

State Water Infrastructure Commission:

2007 Report and Recommendations on Regional Collaborations for Infrastructure

Presentation to the ERC
November 27, 2007

State Water Infrastructure Commission

- Created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 2005.
- The purposes of the Commission are to
 - identify the State's water infrastructure needs,
 - develop a plan to meet those needs, and
 - monitor implementation of the plan.

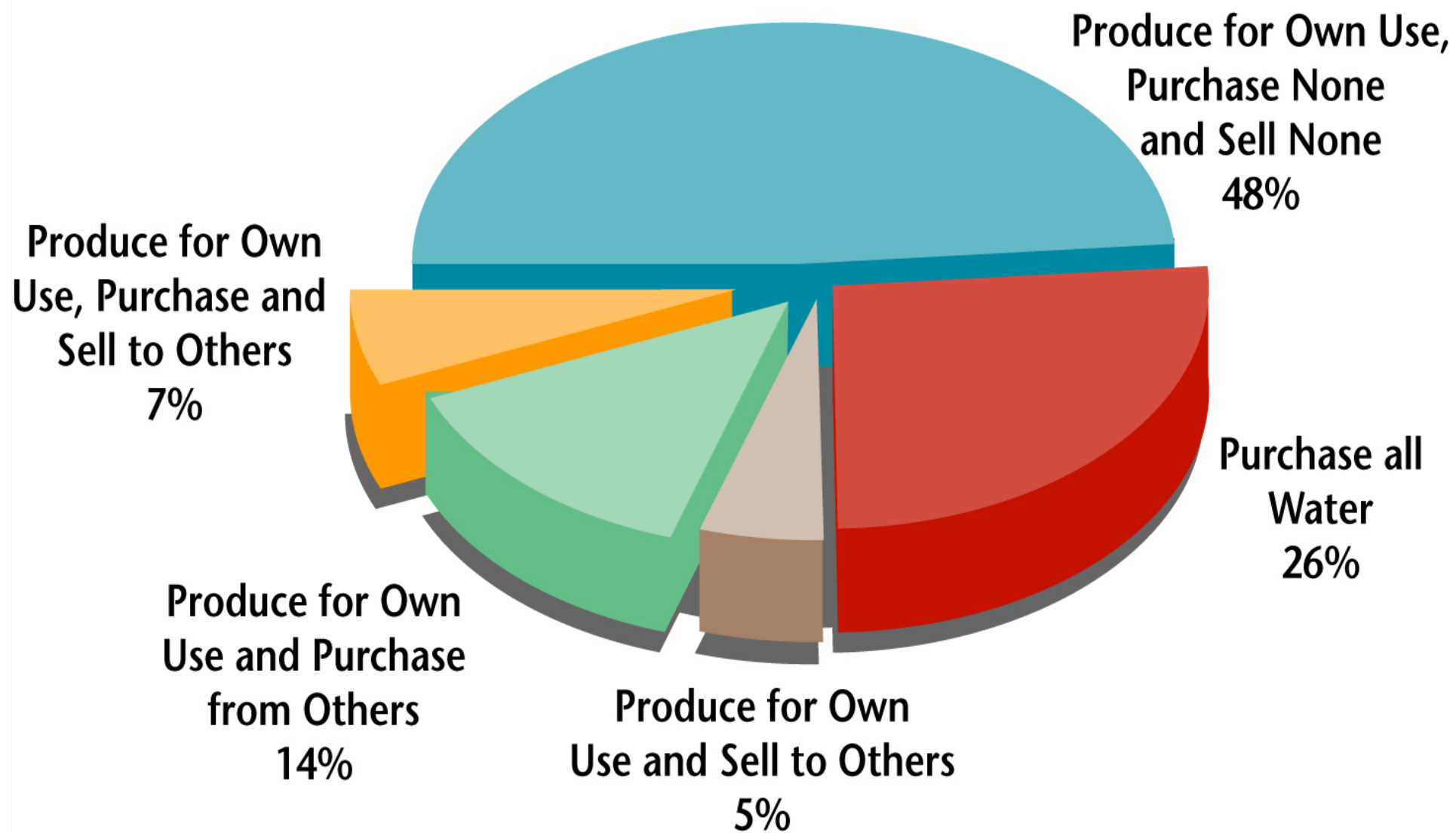
Regional Collaborations and Partnerships

- How does the State currently address regional infrastructure?
- What can we do we maintain that which works? What can change where needed?

Regional Collaborations and Partnerships

- There is no uniform State policy regarding regional infrastructure
- Regional efforts originate locally in response to local needs/opportunities
- State funding is the only way we currently recognize the value of regional collaborations
- Funding is not predictable year to year; each funder has it's own points formula

