

**Water Information and Data Subcommittee
Combined Workgroup 3 and Workgroup 4 Conference Call
Minutes – July 11, 2013**

Attendees: Sara Larsen (WSWC), Dwane Young (EPA), Dave Cole (UT), Dharhas Pothina (TWDB), Jurgen Koch (TCEQ), Steve Malers (Open Water Foundation)

Administrative: Sara welcomed the group back and took attendance. She noted that many of the people who made the last call were not able to make this one and vice-versa, so it might be best to give a brief overview of what was covered in the last call also. Before doing that there were some administrative items to cover. The minutes of the last meeting were adopted as presented. Another administrative item was to simply rename this workgroup to Workgroup 3 – the Data Exchange Template/Methodology Workgroup. Dwane Young had been the Workgroup 3 lead in the past, but due to the receipt of an Exchange Network grant, he and Sara thought it might be prudent to reappoint the position. Dharhas Pothina had been the Workgroup 4 lead in the past, so Sara asked if he could continue on as lead for the newly combined workgroup. Dharhas talked about the restructuring that would be occurring at TWDB in the fall, and indicated that he may or may not be able to participate after the restructuring. He did agree to stay on as workgroup lead in the meantime. Sara asked if WSWC should conduct an outreach meeting with the branch of TWDB (not Dharhas' branch) that housed the targeted WaDE data. Dharhas agreed that would be good, but only after the restructuring had occurred after September.

Workgroup Discussion: Sara introduced one of the new workgroup members, Jurgen Koch from Texas Council of Environmental Quality (TCEQ). She gave Jurgen an update since the last call (see minutes from the March 20th meeting), covering the Exchange Network grant process and the budgets for the partner states and potential new grant applicants. Sara has been working to get the WaDE deployment cost estimates from the states, but also updating the databases for the version 2.0 schema. For the members who were not on the call, Sara showed the mind-map on the WSWC "Draft Items" website, of the current schema. Reviewing the new schema on the last call had prompted an "Action Item" for the creation of a WaDE entity relationship diagram (ERD) for the members who were more familiar with that format. This was created and would be discussed later in the meeting. As of the March meeting, two new states had indicated that they were willing to get started on the WaDE deployment right away: New Mexico and Nebraska, in addition to Utah and Wyoming. Wyoming had actually taken the first steps toward mapping their native database to the WaDE database and were using the new ERD to map their data elements. There were no comments on the flow configuration document at that time. Also, no initial comments on the WaDE ERD. Sara presented the ERD and broke down its different sections and related them to the main components of the XML schema. She mentioned that the next big challenge will be populating the lookup tables before distributing the database.

Jurgen gave some background information on the Exchange Network grant process. In mid-June TCEQ was first contacted by an EN representative saying that they'd been 'tentatively' funded for the full requested amount of \$500K. He hadn't yet received confirmation, but the full award amount was highly likely. EPA was delayed in their response, so there would likely be a slight delay on the next steps. The

next step would be administrative, such as the contracts that would need to be drawn up. Dharhas asked what the timeline would be if everything went smoothly. Jurgen indicated that normally they'd get the funds in September. After that they would set up governance and draw up the contracts, and would continue to interact quite a bit with this Workgroup. He needed to talk to Sara about how to coordinate between the two governance groups. Sara asked about the contract arrangement, and whether TCEQ would be distributing the funds as a lump sum or as the work was performed. Jurgen thought that the latter case was the more likely of those two. They would use Texas' administrative codes to set up a pass-through entity. They would also need to reconnect with the partners and go over their estimates again and confirm the amounts. Sara also mentioned that the Exchange Network partners had up to three years to complete the specified work, which gave the states a lot of flexibility.

Sara indicated that WaDE had been designed to include some of the technical aspects of the Exchange Network just in case the grant application was funded. Now that funding was tentatively awarded, this presented some new design options for the states, including the possibility of deploying the WaDE databases on a "virtual node." She also asked Dwane for an update on the EN's REST specification progress. Dwane said that they were going to finalize their REST specification earlier in the summer, but ended up delaying that for additional discussion. However, he didn't think that what would eventually be issued by the EN would require significant changes from the format that WaDE was already using. Dwane asked Jurgen whether he'd seen a lot of use of the "virtual node" or what the states thought about it. Jurgen said it was an option and that they could look at it. Dwane responded that he thought there might be challenges surrounding firewalls and access to the databases – that there would be a firewall between the states' databases and the node in the cloud. Dharhas discussed TWDB's use of the cloud for a pilot cloud program. He said that they hadn't noticed a difference between using the data hosted on the cloud and the data hosted on servers down the hall. TWDB connected to the cloud data using a virtual private network (VPN) connection.

Sara wrapped up the meeting by asking whether members on the call had any conflicts with a mid-September meeting. She would like to send out a doodlepoll to get the event on everyone's calendar right away, and try to encourage greater participation among their membership. The workgroup then adjourned. No specific action items were generated during the meeting.