

10/31/07
Time Start: 2:05 am
Time Stop: 3:00 am

Teleconference Call:

*Work Group 4 ~ Monitor new technologies for possible inclusion in Best Management Practices' Guide
& Develop a state water management resources library.*

Council Participants

Spokesperson Gene Montgomery

C.E. Williams

Greg Carter

Bill Hoffman

Karen Guz

TWDB Staff Sitting In

Vanessa Escobar

John Sutton

C.E. Williams called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm and started by asking for nominations for a spokesperson. Gene Montgomery was nominated and selected. There was some discussion about the intended goals of the charge. Gene Montgomery suggested that a state water management resource library should be a resource where people can come in and identify those concepts or practices they are interested in or find information about the most current technologies or best practices. In envisioning a library type database there might be a subscription process, as well as a cataloging step. It should be a database library system where people can do search queries, and there should be a system to alert people of new updates in technologies or best management practices. In implementing this resource we not only want to constantly collect information, but make it easy for people to search through it as well. Housing this online resource is another question to consider.

Karen Guz suggested that with all the new technology there are often experts in specific fields who may be willing to be the expert specialist for certain categories of information on the conservation library. In a way that person could also be responsible for informing the manager of this library about any new updates in the field, new publications, or new products. Subject matter experts can serve as resources in addition to the information resources. Perhaps to start out with there may be volunteer experts willing to review portions of information. A question to consider with this thought, is if there would be some professional liability with having subject matter experts?

It was discussed whether or not universities would be a good place to house this library.

An observation was made about the possible challenge of incorrect information being put into the library. We would want to avoid incorrect information or "advertorials" being incorporated into this online resource library. Will there be a place, person, or procedure to filter information? Perhaps this is where subject matter experts could help review? Will there be a place, person, or procedure where the audience users of this resource can ask questions or be provided further guidance?

A suggestion was made that there may be experts out there who already know how to build these types of database information resource for environmental subject matter. Perhaps even the state's Department of Information Resources may have the information on how to build this type of resource. Other examples may include the medical online information search engines, or

the California Urban Water Conservation Council (CUWCC). Immediately following the meeting, Bill Hoffman sent Gene Montgomery a note about the CUWCC web site indicating that “They put a couple of hundred of thousands of dollars into its upkeep each year. Their web library is an excellent source of current data. They keep it current by paying several experts to keep it going and filtered to keep out junk. I have worked with them on a number of occasions. Tom Pape and John Koeller are their two main contributing experts. You may want to look at the web site if you are not familiar with it. It can be found at www.cuwcc.org.” Bill Hoffman also said that he had talked to Carole Baker about the Alliance for Water Efficiency (AWE) and the Environmental Protection Agency resources. Bill Hoffman said that Carole Baker has the latest on the efforts at AWE. The CUWCC web library may be moving to the AWE. Bill Hoffman believes there is a real possibility to coordinate with them.

It was also stated that although the Alliance for Water Efficiency wants to cover some of the same ground, they are still in the very early stages. They may be a possible partner on this effort. The question was asked if there should be a subscription process to help with the funding of this type of effort.

Karen Guz made the observation that the Wikipedia online encyclopedia can serve as a model for this conservation library. One aspect of Wikipedia is that people can add and remove information. The overall structure of this particular resource is something we should definitely look at and utilize more control over the type of information that is put into this library. How this online search resource is funding is not known.

A suggestion was made that all information doesn’t have to be housed in one place. There could be subject matter experts with editorial control managing their own web pages, and these web pages would feed into or be linked to a larger super structure.

An observation was made that several university systems in Texas have existing and growing water resource and water management programs that would be capable of administering this effort. One limitation is that most of these types of extensions or institutes only work on these projects based on grant funding.

It was stated that a main issue to keep in mind when developing this resource, is if the maintenance and continuity factors are being taken into consideration?

It was suggested that the work group’s first task not be how to design the resource library, but rather to go out and find the people who know how to build libraries, what is involved in that, how those were constructed, and how they are maintained. Additionally, find out what the costs associated with that would be, before we figure out what we want in the library. Ideally we would need a contact to speak to this work group about the major “Dos and Don’ts” of putting something like this together.

Karen Guz suggested that it might be a good idea to explore working with someone who already has an online encyclopedia type web structure, and say that we have the experts and want to manage the content but we need a structure.

Immediately following the meeting, Bill Hoffman sent Gene Montgomery a note with additional information.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Immediate Actions	Long Term Actions
TWDB will make CDs of Best Management Practices Guide available at next council meeting.	Explore web casting for conference calls in the future.
The work group will do some research on similar resource libraries, or respected on line encyclopedia firms that could serve as models for this conservation library, and then reconvene at next conference call.	Consider signing up for work group sessions via posting on website, in order to eliminate forcing people to drop off calls.
The work group will do some research on finding contacts who know how to build resource libraries, and then reconvene at next conference call.	
Find out who the point of contact at Department of Information Resources is and how they could assist in this effort.	
Next meeting scheduled for November 15 at 10 am. TWDB staff will send out reminder emails.	