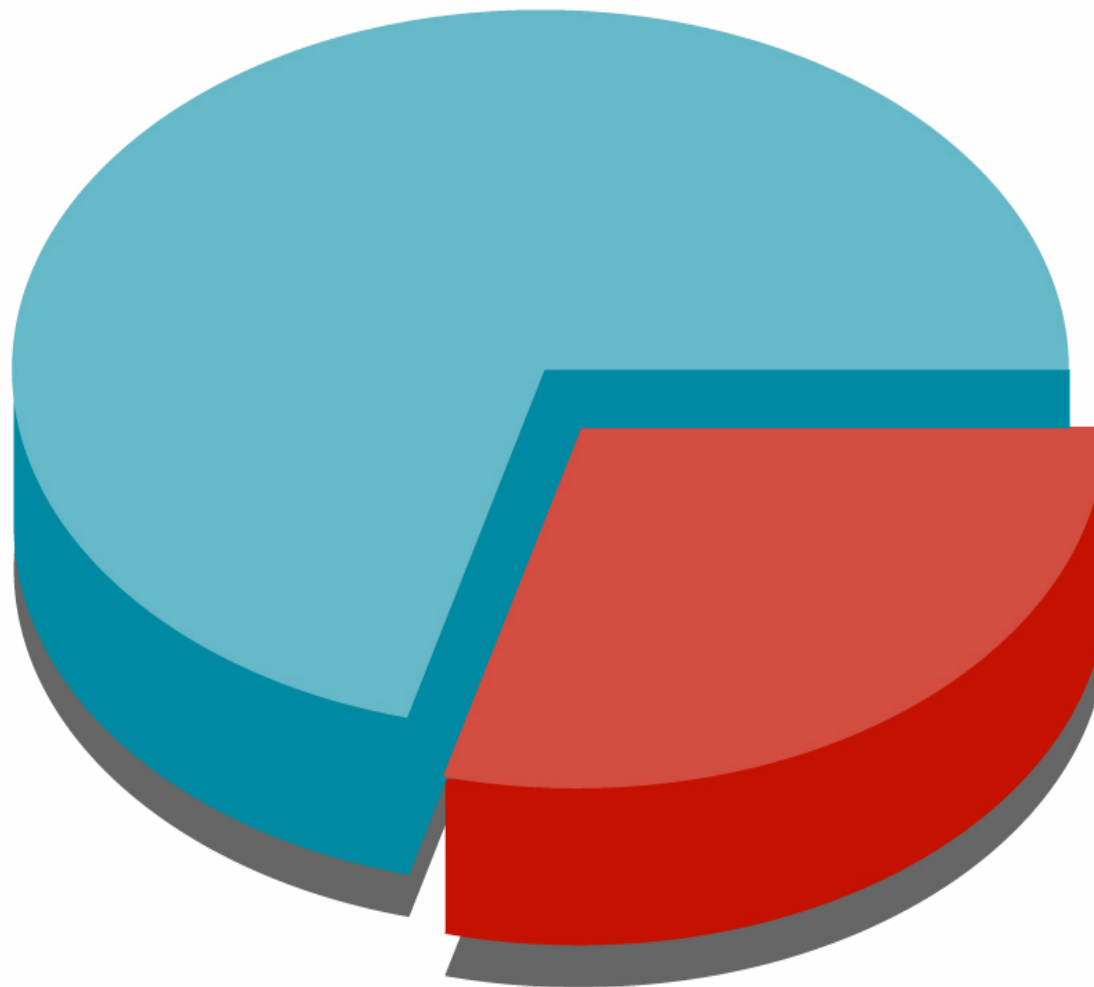
Water Regionalization



Source: NC Rural Center Water 2030

Sewer Regionalization

Treat Own
Sewage or
Treat Own
and Others
71%



Sewage Treated
by Others
29%

Benefits of Regional Collaborations

Whether physical connections or shared management and administrative efforts, regional collaborations provide many benefits:

- Reduce number of treatment plants under State regulatory supervision
- Economy of Scale
- Strategic deployment of funding resources
- Regional networks provide needed backups
- Support regional economic development

Barriers to Regional Collaborations

- Start-up funds very limited
- Costs are higher for small and rural systems
- “Emotional” barriers
- Regulatory and legal barriers

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Some systems in North Carolina are not ready to participate in regional collaborations:

- imperfections in the system
- lack of sound fiscal management for the system

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Some systems in North Carolina cannot participate in regional collaborations due to distance between systems and topography

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SWIC Recommendations

Regional Collaborations and Partnerships

1. Identify and remove existing barriers legal, regulatory and policy barriers to regional collaborations and provide a set of inducements that will promote regional thinking.

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2. Develop and implement a set of criteria for evaluating system “readiness” for regionalization.

This may prevent bringing systems that are not ready i.e., not yet managing their systems efficiently and effectively, into a regional configuration where they cannot participate as an equal.

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3. State funders of infrastructure should develop a "Cooperation Alternatives Analysis" process.

This will ensure that systems seeking State funds have analyzed all regional alternatives available.

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4. Federal and State funders of infrastructure should execute a Memorandum of Understanding to support funding collaboration on regional projects.

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5. Conduct a study to identify the most promising regions for water regionalization.

Using existing geospatial data we can identify systems that represent potential regional networks.

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6. Increase funding for the strategic development of regional collaborations.

A predictable revenue stream would allow for strategic development of regional systems.

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7. System regionalization should also allow for cooperation between private and public water entities.

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8. Encourage the State Division of Water Resources to explore and employ water resource management strategies that compliment regionalization.

Continue and expand work on new strategies that ensure sustainable water capacity for future use.

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9. System owner education on fiscal management and its relationship to regional partnerships is necessary and needed.

Educational materials are also need for the consuming public on the value of regionalization as a tool for managing the state's water resources.