

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE: Extension's Role in Facilitating Community Dialogue

CSREES 2009 National
Water Conference
St. Louis, MO
February 11, 2009

Penn State EXTENSION

AGRICULTURE | COMMUNITY & FAMILY | ENVIRONMENT

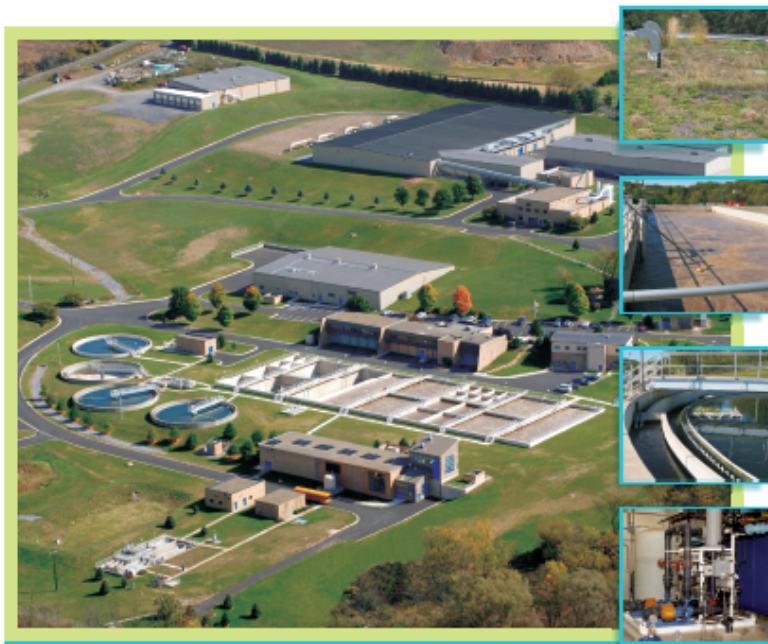
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A State Government Priority



Creating a Sustainable Solution *for Pennsylvania*



November 1, 2008

Edward G. Rendell, Governor

Governor's Sustainable Infrastructure Task Force Report

The Governor's Sustainable Infrastructure Task Force was supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

This report was drafted by the Task Force and is comprised of input collected at eight public meetings conducted throughout Pennsylvania and the independent research and analysis performed by each of the five Work Groups.

- Early 2008, PA Governor Rendell established a Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force
 - Report issued Nov, 2008
 - Education for multiple audiences a high priority

A Need for Education

1. Public Education
2. Industry Workforce Development
3. Industry Board and Management Training

A State Government Priority



Majority of Voters in 64 of 67 Counties Show Support for Crucial Infrastructure Investments

NEARLY TWO THIRDS OF VOTERS APPROVE \$400 MILLION FOR WATER AND SEWER UPGRADES THAT WILL SUPPORT 12,000 PENNSYLVANIA JOBS

(Reprinted with permission)

The money will be available for municipally owned drinking water and wastewater systems in every corner of the state, large or small, urban or rural.

The funding will be available to the 183 publicly owned water systems in Pennsylvania that are facing federal mandates to reduce nutrient pollution in the Susquehanna and Potomac river basins and downstream in the Chesapeake Bay.

