

PWEA Position Statement

Federal Groundwater Legislation

Adopted by PWEA on February 13, 2014



PWEA Mission Statement

Enhance the knowledge and abilities of Pennsylvania's water quality professionals, promote sound sustainable water policies, and promote public awareness of the need to protect water resources.

The Water Environment Federation PWEA believes that the responsibility for groundwater protection and research rests with national-level or federal governments. Groundwater is a highly valuable, finite resource that should be cared for by the highest level of government.

Federal legislation should be designed to assist states and regions as they carry out their groundwater protection programs, but such legislation should not preempt or control those programs. Federal groundwater protection legislation should include increased support for groundwater research and demonstration projects. Federal legislation should include increased support for information sharing, technology transfer, and training. New groundwater legislation should take into account existing legislation and policy for the control of point and non-point source pollution, without creating redundant, conflicting, or stricter regulation of these pollutant sources. In addition, any new legislation and policy controlling point and non-point source pollution should be crafted to adequately protect groundwater resources.

A single federal agency should have the lead role in coordinating groundwater research, demonstration, information sharing, and technology transfer programs at the federal level. The federal agency with the lead role in coordinating such programs at the federal level should report to the national or federal legislature on the programs made to improve knowledge of groundwater phenomena, as well as the progress that states, regions, and other federal agencies are making in protecting and improving groundwater quality. The existing authorities of all federal agencies with groundwater research assessment or protection responsibilities should not be reduced by federal or national legislation. The regulatory authorities of any federal or national agency should be increased only when absolutely necessary to protect vital groundwater resources.

The Water Environment Federation believes PWEA agrees with the WEF that federal and national governments should strive to protect and enhance groundwater as a crucial component of the world's water resources.