



Department of
**Environment &
Conservation**

Studies Work Group Update

Work Group

- Chris White, Bedford County, Chair
- Rep. Pat Marsh; Vice Chair
- Mayor Sheila Butt, Lead for Regionalization Study
- Jimmy West, TNECD
- Sen. Joey Hensley
- David Money, DRA
- George Nolan, SELC

Partnership Recommendations in 11/20/25 Report

- TDEC to Commission a Water Needs Analysis
- TDEC to Commission a Thorough Analysis on Regionalization of Water and Wastewater Utilities
- Ask TDEC to Provide a Feasibility Study of Building a Pipeline to the Tennessee River
- Increase Supply Reliability for Essential Water Use During Drought Conditions and Protect In-stream Flows by Capturing Excess Water in Off-stream Storage Ponds

Water Needs Analysis

- TDEC under contract with HDR. Study includes:
- Assessment and Evaluation of Existing Water Systems
 - Data Collection and System Inventory
 - Existing Demand and Water Loss Evaluation
 - Supply Capacity and Interconnection Assessment
 - TVA Reservoir Operations and Release Management
- Future Demand Methodology and Projection
 - Development of Future Demand Projection Methodology
 - System-Level Future Demand Projections
 - Identification of Future Supply Risks and Deficiencies

Regionalization of Water and Wastewater Utilities

- TDEC under contract with WFX. Study includes:
- Evaluating Compliance Challenges and Solutions
- Regional Governance and Organizational Alternatives:
 - A Regional Water/Wastewater Authority: An independent governmental entity established through state legislation consisting of member utilities, capable of issuing debt and setting regional policy.
 - The Municipal System Extension Model: Leveraging larger, more robust municipal systems to provide services to smaller, neighboring utility districts through interlocal agreements.
 - Utility District Consolidation: Merging existing, smaller districts into a unified regional
- Detailed Review of Existing Opportunities
- Funding, Financial Strategy, Cost Allocation, and Affordability
- Implementation Roadmap and Strategic Communication

Feasibility of a Pipeline to the Tennessee River

- TDEC under contract with Hazen & Sawyer. Study will be very similar to the 2025 Cumberland River Feasibility Study and includes:
 - Hydraulic water modeling data
 - Pipeline routes, pumping and storage analysis
 - Water quality considerations
 - Identification of future field information
 - Environmental, cultural and historic considerations
 - Permitting requirements
 - Raw water transmission analysis
 - Probable Costs for construction
 - Cost of Service, including O&M costs

Off-stream Storage Reservoirs

- TDEC under contract with Gresham Smith
- Continuation of work performed in 2025
- Gresham Smith presented at December 12, 2025 workshop to Partnership
- Study includes:
 - Further investigations into drought management options
 - Determine 30-day storage volume required to offset water withdrawal
 - Identify preliminary storage locations
 - Identify preliminary transmission line route
 - Develop high level cost estimate for construction and land acquisition

Regionalization Efforts

- Studies Workgroup met with Bell Buckle's Mayor and Water Manager on May 4 to discuss a potential Water and Wastewater Authority with Wartrace.
- Feedback was positive, with Wartrace's primary concerns centered on governance.
- Wartrace's Mayor and three Aldermen have been briefed and invited to the next Workgroup meeting.
- Both communities appear receptive to continued discussions regarding a regional utility partnership and a mutually acceptable governance framework.
- We plan to have our next workgroup meeting in two weeks.