

***Ground Water Inventory, Monitoring & Assessment***

***Technical Guide Development***

**Date:** January 9, 2014

**Subject:** Core Team Conference Call

**Participants:** Allison Aldous, Devendra Amatya, Liz Berger (vice Chris Carlson), Kate Dwire, Joe Gurrieri, Andy Rorick (NRM-METI), Troy Thompson, Casey Giffen (METI), Pete Kilbourne (METI), and Steve Solem (METI).

**Vacant Core Team Positions:** vice Trish Carroll, vice Megan Lang

**Discussion Topics and Action Items**

**Next Core Team Call on April 10, 2014 @ 2:00 ET/12:00 MST**

# ****Project Overview**** Project Schedule

**Steve Solem discussed key tasks coming up in the project schedule (12/27/13) and their status:**

* **The Internal FS Review (Task 4.60) and Partner/Affiliate Review (Task 4.70) began on January 07, 2014 and conclude on March 21, 2014. This allows two full months for review and comment on the draft.**
* **Task 4.80 Review Comments/Reconciliation is the next major Technical Guide task, which begins at the end of March 2014.**
* **Preliminary work to define the scope of the Revision of Managing GW Resources Technical Guide (FS-881) is ongoing.**
1. **Internal FS and Partner/Affiliate Review Process**

Steve Solem reviewed the Internal FS and Partner/Affiliate Review Process. The January 7, 2014, letter from the NFS Deputy Chief formally announced and kicked off the review of the draft Technical Guide.

In addition to internal distribution, Joe is extending email invitations to agency partners and others requesting their comment on the draft Technical Guide (See attachment at the end of this document).

Technical Guide Internal/Partner Review Website

The external website is set up for the Internal FS/Partner Review of the draft Technical Guide to serve as a common gateway to access project documentation, review guidelines, and to provide internal reviewers access to SharePoint sites. Forest Service reviewers will be directed to an Internal FS SharePoint site set up for the FS Application Dependency Assessment, and a site for review and comment on changes to the Data Dictionary/Geodatabase Design.

Steve Solem reviewed the website posted on the Ecosystem Management Coordination staff’s webpage and its structure (see <http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/rig/protocols/groundwater.shtml>). The top section of the page contains transitory material that will only be available during the review. The bottom portion of the page contains content related to the Groundwater Technical Guide Development Program and will serve as the main groundwater Technical Guide development page.

Core Team members are encouraged to contact both internal and external members of their networks and inform them of the opportunity to comment on the draft Technical Guide and other materials.

Steve also indicated that briefings for TNC and the Utah State Geological Survey on the data dictionary and geo-database design are being scheduled to obtain their comments on the proposal.

CT Discussion on the Review Process

The Core Team discussed the role of team members when requesting partner/affiliate review comments on the Technical Guide. Core Team members are encouraged to forward the request for review to their networks, but members should ensure that prospective reviewers understand the scope of the Technical Guide and do not confuse this review with the groundwater policy currently under development. During the discussion the following points were raised:

* + A message went out to external reviewers suggested by Core Team members, including reviewers such as professors in hydrogeology and state-level groundwater specialists. High-level U.S. Geological Survey specialists (e.g. Jim LaBaugh) are also participating in and helping coordinate the review of the Technical Guide within their agencies.
	+ Joe Gurrieri is not sure if the letter made it to FS Research. Kate Dwire will look into whether the letter was distributed to Research and Development staff and Research Stations.
	+ Pete Kilbourne indicated the letter also should have gone out to state geological surveys, such as the Utah State Geological Survey. Steve Solem indicated that he believes Chris Carlson has a specific list of reviewers that did not include all state geological surveys.

Processing Reviewer Comments

All internal comments from Forest Service are supposed to be provided in a consolidated unit response through the Correspondence Database. Joe Gurrieri and Liz Berger expressed concerns that the Deputy Chief’s letter is not clear that the Regional responses should be submitted through Correspondence Database but submitted directly to Joe. Liz Berger will check the Correspondence inbox for replies and forward these to Joe.

Pete Kilbourne will work with the Geospatial Management Office to process the comments on the GIS Data Dictionary and proposed geodatabase design. (Note: following the call the Geospatial Management Office scheduled a call to discuss how to conduct a review and respond to comments for February 24.)

For the FS Application Dependency Assessment, reviewers are asked to complete a form on an internal FS SharePoint site. Responses from the dependency assessment will help to identify potential impacts to Forest Service database applications, including National Resource Manager (NRM) data structures and applications, as well as local field applications.

Steve Solem invited Core Team members to submit comments on the Technical Guide, Technical Notes, proposed Data Dictionary and geo-database design, and application dependency assessment.