The Sustainable Infrastructure Task Force that Governor

\$ 400 Million
per year

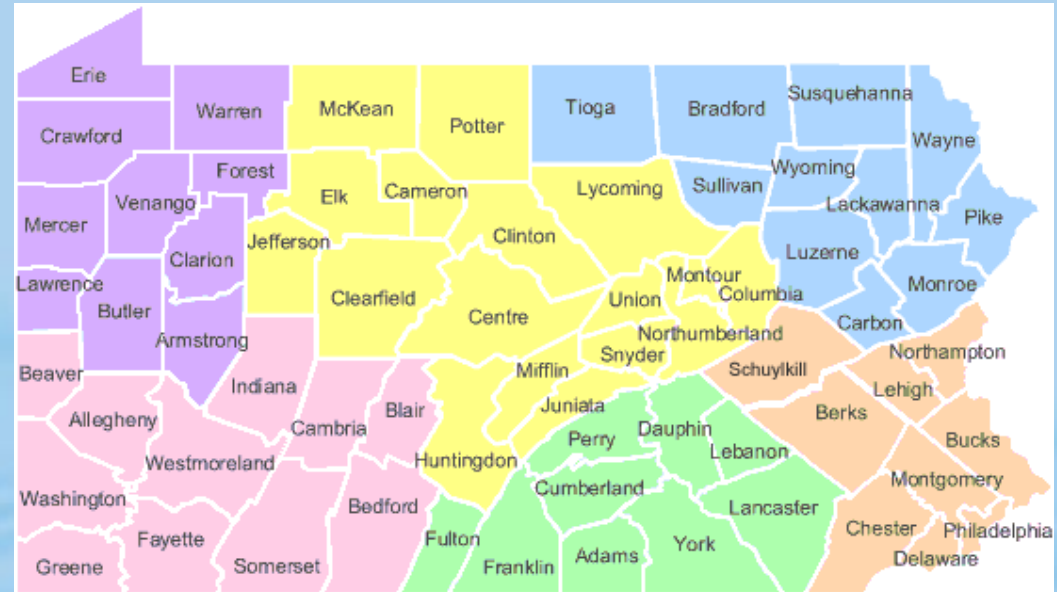
Federal Clean Water Needs Survey estimates that PA will need

\$11 billion for drinking water
>\$7 billion in wastewater

Penn State Cooperative Extension Uniquely Positioned



- Spatial presence across Commonwealth
 - Statewide - 67 county offices
- Access to expertise
 - University resources, research - water conservation, pollution, drinking water, water policy, and watershed education
- Delivery mechanisms
 - Multiple delivery mechanisms including informal and noncredit workshops



Penn State Cooperative Extension Emerging State Program



- Water Resources Extension
 - Identified “Water Infrastructure” as emerging state program
 - Coordinate with Economic & Community Development Extension
- Statewide water infrastructure would address
 - Needs analysis
 - Municipal official training
 - Public education.



Role of Extension Professionals



- Making the connections
 - People and organizations)
- Best use of available tools to promote awareness
- Disseminate information to the decision makers
 - Municipal officials, homeowners, local legislators



Outreach Partners on Infrastructure – State & National



Outreach Partners on Infrastructure – Local & Regional



PENNSTATE



Regional Water Management
Task Force



**First Suburbs Project
Philadelphia**

Susquehanna River Basin Commission

A water management agency serving the Susquehanna River Watershed



**County Government Watershed Associations
Planning Community**

**Environmental Training Center &
US EPA Small Public Water Systems Technology Assistance Center**

A Tool for Outreach



Liquid Assets
liquidassets.psu.edu



- Liquid Assets – The Story of Our Water Infrastructure
 - Water-, wastewater, and stormwater
 - Antiquity of systems (>100 years old)
 - Critical public health – economic, community growth
 - Out of sight – out of mind
 - Lack of maintenance
 - Single largest public works endeavor in our nation's history.



