

***The Research and Information Collection Partnership***  
**STEERING COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL**

**February 1, 2010**

**Final Conference Call Summary**

**Meeting Objectives/Desired Outcomes:**

- *Present the results of the scoring of research and information collection projects, obtain feedback from the Steering Committee, and accept the ranking of projects;*
- *Review the high priority project descriptions, obtain feedback from the Steering Committee, and accept revised project descriptions; and*
- *Discuss the draft communication process*

**I. Key Next Steps**

	<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
1	Send comments on high priority project descriptions to Karl Anderson (cc Kathy Grant)	Steering Committee members	By COB February 8
2	Compile initial comments and distribute to Steering Committee	Partners & RESOLVE	As soon as possible following receipt of comments
3	If after receipt of comments another call is required, schedule call	Partners & RESOLVE	As soon as possible following receipt of comments (if necessary)
4	RICP Steering Committee conference call	Steering Committee members	March 9
5	RICP Steering Committee meeting	Steering Committee members	April 15-16

**II. Welcome, Introduction, Meeting Objectives and Agenda**

Kathy Grant, the facilitator, opened the call and welcomed the participants. She briefly reviewed the call materials, the call objectives, and the call agenda.

Chris Rayburn of the Water Research Foundation (the Foundation) thanked members of the Steering Committee for their continued participation in the Research and Information Collection Partnership (RICP) process. He reminded the Committee of the goal of finalizing the research and information collection priorities document at its April meeting. He urged the Committee to review the results of the scoring process for research and information collection projects and to use their best professional judgment to identify those of the highest priority.

Pam Barr, US EPA, echoed Mr. Rayburn's appreciation for the Committee's work. She reminded the group that the Total Coliform Rule/Distribution System Advisory Committee (TCRDSAC) stated in its Agreement in Principle that "The RICP will establish a science-driven,

mutually agreed upon, strategically-focused, decision-relevant research and information agenda.” She particularly stressed the importance of decision-relevance and the need to understand which of the twenty-seven research and information collection projects will provide the information EPA needs to make policy decisions in the next five years, if necessary.

### **III. Presentation: Prioritization of Research and Information Collection Projects**

Ali Arvanaghi, US EPA, reviewed the scoring process, discussed and supported by the Steering Committee at their November 2009 meeting, noting the framework weights used to differentiate the Tier 1 and Tier 2 issue areas designated by the TCRDSAC and the tie-breaker dependencies and timing scoring. He further explained a “generational approach” to breaking ties, which gives priority to first generation – or primary – projects (those which can be started immediately, without waiting for the results of other projects).

Mr. Arvanaghi then presented the results of the partners’ scores, showing the Committee three lists to consider using when applying their best professional judgment to prioritize projects: a list of the final rankings for all 27 projects, with ties included; a list of eight primary projects; and the list of seven high priority projects identified by the Committee at its November meeting.

**Members of the RICP Steering Committee reviewed and discussed the results of the scoring process and, using their best professional judgment, accepted the following list of ten high priority research and information projects:**

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>1. Sur1</b> | <b>6. Sur4</b>  |
| <b>2. Pre1</b> | <b>7. CC1</b>   |
| <b>3. Pre2</b> | <b>8. Stor1</b> |
| <b>4. Hea1</b> | <b>9. Con3</b>  |
| <b>5. Hea2</b> | <b>10. Con4</b> |

In determining the list of high priority projects, the Committee took into consideration several factors and criteria. Members first considered the ten projects that ranked 90 or above in the scoring process (Sur1, Sur2, Sur3, Pre1, Pre2, Hea1, RisM1, Hea2, Sur4, Pre3). Of these ten, the Committee decided to give priority to the six projects that are not dependent on other projects and could be launched immediately (Sur1, Pre1, Pre2, Hea1, Hea2, Sur4). Although the cross connection and storage projects were ranked lower in the scoring, the Committee added CC1 and Stor1 to the list of high priority projects because they address high priority risk areas (as determined by the TCRDSAC), and because they are considered first generation projects. Lastly, the Committee added two projects, Con3 and Con4, because they have the potential to provide basic risk information on contaminant entry that could feed into CC1 and Stor1.