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| **Action:**  | * Joe Gurrieri will confirm with Chris Carlson or Liz Berger whether other state geological surveys should review the Technical Guide.
* Core Team comments on the review materials should be submitted to Joe Gurrieri and Steve Solem and are due March 21, 2014.
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# Revision of TG for Managing Groundwater Resources

**The effort to revise this Technical Guide begins May 2014 following agreement on the revision scope by the Steering Team. As the first step of this process defining the scope of the revision effort is essential to identifying development/revision needs and to organize to accomplish the revision effort.**

**Joe Gurrieri has developed a preliminary outline of the Technical Guide using the outline from the existing Technical Guide as an outline to assist in defining the revision scope and requested CT review and feedback on the proposed outline.**

**The process for the revising Management Technical Guide will be similar to that used to develop the Groundwater IM&A Technical Guide. However, from Joe’s perspective, he believes the revision of the Management Technical Guide will require additional by in from multiple program areas because the revision effort will involve development guidance regarding the assessment of projects and activities affecting groundwater. Without agreement during the development phase on how the assessment and analysis of project effects should be framed, staff in these program areas may not agree to the guidance and the development effort could get bogged down.**

This means membership on CT/ST should be expanded include representatives from these key program areas. However, **Joe suggests waiting to pursue CT/ST membership until the scope of the revision document is better defined. Steve Solem agreed to the need to review the composition of the Core and Steering Teams as this revision effort gets underway to make sure there is the right representation of subject matter experts involved on the development team. This topic will be discussed further once the scope of the revision effort is better defined.**

**CT Comments on Revision Scope Outline**

**Core Team members raised the following points during the discussion:**

* **Kate Dwire felt the outline looks good and suggests adding a climate change representative to CT/ST membership. Kate can also help find a representative to cover the effects of vegetation management.**
* **Devendra** Amatya **asked that he be added as climate change contact for the revision effort, especially as it relates to climate change in the southeastern US.**
* **Kate also commented that if there is a need to involve the range staff, Linda Spencer may be a good representative for the Range program given her background on the groundwater technical guides and range management.**
* **Joe Gurrieri and Troy Thompson both said they would interact with Minerals and Geology program staff to assess options for their involvement on the CT/ST.**
* **Allison Aldous said she is still not clear where the concept of GDEs and importance of GDEs appear in the outline. She suggested these concepts could be covered in the section “**Importance of Groundwater Resources on NFS Lands.”
* **Joe Gurrieri is not sure how EFLs will be treated and is not clear yet where this topic will be covered in the revision document. Allison Aldous, Joe and others will be discussing EFL pilot projects on January 14 and will develop a proposal on how EFL concepts and procedures can be incorporated into the revision scope outline.**

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| **Actions:**  | * Core Team members should provide feedback to Joe Gurrieri on the revision scope outline by January 24.
* Core Team members are asked to send Joe Gurrieri suggestions for potential membership to the CT/ST for the revision effort and potential work groups by February 28 for further discussion during the April 10 Core Team call.
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# Groundwater Training

**Devendra Amatya asked about the basic groundwater-level training and the target audience/location. Joe Gurrieri explained that the training is focused towards program managers (GS 9/11) and may be held in Wisconsin. Participants at the GS 8-level would also be acceptable for the training.**

# Wrap Up

Joe Gurrieri thanked Core Team members for their continued participation as the team moves into a new phase.

# Request for Partner/Affiliate Review Email

Subject: Request for Review: Forest Service Groundwater Inventory, Monitoring, and Assessment Technical Guide by March 21, 2014

You have received this e-mail on the recommendation of one or more people on the interdisciplinary team that are developing the Forest Service *Groundwater Inventory, Monitoring, and Assessment Technical Guide*.  The interdisciplinary team with members from national, regional, research station, and forest staffs have worked together to prepare this guide for use as an initial technical resource associated with managing groundwater resources on National Forest System lands for groundwater specialists, non-groundwater specialists, and contractors. As groundwater resource management issues become more prevalent across the National Forest System, having consistent procedures incorporating best available science and technology to address current and emerging resource management issues affecting this critical resource is important.

The Guide is now at a stage where external review by our partners and affiliates would be very helpful.  Subject matter experts are welcome to limit their review to only the subject matter of interest.  We are specifically interested in your perspectives and responses to the following questions:

1. Is the overall structure and flow of information presented in the technical guide useful and intuitive?  Are there any major flaws?
2. Does the technical guide adequately describe the relationships between agency business requirements and the proposed methods described?
3. Are there changes to the technical guide that should be considered?  Are there missing components?
4. What impacts to your organization may result from using the technical guidance?
5. Benefits/Consequences:  What benefits to partnerships, data sharing, and improved efficiency do you envision?  Do you foresee any unintended consequences as a result of applying these procedures?
6. Transition Costs:  Are there changes or adaptations needed to information systems or inventory/monitoring systems to make them compatible with the guidance?
7. Capacity of Personnel to Understand and Use:  Are the skills and training of potential users adequate to understand and apply the guidance?  What training opportunities would help users?

How to Review

Full review procedures are posted on the Groundwater Inventory, Monitoring, and Assessment Technical Guideweb site at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/rig/protocols/groundwater.shtml>.  The site also provides background on the project, including the project charter and organization, scope of work, briefing papers, and meeting notes.  (Note: You will not be able to access the review materials for the *GIS Data Dictionary and Geodatabase*, or the *Forest Service Application Dependency Assessment*. They are for internal review only.)

If you know others who may add value to the review process, please forward this review request.  Thank you in advance for your assistance with this critical review.  Send your comments to me directly and feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Joe Gurrieri, Hydrogeologist

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