

APPENDIX



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ed Potosnak, New Jersey League of Conservation Voters, 609-331-9922 (ed.potosnak@njlcw.org)

April 22nd, 2015

New Jersey LCV Calls for Updated Clean Water Plan

Trenton, NJ- Today as Americans were celebrating Earth Day, the New Jersey State Senate held a critical oversight hearing into the pressing need for an update to the State's Water Supply Master Plan.

New Jersey LCV facilitated the oversight hearing as part of its ongoing efforts to bring the environmental community together to address serious conservation challenges facing New Jersey families and business. New Jersey LCV's regular meetings with Senate Majority Leader Weinberg and environmental groups have improved communication and enhanced the efficacy of the community in protecting our natural resources.

"We are very pleased the state Senate is holding this important hearing to discuss the long overdue update to the Statewide Water Supply Plan. We are grateful to **Chairman Bob Gordon** and **Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg** for their interest and leadership on this important issue" said **Ed Potosnak**, Executive Director of the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters.

Despite the long-standing requirement for New Jersey to develop a comprehensive Statewide Water Supply Plan every five years, the most recent version is nearly 20 years old. Decisions are being made today based on the way things were two decades ago. The New Jersey Legislature grew increasingly concerned about the need for an updated plan passing legislation mandating the DEP to prepare and adopt the plan no later than 2006. To date, no updated plan has been adopted.

"Our water supply is uncharacteristically low in the Garden State – we need to look no further than California to see the importance of having an accurate, up to date, water supply plan that takes into account the most current science on water quality, availability, and climate change. New Jersey's plan is nearly 20 years out of date – the lack of an update disregards basic requirements to ensure good planning." **Potosnak** concluded.

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About NJLCV:

The New Jersey League of Conservation Voters (NJLCV) serves as the leading political voice for the environment. As a non-partisan, statewide organization NJLCV holds elected officials accountable for all their actions that impact our precious natural resources. www.NJLCV.org

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April 22, 2015

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The Honorable Robert M. Gordon, Chairman
Legislative Oversight Committee
New Jersey Senate
35 South Washington Ave.
Bergenfield, NJ 07671

Re: NJ Statewide Water Supply Master Plan Update

Dear Chairman Gordon:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we thank you for holding this hearing to address such an important issue. We urge your committee to seek the public release of the updated New Jersey Statewide Water Supply Master Plan.

In 1981, the Legislature declared that New Jersey's water resources "are essential to the health, safety, economic welfare, recreational and aesthetic enjoyment, and general welfare, of the people of New Jersey," and that "it is necessary to ensure that within each basin there exist adequate water supplies to accommodate present and future needs."¹ Out of this declaration came the first New Jersey Statewide Water Supply Master Plan, released to the public in 1982. Its goals were simple but vitally important: to ensure that the State's water resources were managed in a way that would withstand drought, maintain productive aquifers, and ensure a sustainable supply of surface and groundwater resources to protect human and environmental health.

The most recent version of the Plan was released nearly two decades ago in 1996. It has always been understood, as acknowledged in the 1996 report, that an update was necessary because "available supplies, projected needs for water supplies, development trends and knowledge regarding ecological water needs and water management concepts were changing."² Despite the fact that the statute requires an update at least once every five years,³ we have not had one since 1996. This delay is even more troubling considering that in 2005, the Legislature required the release of an update no later than December 31, 2006.⁴ We are almost halfway through 2015 and we do not have the required update.

Since 1996, much has changed in our State. According to Census data, the population has grown by roughly 800,000 people, with each New Jersey resident using between 70-155 gallons of water per day on average.⁵ We have seen accelerated urban development throughout the State, including in areas like Ocean and Middlesex Counties (where the 1996 update emphasized short and long-term concerns over

groundwater supplies). This development decreases the amount of water that infiltrates into the soil to recharge our aquifers while increasing the withdrawals from our surface and groundwater supplies. In addition, climate change has led to altered rainfall patterns, sea level rise, and saltwater intrusion into coastal aquifers. All of these factors impact New Jersey's current and future water supplies and those impacts must be incorporated into the State's overall plan to manage water resources.