The Committee recognized that their prioritization of projects represents a suggested course of action by the Committee. Those interested in conducting research and information collection projects may look at the list of high priority projects and choose to implement some elements of a particular project rather than an entire project.

The Committee considered CC2 and Stor2 as alternatives for CC1 and Stor1 on the high priority projects list. The former projects focus more on the magnitude of risk, the latter on mitigation of

risk. Although EPA would need information on the magnitude of risk to inform a decision on risk mitigation, the Committee noted that the information on risk mitigation would be immediately valuable to public water systems and could inform risk management decisions.

The following is a summary of other key considerations in the Committee's deliberations:

- Although Sur2 may not be dependent on Sur 1 and could be a high priority project, the design of Sur2 could benefit from lessons learned from implementing Sur1.
- RisM2 did not rank higher in the scoring because there are other efforts underway related to improve hydraulic modeling. Although it may be premature to launch this project now, this determination should be reassessed in a year.
- Although Hea3 is a first generation project, it could be duplicative of efforts at CDC.
- The Research and Information Collection Priorities document will likely list all 27 projects, not just the ten high priority projects. This will give potential researchers a longer list to choose from if none of the high priority projects are of interest.

#### **IV. Discussion: Research and Information Collection Projects**

The Steering Committee made only brief comments about the projects descriptions and agreed to send further comments following the meeting. Members suggested that the partners review the descriptions to be sure the write-ups related to dependencies are consistent with the table of relationships in the descriptions. To the extent that the inconsistencies are related to "soft" as opposed to "hard" dependencies, it would help to make that nuance clearer.

#### **V. Discussion: Communication Process**

Jeanne Briskin, US EPA, briefly reviewed a draft document outlining a communication process for distribution system research and information collection as recommended by the TCRDSAC. The document includes an overview of the purpose of communication, key messages, RICP products, outreach methods, audiences, and a schedule for communication efforts. Consistently with the commitment in the AIP, Ms. Briskin noted that the EPA is committed to having a stakeholder meeting at least within two years of the launch of the RICP priorities document.

Members noted the importance of collecting in one place the results of the RICP high priority research and information collection - as well as other relevant research if possible - so that it is available for review in five years when a Federal Advisory Committee may be convened to discuss the implications for policy decisions. The partners explained that the communication plan includes a website that will have the abstracts and summaries of the work sponsored by the EPA or the Water Research Foundation. They will consider the feasibility of including links to other projects given resource constraints.

#### **VI. Next Steps**

The Steering Committee members will review the high priority issue project descriptions and send any comments they have to the EPA and RESOLVE by February 8th. EPA will compile these initial comments and distribute them to the Committee. If there are comments that the partners feel warrant discussion by Committee members, a conference call will be scheduled.

The Steering Committee will next meet on March 9 via conference call. The Steering Committee will next meet face-to-face on April 15-16 in Washington, DC.

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*  
**RESEARCH AND INFORMATION COLLECTION PARTNERSHIP  
STEERING COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL**

February 1, 2010

**Conference Call Participants**

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**Ali Arvanaghi**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Nick Ashbolt**, US EPA, ORD, National Exposure Research Laboratory \*  
**Pam Barr**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Marie-Claude Besner**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Frank Blaha**, Water Research Foundation  
**Jeanne Briskin**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Joan Brunkard**, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention\*  
**Gary Burlingame**, Philadelphia Water Department\*  
**Guy Cole**, US EPA, OGWDW  
**Steve Estes-Smargiassi**, Massachusetts Water Resources Authority\*  
**Cindy Forbes**, Southern California Section Drinking Water Field Operations Branch, California  
Department of Public Health\*  
**David Gute**, Tufts University\*  
**Kathy Grant**, RESOLVE  
**Mark LeChevallier**, American Water\*  
**Debbie Lee**, RESOLVE  
**Audrey Levine**, US EPA, ORD, Drinking Water Research Program\*  
**Darren Lytle**, US EPA  
**Adrienne Menniti**, CH2M Hill  
**Jonathan Pressman**, US EPA, ORD  
**Chris Rayburn**, Water Research Foundation  
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**David Wahman**, US EPA

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