



SUSTAIN SOUTHERN MAINE

Partnering to strengthen our economy, environment and community

Policy Innovations: Effective Strategies for Adoption and Implementation



Members of Logan County Water District Board No. 1 gather at the future site of a 200,000-gallon water tower. Photo by Adam Kemp, The Oklahoman.

Building Capacity Through Water System Partnership

Problem Statement: Need to decrease costs and increase viability of small rural water systems.

Policy Innovation: Economy-of-scale regionalization by rural community water systems.

Across the country water systems are experiencing the challenges of stricter water quality standards, decaying infrastructure, droughts and increasing water demands. In response to these vulnerabilities water systems are considering regionalization. A case study on regionalization of the Logan-Todd Regional Water Commission in Kentucky is presented that evaluates costs and benefits of interconnecting twelve water systems. Results indicate that imposing a model based on economies of scale generally has a positive effect on consumers and purveyors alike.

Effective framing strategies utilized:

- Local initiative and involvement is key;
- Consolidation builds a case for financial solvency;
- Economic development incentive for improved capacity.

Transferability:

- Define regional water needs;
- Reach out to other communities to gain buy in;
- Start with small scale cooperation (i.e. bulk chemical purchase, emergency connections).

Resources:

1. [US EPA. \(2009, October\). *Water: Small Systems and Capacity Development*](#)
2. [US EPA. \(2012, February 29\). *Communicating to Gain and Maintain Buy-In Webinar*](#)

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