

# Facilitated Discussion (S833): APA's Task Force on Water

Tuesday, April 21, 2015 • 11:00 am – 12:15 p.m.

WSCC—211

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**American Planning Association  
2015 National Planning Conference**

# Agenda

- **Who:** APA Water Task Force
- **Why:** Critical Water Issues Call for Improved Water Planning Practice & Policy
- **What:** Summary and Discussion of Task Force Report and Recommendations

**American Planning Association**  
*Making Great Communities Happen*

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**APA Board of Directors – Committee and Task Force Report**

<b>BOARD MEETING DATE:</b>	April 18, 2015	<b>TYPE OF REPORT:</b>
<b>TO:</b>	APA Board of Directors	<input type="checkbox"/> Action
<b>FROM:</b>	APA Water Task Force Bill Cezanek, AICP, Co-Chair Lundy Wordlaw, AICP, Co-Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	APA Water Task Fork Report	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA
<b>ADOPTED POLICY:</b>	No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

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**RECOMMENDATION:**  
That the Board accepts this informational report.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE BOARD:**  
None.

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**Executive Summary**  
 Water—essential for life; an indicator for our earliest settlement patterns; and at 75 percent of the earth’s surface, all around us. But as settlement patterns and consumption habits change, so too have our water needs. Communities around the world are grappling with ever-increasing challenges of water, wastewater, and stormwater management; as well as issues related to access, reliability and quality. Those working directly with water understand its complex nature and need for a comprehensive approach—but the rest of us, most planners included, have only a general understanding (if any) of anything beyond the basic issues.

The American Planning Association (APA) created a Water Task Force in 2014, comprising a diverse group of planners, landscape architects, economists, policy makers, and academics, to evaluate the link between water management and land use planning, and to offer recommendations to APA’s Board for improved policy and practice. The resulting report is meant to challenge existing water planning silos and encourage the Board to take the lead on addressing this

# APA Water Task Force Members

- **Bill Cesanek, AICP, Co-Chair**
- **Lindy Wordlaw, AICP, Co-Chair** (Chair, Environment, Natural Resources and Energy (ENRE) Division; Member, Sustainable Communities and Planning in the Black Community Divisions; Senior Manager, Nonprofit and Public Sector, Elevate Energy)
- **Mary Ann Dickinson,** (Member, Sustainable Communities Division)
- **Danielle Gallet,** (Member, ENRE Division)
- **Kristina Hill**
- **Thomas Hamed,** (APA Region II Student Representative)
- **Michael Marella, AICP**
- **Henk Ovink**
- **Kelli Sertich, AICP,** (Member, Hazard Mitigation and Disaster Recovery Planning Division)
- **David Waggoner**
- **Jennifer Graeff, APA Staff/Contributor** (Member, International and Sustainable Communities Divisions)

**The Water Task Force would also like to thank Laura Buhl, (Past Chair, International Division), Joe MacDonald, AICP, and Dale Morris for their contributions to report.**

# Why a Task Force on Water?



# Why a Task Force on Water?

- Drought of historic magnitude in western US
- Groundwater depletion and subsidence in south
- Continuing threats to water quality from urban runoff and insufficiently treated waste water discharges to streams
- Volatility and uncertainty of extreme weather events associated with climate change
- Increased competition to support development & populations growth among water users for scarce and overused supplies
- International conflicts over water access



# The Challenge to Planners

- Geographic scale: watershed mgmt vs community planning
- Temporal scale: short term vs long term action
- Water mgmt typically siloed, but needs to be interdisciplinary
- Involves multiple stakeholders
- Need new paradigm for water planning / mgmt

# Structure of Task Force Report

- Recommendations report sought to address ALL use of water, runoff, and disposal.
- Water – wastewater – stormwater
- 6 core themes
- 32 recommendations

## Core Theme #1:

Water is a central and essential organizing element in a healthy urban environment.



Our recognition of the vital importance of water—for human health, for the natural environment, sanitation, habitat, transportation, and commerce—establishes the rationale for expanded action by planners.



## Core Theme #2:

Planning practice needs to apply an integrated, systems-oriented approach to water management

### Recommendations:

**Better incorporate water into the comprehensive planning process**, as a component of a Comp/Master Plan or a sustainability plan

View water resource management as **interdisciplinary, not multidisciplinary**

# Core Theme #3:

## New mechanisms for interdisciplinary interaction are critical to effective water management

urban planning/design, engineering, landscape architecture, architecture, hydrology, etc.

