)
 2. Summary of report (October meeting)
 3. Goal
 4. Criteria for planning process?
 5. Lessons from other places?
 6. Structure, (a) based on criteria, and (b) based on lessons from other places?
 7. For what a type of studies is funding needed?
 8. Next steps?
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1. Everyone introduced themselves.
 2. Vincent Tidwell summarized key features of the report from the previous meeting. There was general satisfaction with the summary. One issue was added to the list of key issues.
 - Coordinate AWSA planning efforts with other water planning authorities and initiatives (e.g., State Wide Water Planning, municipal water planning).
 3. Vince presented a goal that the meeting planners thought reflected the apparent agreement of the group at the October meeting. After discussion the goal was modified to read:

Utilize the AWSA in a cost effective manner to balance historical and future demands against uncertain supply while protecting the environment.
 4. Vince presented a set of potential criteria, based on the agreements at the October Meeting. *Indent and italics indicates new input at the December meeting.*
 - Expand to include broader stakeholder participation
 - Technical expertise (also scientific)*
 - Develop operational guidelines*
 - Recognize (value or necessity) of building agreement to move forward*

- Timely and productive
 - Professionally facilitated
 - Include all voices [go out to find the silent voices]*
 - Explicitly defined lines of communication
 - Transparency*
 - Use of technology*
 - Use Gila-San Francisco Coordinating Committee?
5. Mary Reece presented lessons from other places, including examples of different kinds of organizations and features most of the various approaches have in common. Immediately following her presentation (and a break), the large group was divided into smaller groups and the smaller groups were asked:

What did you hear in Mary’s presentation that you like and should be included in our structure?

1. Combine similar groups with single voice.
2. Communication: public, intra-process, legislators, external, stakeholders (designate committee to do this)
3. Pulling stakeholders into process
4. ✓ Flexible process
5. Core Group re: day to day
6. Reach consensus where possible, otherwise may need to adopt guidelines for reaching a decision where consensus is not possible
7. Meet the challenge of consensus: Use informed consent.
8. Minority Report

Next the small groups were asked:

What was not in Mary’s report that you think ought to be part of the structure? What did she not say that should be included in the structure?

9. Methods for encouraging participation of stakeholders. How to assist them?
Scheduling?
10. ✓ Ways to include elected officials as active participants
11. Adequate communication to inform and draw in important parties.
12. ✓ Clearly defined by-laws and rules (at the front end).
13. ✓ Road map for process [13 b]. Who makes the decisions?
14. Facilitation of overall group and subcommittees for the entire process
15. ✓ All open meetings. Public notice.
16. Staff support
17. ✓ Funding and budget
18. ✓ Link staff support and facilitation; one entity = common thread
19. ✓ People need “breathing room” to “take back” decisions to their governments/groups.
20. ✓ Clarity between stakeholder groups and decision makers
21. ✓ Integrate with existing plans
22. ✓ Coordinate with existing organizations

6. The group determined that rather than try and revise the Gila-San Francisco Coordinating Committee, they should begin with a blank page to design the new structure. The full group was systematically sub-divided into smaller groups with representation from all of the constituent groups represented. They were asked, “given the criteria, what you heard and liked from other places, and what you have just said should be part of the structure, agree on the essential elements of a structure. The groups went to work in their small groups and came up with the elements that they thought should be in an organizational structure. After each group presented their elements (most of them in the form of a diagram), they were asked, “what are themes that seem to cut across all of the presentations?”

Common themes?

- Leadership/Mgmt/Core – small enough
- Broad Stakeholder group
 - Stakeholder Group is responsible for setting general direction for the planning process
- Communications Group
- Stakeholder Group settles on questions to be addressed thru studies
- Studies may crystallize ideas
- Technical Group with Peer Review-reliability and validity
- Consensus
- Facilitation
- Implementation Group - Single Message
- Staff
- Outreach/extension

Additional good ideas that are not included in the preceding list

- Flexible process; allow process to adapt as things change
- Ways to include elected officials as active participants
- Clearly defined ground rules and subcommittee responsibilities. Limit ground rules to the extent that it facilitates the orderly operation of each group.
- Road map
- All open meetings, notice
- Funding/budget
- Link staff support and facilitation
- Room to take back decisions to elected bodies
- Integrate with existing plans
- Coordinate with existing organizations
- Clarity between stakeholder groups and decision makers

7. The group then identified the broad categories of studies for which funding are needed. They agreed that the scope of the studies will be the four counties: Catron, Grant, Hidalgo and Luna, and that the studies will compliment work/studies already completed.

Categories of studies

- Administration (of a multi-stakeholder planning process)/Public Involvement
- Ecological
- Hydrology
- Demand management/conservation
- Demographics
- Economics

8. The last item on the agenda was next steps/timeline.

- Vince and Carl will prepare a report of today's meeting.
- They also will draft a potential structure based on the agreement at today's meeting. When it is drafted they will work with the following people to ensure that what they did reflects the work of the full group:
 - Vance Lee
 - Tom Bates
 - Estevan Lopez
 - Alyson Siwik
 - Mike Cuff
 - Mary Reece
 - Gerald Schultz
- Estevan agreed that when legislation language is ready he will share it with the group.
- The group will meet again on 5 January 2008 in Silver City at the County Administration Building to refine and to begin implementing the new structure.