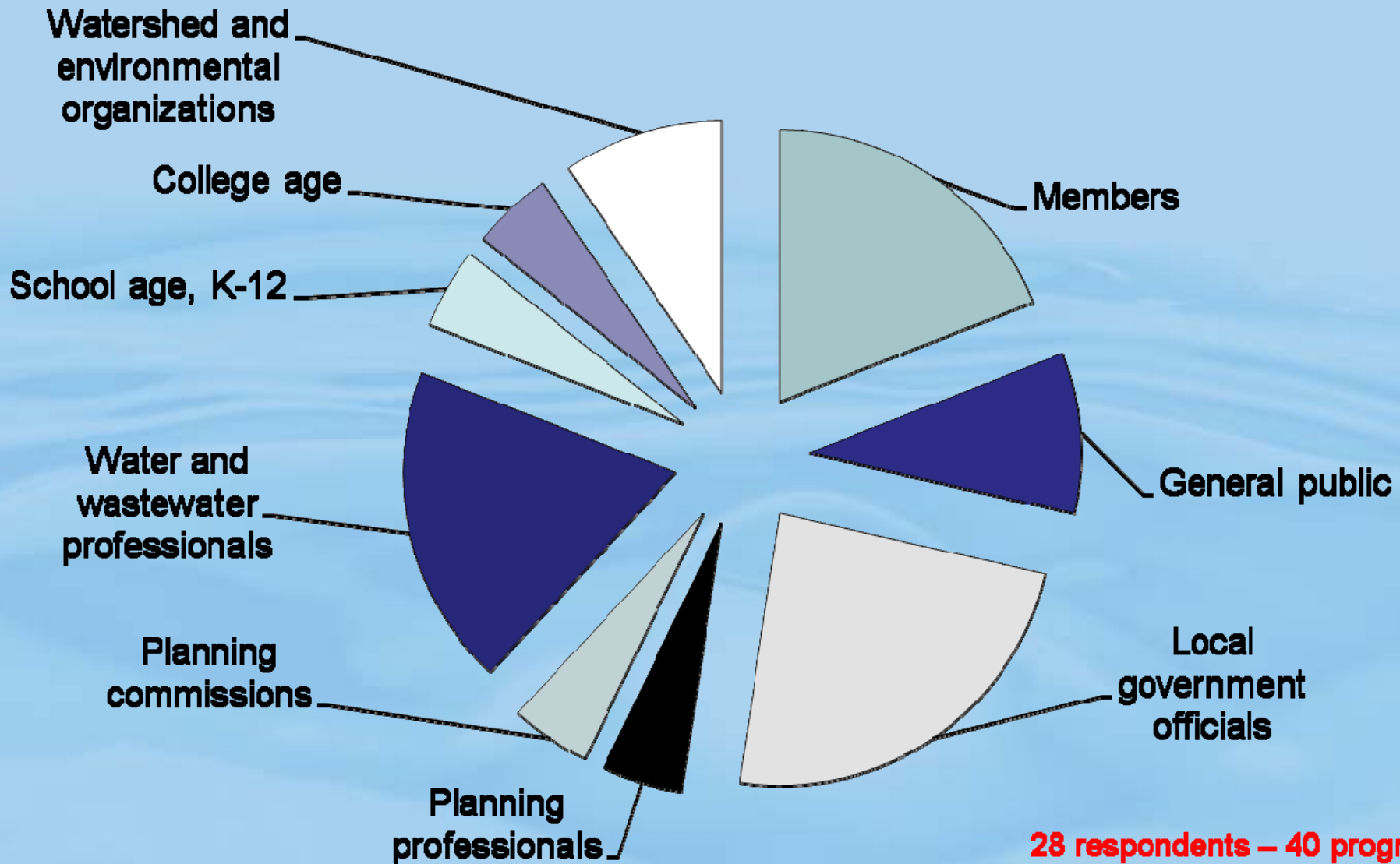
Liquid Assets

The Story of Our
Water Infrastructure

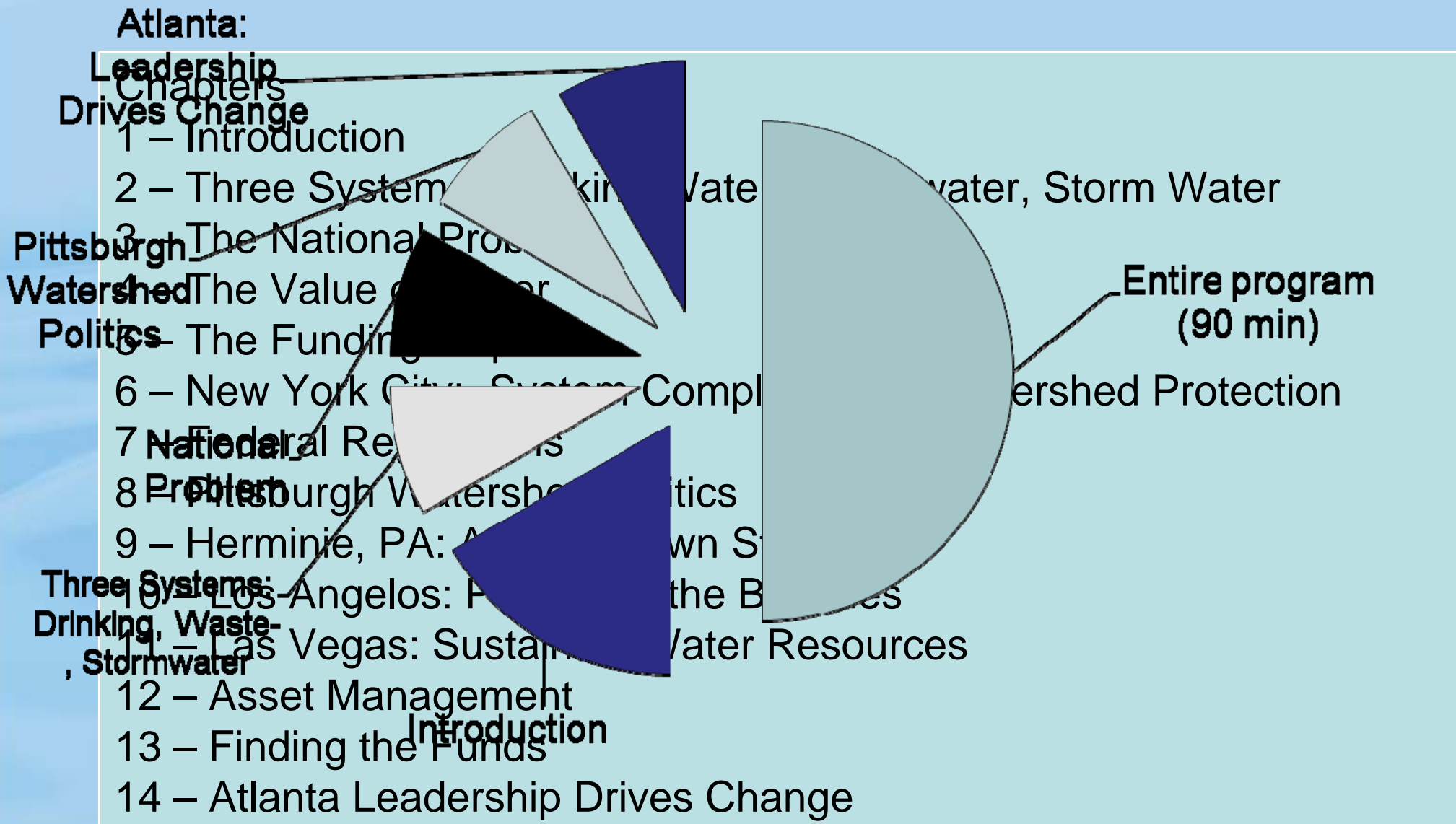


- Extension as Pennsylvania “Outreach Partner”
 - PBS airing schedule
 - 300 copies of DVD and Community Toolkit for PA-based Outreach
 - County Extension offices
 - Local governments and watershed organizations notified of availability.

Pennsylvania Audiences for “Liquid Assets” Based on Outreach Partner Reports



Informational Preferences for Outreach: Liquid Asset Chapters



Use of Community Toolkit by Outreach Partners



- Did you use the community toolkit for outreach and publicity related to your event?
- Did you use the outreach guide to facilitate discussion with your program participants?
- What outcomes, if any, have occurred in response to your use of the Liquid Assets DVD?

**Outreach Partners response –
No, no, and not sure.**

Enter Extension – a Critical Link



- Facilitation with municipal officials
- “Red-carpet” previews
- Training with water and wastewater treatment operators.
- Outreach, K-12



Outreach for the Future



- Water and wastewater utility capital plan
 - major investments required to upgrade infrastructure.
 - Finalize water and sewer budgets - to help local boards understand the need to invest in our utilities.
 - Discussion starter for community dialog on regionalization of water and/or sewer services.
- Cultivate awareness and improve public knowledge and support for infrastructure improvements
 - Drinking water, stormwater, and wastewater

In closing



- If not Extension, then who?
 - Critical gap in increasing public awareness and facilitating the dialogue.
 - Extension in unique role – both from an expertise standpoint, ability to draw from multiple disciplinary areas, and spatial distribution throughout the state.
 - Partnership approach is critical to effective outreach.

Liquid Assets: www.liquidassets.psu.edu

PSU Water Resources Extension:
www.cas.psu.edu