

# SCCGW PRIORITIES IN REFERENCE TO OWRC FOUR YEAR ACTION PLAN

## Ohio Water Resources Council Strategic Plan

### WATER QUALITY

Water resource management includes the responsibility to restore, protect and maintain the quality of surface and ground waters across the State. Ohio measures progress on water quality for surface water based upon the percent attainment of the standards (or benchmarks) for aquatic life in streams (fish and macroinvertebrates). Ohio has a goal of 80% attainment of these aquatic life uses by 2010. Currently, 64% of large rivers (large rivers are defined as having drainage areas >500 square miles) meet aquatic uses while only 48% of watersheds fully meet these uses. Watersheds are smaller than large river basins and have drainage areas of approximately 130 square miles. Nearly half of Ohioans rely on ground water to meet their daily water need. Ninety percent of Ohio's public water supplies use ground water as a source of drinking water. Because Ohio does not have ground water standards, assessment activities have focused on characterizing ground water quality and identifying areas of water quality impact. The effect of ground water and surface water interaction needs to be more fully incorporated into water quality analysis to assess impacts especially in locations of induced infiltration by water supply wells. Developing data collection and characterization to adequately analyze water quality conditions

and the integration and leveraging of water quality programs have been identified as a strategic issue.

Concerted efforts are needed to focus our restoration and protection activities to meet and hopefully exceed the 80% goal for surface water and protect the functions of wetlands and headwater streams. Ground water restoration and protection efforts need to focus on the sensitive aquifers where the active ground water-surface water interaction and land use influence water quality. Numerous land management activities affect water quality and collaborative approaches are needed to maximize water quality benefits from protection activities. Ohio must expand knowledge about water quality and capture water quality data electronically to ensure data availability and to help promote sound decision making in local watersheds and statewide programs. Monitoring and assessment activities must be designed and conducted to provide information about water quality status and trends. As growth and development continue, more sophisticated analyses and information will be needed to ensure clean water and healthy watersheds.

### Objectives:

1. Develop water quality data collection and characterization capabilities to adequately analyze water quality conditions and status and trend information.
    - Refined assessment techniques for all waters
    - Access and availability of water quality data for stakeholders
    - Techniques to assess attainment for recreation and public drinking water supply beneficial uses
    - Techniques to incorporate nutrient criteria into Ohio water quality standards
    - Ability to report on Ohio water quality conditions at statewide and watershed/aquifer scales
    - Stakeholders trained in data collection and analytical methods
    - Identification of areas with ground water quality impacts
  2. Integration and leverage of water quality programs and resources.
    - Coordinated approaches to land use decision making that support water quality restoration and protection
- Information-based decision making for watersheds and drinking water source protection areas
  - Partnerships among the public and private sectors to support the planning and implementation cycle of watershed projects (assess, plan, implement, evaluate)
  - Alignment of funding resources to support the planning and implementation cycle of watershed projects (assess, plan, implement, evaluate)
  - Incorporate sensitive aquifer protection strategies into watershed projects and into regulatory programs as necessary
  - A web-based water portal to provide easy access to water quality data and information
  - Improved integration of water quantity and water quality management

\* - denotes SCCGW involvement

**BOLD** - denotes some direct activity by SCCGW

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Objs.	Action (Program / Initiative)	Indicator / Measure	Lead* and Supporting Agencies	Resources 1. complete with existing 2. develop/identify to complete 3. new needed
1	Refine the assessment of the status and condition of significant Wadeable streams, large rivers, and lakes	Inclusion in the 2006 and 2008 Integrated Report	Ohio EPA - DSW	1
* 1	Finalize and implement methodology for beneficial use assessment of 1. public drinking water and 2. recreation	Inclusion in the 2006 (partial) and 2008 Integrated Report	Ohio EPA - DSW	1
1	Finalize and implement rule development for wetlands biocriteria	Implementation of 401 mitigation rules by 2007	Ohio EPA - DSW	1
* 1	Implement methodology to assess primary headwaters	Primary headwater assessment tools included with mitigation rules by 2007	Ohio EPA - DSW	2
* 1	<b>Evaluate ground water &amp; aquifer / surface water interaction assessment techniques</b>	Recommend techniques to be incorporated into the TMDL process and related programs	Ohio EPA – DDAGW ODNR - DOW	1
1	Finalize rules for nutrient criteria for lakes, streams and rivers to establish standards for allowable discharge	Rules proposed in 2008	Ohio EPA - DSW	1
* 1	<b>Document areas with verified ground water contamination</b>	Map areas and input attribute and geospatial data in a Ground Water Quality Impacts database; Incorporate summary results into the 2008 Integrated Water Quality Report	Ohio EPA – DDAGW* ODNR ODH	1
* 1	<b>Develop a groundwater strategy to assess ground water impacts and defines a common approach to define impairment; Strategy will guide:</b> - <b>corrective actions</b> - <b>appropriate public health interventions</b>	A ground water beneficial use assessment methodology developed by April 2008. The methodology will establish a consistent process to identify/map sensitive hydrogeologic settings and develop water quality criteria to map impaired ground waters.	Ohio EPA – DDAGW* With the State Agency Coordinating Committee on Ground Water	1
1	Develop credible data Level II monitoring training for watershed stakeholders	- Level 2 Qualified Data Collector in each watershed - Number of Level 2 QDCs in each watershed	Ohio EPA - DSW	2

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2	Improved geographic targeting of farmland preservation programs		ODA	
* 2	Ensure linkage between state decision-making and watershed goals (including consideration of potential impacts on Lake Erie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Utilize lessons gleaned from the Balanced Growth Initiative, water quality trading projects and other initiatives</li> <li>- Improve Lake Erie Quality Index Score</li> </ul>	All	1
2	Develop list of potential restoration/protection sites.	List developed and used for directing funding resources	Ohio EPA - DSW	1

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