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**Subject:** Notes from Sept. 5 P&P Co-Chairs Call

**Attachments:** Elevation Policy\_8-15-17.pdf

Hello,

Draft notes from today's P&P call, below. I welcome your edits!

Thanks,

Andrea Barbery

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

202-564-1397

#### Notes from 9/5/17 P&P Co-Chairs Call

##### 1. **Announcement**

The P&P group wishes Mike Osinski well! Mike started in his new role as Director of the Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division, in OARM's Office of Grants and Debarment today, after having served for over 13 years in OCIR. Best of luck to Mike in his new role!

##### 2. **EPA Lean Initiatives**

Assistant Deputy Administrator and Chief of Operations Henry Darwin joined the call to discuss his work on the nexus of leaning federal government and cooperative federalism. Having spent 18 years with Arizona DEQ – leading the agency for 5 of those years – he developed a passion for operations and performance, which led Governor Ducey, in 2015, to name him Chief of Operations for the state. In this role, Darwin developed and deployed a lean management system for the state's 35 agencies. Administrator Pruitt brought Darwin on to bring his vision and expertise the federal level, using lean philosophies and processes more strategically to work towards the administration's theme of cooperative federalism. In particular, Darwin is working to identify how we can measure our work towards achieving Cooperative Federalism ("2.0"); the success of any new systems we implement will depend on whether we are measuring the right things. States can expect to see these ideas in EPA's draft FY18-22 Strategic Plan, due out later this month. Between the draft Strategic Plan going out for public comment in September, and its final form expected in February 2018, states will have many opportunities to weigh in on how the agency should achieve its goal. CO asked where EPA is starting on this endeavor; Darwin confirmed that he is working to assess the current state of EPA's operations and where we have an opportunity for improvement. TN shared a desire in the state to move to the next phase in lean, from hosting lean events to

creating more of a lean culture, and asked EPA to share anything that would be helpful to the states as the agency works to improve its own lean culture.

### 3. ECOS Fall Meeting Planning

WI DNR Deputy Administrator Pat Stevens gave an update on preparations for the [2017 ECOS Fall Meeting](#), to be held Sept. 11-12 in Jackson, WY. Stevens highlighted a number of sessions on the [agenda](#), including a session on “Communicating Progress: Telling the State Story Via Measures & Results,” during which ECOS’ Planning Committee will reveal its new web-based dashboard, a snapshot tool designed to quickly show the public states’ progress in meeting 14 common measures. Also on the agenda is a session on “Innovations in Permitting: Improving Outcomes for All Stakeholders,” which will showcase states’ efforts to deliver permitting-related services to its stakeholders. The Planning Committee is also working on a number of resolutions; with a goal of reducing the overall number of resolutions on the books, the Planning Committee will sunset 2 resolutions, renew 2 resolutions, and adopt a new resolution, as follows:

- [Resolution 8-10](#): “Strengthening the State-EPA Partnership Including a Continued Commitment to NEPPS” will be sunset because it has been superseded by the September 2015 “[Renewal of Commitment to the National Environmental Performance Partnership System](#)” as well as ECOS’ [Cooperative Federalism 2.0 paper](#), which goes into greater detail about state-EPA interactions.
- Resolutions [11-1](#): “Objection to U.S. EPA Imposition of Interim Guidance, Interim Rules, Draft Policy, and Reinterpretation Policy” will be combined with [11-8](#): “On the Use of Guidance” to emphasize that EPA guidance should not be used as a substitute for rulemaking or laws.
- [Resolution 14-3](#): “Federal Resources for State Environmental Programs” will be revised to include language from CF2.0, supporting a level of federal funds commensurate with what the federal programs are requiring of the states.
- Resolution 17-TBD (new) on the promulgation of federal rules, stressing the need for EPA to get states’ early input on any rulemaking efforts.

### 4. EPA’s Elevation Policy

Nancy Grantham, Acting Principal Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Public Affairs, reported out on EPA’s renewed elevation policy (attached). Issued by Administrator Pruitt on August 15, 2017, the policy mirrors the agency’s January 2016 message and urges EPA employees to elevate concerns quickly and think creatively when a larger environmental or human health issue is at stake.

### 5. NPM Guidance/NEPPS Workgroup

Blair Budd reported out on the draft FY18-19 NPM Guidances, which are currently with senior EPA leaders for review. The public comment period ended Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup>. The agency expects to post the final guidances on [OCFO’s website](#) by Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup>.

ECOS reported out on the Aug. 29 meeting between EPA and ECOS’ Executive Committee to get state input on priorities for the FY19 budget planning process. During the meeting, states expressed support for a budget that aligned with ECOS’ core themes, namely: advancing cooperative federalism and shared responsibilities; defining roles and responsibilities of EPA and the states, and allocating resources accordingly; focusing on environmental results rather than processes; maximizing flexibilities in order to meet our shared environmental responsibilities more effectively and efficiently; prioritizing the funding for core functions; and coordinating with states on research needs. Darwin also shared with the group a note about a key change to the draft FY18-22 Strategic Plan, which will include fewer strategic measures to emphasize the areas where EPA aims to improve its performance (while continuing to deliver on its core work).

### 6. State Grants Subgroup

Wendy Waskin reported out a handful of key topics the SGS is working on, including:

- Simplified Cost Review – EPA is trying to get a sense of how many states have been taking advantage of the simplified Cost Review option, in which states can provide EPA with an assurance that personnel

and travel systems in place are compliant with federal requirements, and in exchange, states do not need to provide specific details in the personnel and travel components of their grant applications. This flexibility is only afforded to single-year grant applications, not multi-year, and EPA is not sure how beneficial this process is for states at this time.

- Direct Charging of Proposal Costs Policy – EPA is seeking state feedback on a draft policy that would allow states to charge for the costs associated with preparing grant applications.
- EPA’s Sustainability Policy – EPA and states discussed the policy – emphasizing that it is voluntary – as well as EPA program office responsibilities, and how compliance is internally tracked.
- PPG training – expected to be out for review in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of FY18.

**Next Call:** Tuesday, October 3