



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of November 19, 2011**

DATE: November 4, 2011

SUBJECT: Consideration of a regional Water Supply Plan developed collaboratively with other jurisdictions through the Northern Virginia Regional Commission.

C. M. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Adopt by resolution the Northern Virginia Regional Water Supply Plan which was developed collaboratively with other jurisdictions through the Northern Virginia Regional Commission.

ISSUE: No issues have been identified.

SUMMARY: In November 2005, the state of Virginia adopted the Local and Regional Water Supply Planning (WSP) Regulation 9 VAC 25-780-10 et seq. The WSP regulation was developed largely as a result of the droughts experienced in 1999 and 2002. In 2006, the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) of Northern Virginia jurisdictions, working with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, determined that pursuit of a regional supply plan was desirable for technical, timing, and cost reasons. In March of 2007, the County Board authorized the County Manager to work with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) to develop a regional plan in conjunction with the other jurisdictions in northern Virginia. This work is now complete and the plan is available for public review at the NVRC web site, <http://www.novaregion.org/index.aspx?NID=1214>. The Executive Summary and Introduction sections are attached here for a basic review of the plan, but the overall plan is several hundred pages long and too long to include as an attachment. However, a complete copy is available for review in the Office of the Board Clerk.

BACKGROUND: The purpose of the WSP regulation is to: (i) ensure that adequate and safe drinking water is available to all citizens of the Commonwealth; (ii) encourage, promote, and protect all other beneficial uses of the Commonwealth's water resources; and (iii) encourage,

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Staff: Dave Hundelt, Department of Environmental Services

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promote, and develop incentives for alternative water sources, including but not limited to desalinization.

The regulation establishes the required planning process and criteria that local governments must use in the development of local or regional WSPs. WSPs must encompass a planning horizon of 30 to 50 years and address both surface and groundwater use. They must contain information on: (i) existing water sources; (ii) existing water use; (iii) existing water resource conditions; (iv) an assessment of projected water demand; (v) a description of water management actions; (vi) a statement of need if demands exceed source availability within the planning horizon; (vii) an analysis of alternatives to address projected source water deficits; and (viii) maps detailing program elements. In addition, a local public hearing on the WSP consistent with §15.2-1427 of the Code of Virginia must be held. Local governments must adopt a WSP, as well as any necessary revisions to their comprehensive plan or other local programs necessary to implement the WSP prior to submitting it to DEQ.

After a WSP is submitted to and reviewed by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the State Water Control Board will make a determination as to its compliance with the regulation. WSPs must be reviewed by the locality every five years and revised and resubmitted if necessary; all WSP's must be reviewed, revised, and resubmitted to DEQ every ten years.

All cities, counties, and towns in the Commonwealth are required to submit a local WSP or to participate in a regional WSP. The deadlines for the first WSP submissions to DEQ are based upon population. Arlington County's deadlines are discussed below.

Because of the County's long term relationship with the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB), through our supplier the Washington Aqueduct, the County, is already well protected from a water supply perspective. The ICPRB's CO-OP section is the cooperative of the three major water suppliers in the region, the Washington Aqueduct (which supplies Arlington, Falls Church and the District of Columbia), Fairfax Water, and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. The CO-OP has worked since 1970 to construct and operate upstream reservoirs as well as adopt the Low Flow Allocation Agreement that stipulates how the river's flow is divided during periods of drought. These measures, along with local ordinances that allow the County Manager (and other CAOs) to enact water restrictions during periods of drought, help to ensure that Arlington's citizens will be protected during periods of unusually low natural flows in the river. The findings of this water supply plan validate the previous planning efforts in the metropolitan area and because of the previous efforts; it's unlikely that major improvements will be necessary in the planning horizon of this plan.

DISCUSSION: As a jurisdiction with a population greater than 35,000 people, Arlington County would have had to submit a WSP by November 2, 2008, if it had not participated in a regional plan. By joining the other northern Virginia jurisdictions in developing a regional plan the County had until November 2011 to complete and adopt the plan.

The development of the regional WSP has been overseen by an Executive Committee comprised of the CAOs and Water Utility CEOs in northern Virginia. A Technical Advisory Committee (comprised of staff from the appropriate county, city and town agencies as well as water utilities)

along with NVRC staff has facilitated the exchange of required information, reviewed the regional WSP, and is guiding the WSP through the public hearing process.

The finding for Arlington is that we are projected to experience a water surplus through the planning horizon. We have a capacity for approximately 48 Million Gallons per Day (MGD), but an average demand currently closer to 25 MGD. Through the planning horizon that demand grows to about 30 MGD, but even with seasonal peak demands, we will see a surplus of supply capacity.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no initial cost in adopting this regional water supply plan as our supply needs for the foreseeable future are met with existing facilities. The County's costs for future improvements would be determined by its share of use or benefit from each individual project. Adoption of the regional plan does not obligate the County to a set share of expenses for potential improvements to the region's water supply.

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE NOTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLAN.

WHEREAS, Virginia State Water Control Board Regulation 9 VAC 25-780, Local and Regional Water Supply Planning, requires all counties, cities and towns in the Commonwealth of Virginia to prepare and submit a water supply plan to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ); and

WHEREAS, in March of 2007, the County Board authorized the County Manager to work with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) to develop a regional plan in conjunction with the other jurisdictions in northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, this work is now complete and is the Northern Virginia Regional Water Plan as updated through November, 2011; and

WHEREAS, the adopted Regional Water Supply Plan will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality when adopted by all regional jurisdictions,

WHEREAS, on November 19, 2011, the Arlington County Board held a public hearing to accept public comment on the Regional Water Supply Plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the County Board of Arlington County hereby adopts the Northern Virginia Regional Water Supply Plan as it pertains to the Arlington County. Approval and adoption of this regional plan indicates support for and general agreement with the regional planning approach, but does not indicate approval or disapproval of conclusions and recommendations presented in the plan as they pertain to other localities. Arlington County reserves the right to comment on specific water supply alternatives in the future even though such alternatives may or may not be recommended in this adopted plan. Arlington County will not be limited to specific water supply alternatives in this adopted plan and reserves the right to recommend additional alternatives for consideration in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Arlington County intends that the Regional Water Supply Plan shall be revised to reflect changes in relevant data at least once every five years and resubmitted to DEQ every ten years in accordance with the regulation and sound planning practice.