Updates to the plan are required by the statute so that government agencies, water purveyors, municipalities, and the public can evaluate historical data, understand current conditions, and plan for the future. We cannot in good conscience base the decisions we make today regarding growth and development on data in a report that is almost twenty years out of date. We do not benefit from the decades of advances in scientific understanding of the State's surface and groundwater supplies. Without an updated plan, we put current and future New Jersey citizens at risk.

A thorough understanding of our available water resources is our strongest tool for protecting and sustaining them. We appreciate all of the hard work by dedicated staff from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to compile the most recent Plan draft. It is now time for that draft to be released to the public. Thank you again for your attention to this vital issue and your efforts to encourage the Plan's release.

Sincerely,

Kate Miller, The Watershed Institute, Program Coordinator

Michael L. Pisauero, Jr., Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, Policy Director

Sally Rubin, Great Swamp Watershed Association, Executive Director

Lois Giovacchini, Newton Creek Watershed Association, President

Deborah A. Mans, NY/NJ Baykeeper, Executive Director & Baykeeper

Marian Glenn, Rahway River Watershed Association, President

William S. Kibler, Raritan Headwaters Association, Director of Policy and Science

Elliott Ruga, New Jersey Highlands Coalition, Policy Director

Tim Dillingham, American Littoral Society, Executive Director

Heather Fenyk, Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership, Executive Director

Fred Akers, Great Egg Harbor River Council and Watershed Association, Administrator

Britta Wenzel, Save Barnegat Bay, Executive Director

Jane Morton Galetto, Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries, Inc., Board President

Lori Charkey, Bergen SWAN, Director

¹ N.J.S.A. 58:1A-2

² New Jersey Statewide Water Supply Plan, Executive Summary IX. (1996)

³ N.J.S.A. 58:1A-13 (a)

⁴ N.J.S.A. 58:1A-13.3 (2)(a)

⁵ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Water Sense Program, "New Jersey Water Fact Sheet." (2010)



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April 17, 2015

The Honorable Robert M. Gordon
Chairman, Senate Legislative Oversight Committee
State House Annex
P.O. Box 068
Trenton, NJ 08625-0068

Re: Legislative Oversight Committee Hearing
New Jersey Statewide Water Supply Plan

Dear Senator Gordon:

We are very pleased that you and the Senate Legislative Oversight Committee are seeking testimony concerning New Jersey's Water Supply Plan. As the most densely populated state in the nation we are very dependent on a clean and available supply of drinking water. Our agriculture, manufacturing and recreation industries are key to our economic well-being and are also dependent on a reliable source of clean water. As we look at our fellow citizens in California struggling to conserve water during a terrible drought we need to ask ourselves what has New Jersey done to address our supply and quality problems since our last drought which occurred in 2002. After a terrible winter which saw record water line breaks it is imperative that we evaluate our supply and delivery systems and plan for the future.

The adoption of an updated Statewide Water Supply Plan is key to the economic growth of our state, the protection of our natural resources and the health of our citizens. With this in mind we are thankful to the Committee and look forward to the completion of this very important effort.

Sincerely,

Dennis Hart
Director of Utilities

AFFILIATIONS

American Road & Transportation Builders Association
Clean Water Construction Coalition

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ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORITIES

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April 22, 2015

NJ Senate Legislative Oversight Committee

The Hon. Robert M. Gordon, Chair

The Hon. Loretta Weinberg, Vice Chair

The Hon. Thomas H. Kean

The Hon. Joseph M. Kyrillos

The Hon. M. Teresa Ruiz

The Hon. Paul A. Sarlo

Re: New Jersey Water Supply Master Plan

Dear Sen. Gordon and Members of the Committee:

The Association of Environmental Authorities represents drinking water, wastewater and solid waste utilities that are publicly owned and operated in New Jersey. Our members provide services to eight million New Jerseyans; more than 5,000 men and women are employed in our member organizations.

We would like to thank the committee for convening the hearing today. AEA members have long been concerned about the failure to release an updated water supply plan for the State. The current situation reminds us of the proverbial blind men and the elephant. Each blind man drew inaccurate conclusions about the true nature of the beast because he had limited information. Planning will be better coordinated and more efficient when each local stakeholder understands the full picture. We hope today's hearing leads to release of the plan soon.

Very truly yours,

Peggy Gallos
Executive Director