



ACWA 2016 – ANNUAL REPORT

The efforts of ACWA’s volunteer Board and Committees continued strong in 2016.

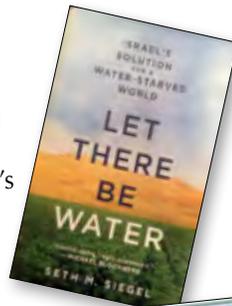
The ACWA Board priority for the year was developing and deploying a recruitment and hiring process for a new Executive Director. The Board is pleased to have Susie Smith, an experienced Public Works Director, former member of the ACWA board, and Water Resources Commissioner joining ACWA as the Executive Director!



Other highlights of the year included:

WORKSHOPS

- **Rebuilding and Revitalizing America’s Water Infrastructure – Starting with your Utility.** Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer provided the keynote address focused on investing in the nation’s and Oregon’s water infrastructure. Additional presentations included a focus on effective utility management, anticipated earthquake impacts on Oregon water utilities, and innovation and excellence in utility leadership.
- **2016 Stormwater Summit** – Held in early spring at Lane Community College, the ACWA Stormwater Summit attracted more water quality professionals in 2016 than ever! Regulatory and legal updates complimented excellent technical sessions, including information on BMPs to control copper and zinc, applying asset management tools to stormwater planning, and learning from the successful public education program *Puget Sound Starts Here...*



- **NPDES Permit Renewal Strategy Session** – A workshop held in Salem with remote access, focused on permitting challenges, items to consider for NPDES permit holders facing permit renewal, and the use of variances.
- **Biogas Workshop** – This one-day workshop drew over 40 Public Works Directors, wastewater facility managers, energy experts, and consultants to explore opportunities for increased biogas production and use at Oregon wastewater treatment plants. Attendees toured the Gresham Wastewater Treatment Plant, a 20 MGD activated sludge plant that is energy net zero through the use of ‘best in class’ energy efficiency measures, a solar p/v installation, and two biogas-powered co-generation units.



- **ACWA Annual Summer Conference** – Held in July in Bend, the program featured senior DEQ and EPA staff members, along with presentations on focused on ‘living with water’ – incorporating stormwater treatment and management into urban design, innovative biosolids management techniques, drivers for industrial recycled water projects, along with a briefing from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies on pending national issues. Tim Palmer shared beautiful photos and his experiences canoeing and kayaking Oregon’s rivers.

- **Developing Local Limits to Meet Your Utility Goals** – This 2-day workshop, organized by the ACWA Pretreatment Committee, was hugely popular, drawing over 50 Pacific Northwest communities to learn more about pretreatment local limits and regulatory requirements.

Committee Accomplishments

The majority of ACWA's work is accomplished by its talented Committees. Most Committees meet monthly and include telephone and video access to the meetings. Contact the ACWA office to join the Committees that interest you.

Some Committee highlights for 2016 include:

- Updated the *Sustainable Breweries* pollution prevention brochure
- Consistent engagement with the consulting team hired by Oregon DEQ to review and suggest improvements to Oregon's water quality permitting program. ACWA members attended several daylong workshops, along with individual meetings with the consultant team, reviewing documents and suggesting improvements
- Coordinated review and technical assistance to permit applicants on both individual and general UIC Stormwater WPCF permits
- Consistent coordination with other regional stormwater and wastewater utility advocacy groups, along with the National Association of Clean Water Agencies
- Detailed review and comments on national EPA rulemaking affecting Oregon ACWA members including the MS4 Phase II 'remand' rule and the proposed revisions that NPDES permit rules that proposed to allow EPA to 'federalize' NPDES permits with greater ease
- High level engagement with senior DEQ managers on effective permitting strategies
- Retained a Portland-based law firm to review draft NPDES permits for ACWA members to improve permit consistency
- Coordinated focus on the MS4 Phase II permit renewal process with active engagement by a number of ACWA members on the DEQ Steering Committee; ACWA provided numerous, detailed comments on the draft MS4 Phase II DEQ permit
- Participation on DEQ policy advisory committee exploring a revised copper water quality criteria for Oregon
- Continued work to promote water quality trading and natural treatment systems as effective compliance options for meeting Oregon's stringent water quality standards



MEMBERSHIP

New members welcomed in 2016 included: Parametrix

ACWA represents 96% of Oregon's municipal wastewater treatment plants, all the MS4 Phase I communities, and 87% of the MS4 Phase II communities. ACWA members provide wastewater and stormwater services to 2.4 million Oregonians, serving 64% of Oregon's businesses and homes.

Overall membership increased in 2016. ACWA currently has 135 municipal, district, and associated professional organization members.

BUDGET

ACWA's annual budget is about \$250,000 per year. The majority of ACWA's income is membership dues, with some additional income from workshops. The majority of the ACWA expenses relates to the Executive Director and Office Manager, along with ACWA office costs.

Challenges Ahead

- The challenges ahead in 2017 for ACWA members are squarely permit-related. Reasonable, actionable permitting strategies for both wastewater facilities and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) communities are needed. This will take creative, excellent technical work and a working partnership with DEQ.
- Litigation related to the Oregon temperature standard and associated temperature TMDLs has concluded and ACWA members will need to engage with DEQ over temperature compliance strategies and updating the mercury TMDL for the Willamette River.
- A new Oregon copper water quality standard, based on the Biotic Ligand Model, will be in place in Oregon in January, 2017. The exact details are still pending EPA action.