### Associated Recommendations:

Create mechanisms for planners to convey to communities the value of water and the opportunity costs associated with development projects

Measure benefits of adapting water strategies/policies

Align water resource protection with other urban development professionals

Conduct charrettes involving planners/ water professionals/others stakeholders for improved understanding between the professions; Rosetta stone

Develop standards for incorporating water professionals during comprehensive planning and land development decisions in order to better understand the long-term impacts

## Core Theme #4:

Planners need new and improved professional practices to manage water more sustainably and provide greater social equity for access



### Associated Recommendation:

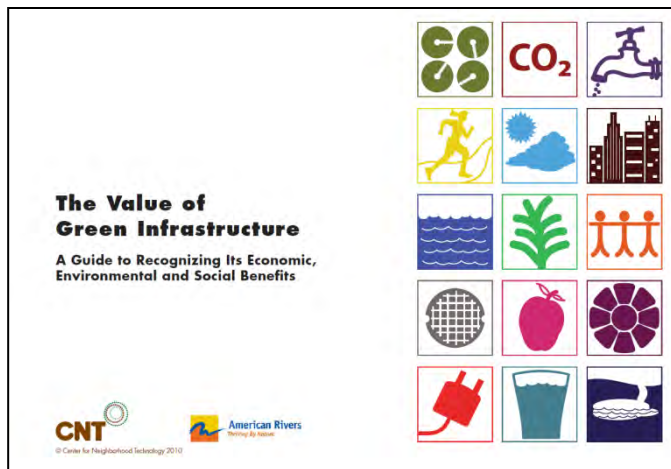
**Apply goals of environmental justice to equalize the risks to health and public safety from water, or lack of water, across income levels and other measures of diversity, so all citizens share equally in the benefits and the risks of maintaining sustainable water systems**

# Core Theme #5:

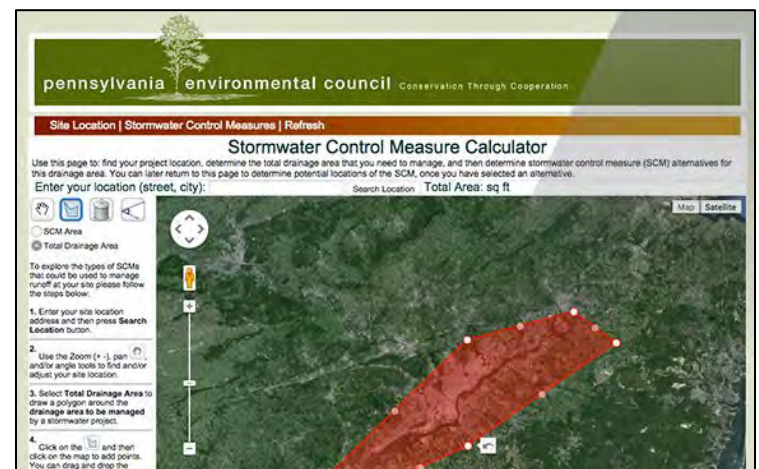
# Innovative land use planning and urban design is needed to improve/protect water environments

## Associated Recommendation:

Create **tools for planners to easily identify the impacts** of projects on natural and urban water resources; Create innovative example water-emphasizing urban designs



Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology



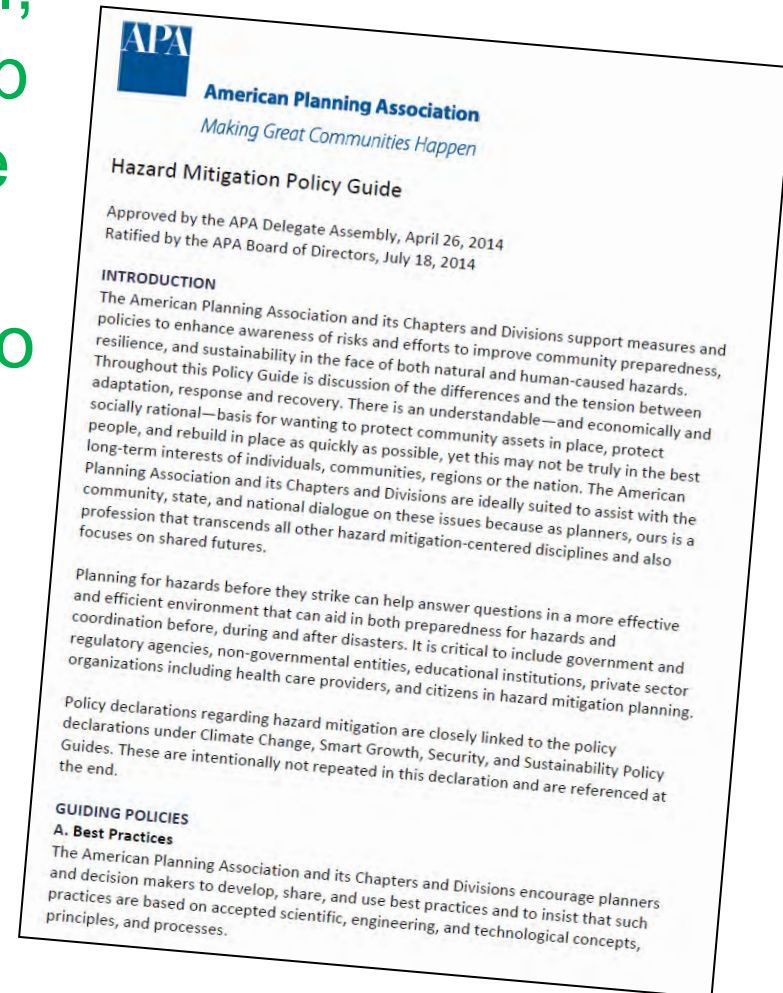
Source: Pennsylvania Environmental Council

## Core Theme #6:

Adaptive land use, environmental, & infrastructure planning can help to increase resilience to extreme climate events and climate change; reducing risk & helping to manage uncertainty

### Associated Recommendation:

Improve flooding/hazard mitigation planning by building upon current APA, FEMA and NOAA work for hazard mitigation; should have specific effort to include water/wastewater utilities



# Additional Recommendations

- Education and Outreach
- Research
- General

## Additional Recommendations: Education and Outreach

Revise planning curricula to uptake of interdisciplinary classes; develop technical skills

Provide interdisciplinary opportunities in graduate studios

Assist applicable divisions in education/outreach around water management issues.

