

Hicks-Ray Associates



May 20, 2010

TO: WESTCAS Membership
FROM: Fred B. Hicks and Tom Ray
SUBJECT: Meeting with Robyn Colosimo of CEQ

Yesterday, we represented WESTCAS at a meeting organized by the National Waterways Conference. About ten representatives of various water related organizations were in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was for us to meet Robyn Colosimo who has just rotated from her position at Corps Headquarters over to CEQ where she has become the point person for the “Principals and Guidelines” issue. P&G has become more important than ever because of the potential that it may be combined into a “super Executive Order” that addresses not only P&G but Climate Change and NEPA as well.

We want to use this report to update you on what Ms. Colosimo told us during her honest and forthright discussion of how she is approach P&G and some of the challenges she is facing in doing so. But before starting, also want to do so in a way that recognizes both how important this issue is to WESTCAS while also acknowledging just how busy our membership is. After all, you are focused every day providing water resource related services to your communities. And perhaps you wonder what it means when you get a Hicks-Ray update on the “latest time-line for P&G?” Maybe it just seems like more “inside the Beltway gibberish.

The reason we sent out these reports is both to inform and update you on what we consider to be among the most important issues facing WESTCAS and the water community. We hope that these updates and the details that are provided helps to put these issues into a context that is relevant to

When Paul Revere and William Dawes and Samuel Prescott rode through “every Middlesex Village and Farm,” back in April, 1775, they pounded on doors and shouted, “The regulars are out.” And when they did, the Colonists living just to the West of Boston knew exactly what they meant and what they needed to do which was for the Minute Men to muster and face the British.

We are not in any way suggesting that the hardworking and highly competent professionals who are working on the P&G issue at the Federal level are like the Red Coats, nor are we suggesting that any WESTCAS member needs to pick up their musket,

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nor dump tea into a harbor or anything else. Our point is that when you see a report on “P&G” or “Executive Orders” please know just how important it is and prepare to get involved. The decisions being made now will impact the water community for generations to come.

Here are the highlights of yesterday’s meeting:

- Ms. Colosimo suggested that a possible time-line for Principals and Standards, which is a sub-part of Principals and Guidelines would be:
 1. November, 2010, comments received from the National Academy of Science.
 2. Draft final standards could be issued in the late-spring/early summer of 2011.
 3. Final Principals and Standards could be issued before the end of 2011.
 4. After this is done, the actual “Guidelines” part could follow soon afterwards.
 5. In between, there will be outreach from CEQ with regard to this issue including taskforces and themed workshops in which stakeholders can participate.
 6. The Obama Administration considers the first three quarters of 2011 to be their golden window of opportunity to get some important things done in terms of water resources planning.
- She also noted that the P&G issue carried with it very high expectations, and with such expectations comes the prospect of failure and nothing being accomplished.
- But there is also a growing consensus that at least for now, the legislative process that could address many of the issues of concern to the EO [ie HR 5088, S. 787, sustainable watershed planning legislation, climate change legislation, WRDA reauthorization, etc. etc.] is stalled.
- This, in turn, makes the prospect of an EO much more attractive to some at CEQ.
- Ms. Colosimo agreed that this EO differs from many others because it embraces a breath-taking expansion of Federal regulatory outreach.

In future reports, we will begin to outline how WESTCAS can make important contributions to the evolving P&G process. We promise not to pound on your doors like Paul Revere did. But we will be working with Dawn to hit the “send” button in getting information to you.