Consider pilot research/hands-on program applications partnership w/ others

Develop/publish reports that provide planning resources on technical aspects

Create/ manage water management information on water

resource management

Create "water governance" multilevel stakeholders

Publish/update

Host series of webinars

Develop university management

Partner with national water resource membership agencies

Lead campaign to help public and officials understand importance of water resources

Encourage planners to be conveners/supporters of local efforts to improve water management, as both a resource and an asset.

**"Upgrade" planning education/practice to include emerging planning topics...they're here to stay.**

## Additional Recommendations: Research

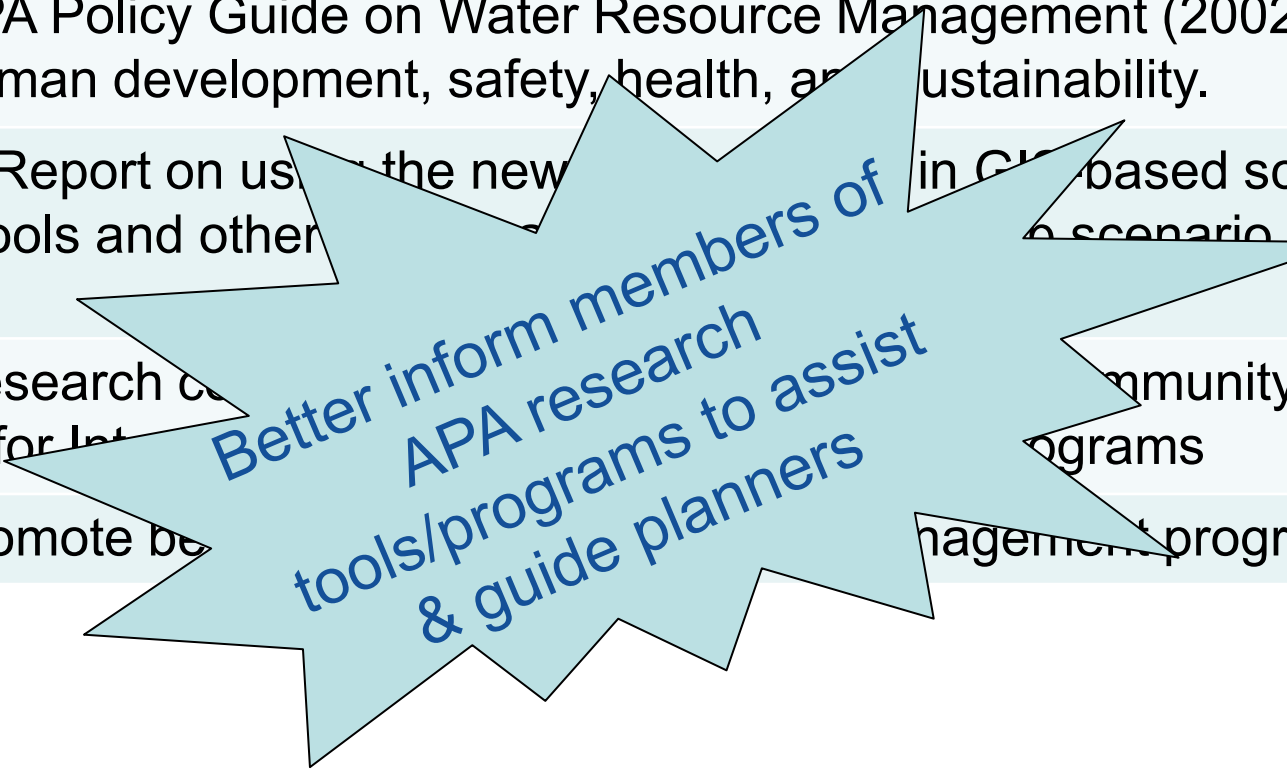
New PAS Report on creating & activating new water paradigm into planning (specific plans, redevelopment plans, master plans).

Update APA Policy Guide on Water Resource Management (2002) to include human development, safety, health, and sustainability.

New PAS Report on using the new in GIS-based scenario planning tools and other scenario planning tools

Prepare research community planning programs for Int programs

Identify/promote be management programs





## Additional Recommendations: General

Develop model ordinance/legislative mechanisms manual to support integrated urban water management

Key stakeholders should work together to reevaluate pricing mechanisms for water and stormwater/wastewater service to better understand the true cost of water use

Create “translations” of peer organization reports for planners!

# Discussion

