



ASTSWMO, Providing Pathways to Our
Nation's Environmental Stewardship Since 1974

November 30, 2017

Dear ASTSWMO colleague,

As each ASTSWMO President has before me, I'll use this opportunity to highlight our collective accomplishments over the past year and share my vision and goals for the next. Under the direction of Past-President Mark de Bie, ASTSWMO continued to grow in prominence and positively influence national environmental policy. We welcome Chip Crockett as our new Vice-President and bid farewell to Bonnie Buthker who provided exceptional leadership during her three-year term on the Executive Committee.

ASTSWMO and our State and Territorial (State) members continue to tackle a wide range of national issues, conducting meaningful research, sharing technical expertise, providing legislative testimony, and offering sound policy advice to our Federal counterparts on critical environmental issues.

ASTSWMO members have taken a leadership role on the issue of contaminants of emerging concern, especially for poly- and perfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, by sharing information and research, keeping members apprised of new developments and providing opportunities for collaboration and discussion among States, with our Federal counterparts and with other organizations. We continue to press the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for national regulatory authority and standards for these compounds as efforts to understand their occurrence, behavior and risk to public health and the environment proceed.

With EPA's ongoing transformation, ASTSWMO has engaged the Agency at its highest levels to ensure that State and Territorial concerns are communicated, acknowledged and considered as that process evolves, and ASTSWMO continues to play an active role in EPA's Superfund Task Force, created to streamline the Superfund program and process.

ASTSWMO and its members continue to play a prominent role on the legislative front, ensuring that State and Territorial concerns are considered in any new or amended legislation. The past year's most notable accomplishments include testimony by several ASTSWMO members on critical legislative issues such as the management and regulation of coal combustion residuals and brownfields reauthorization, to date leading to favorable outcomes on the former.

ASTSWMO continues to explore new partnerships while maintaining or strengthening relationships with others. This past year saw a new agreement promoting collaboration with the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) in areas of common interest, such as recycling and management of food waste, and enhanced interaction with the Interstate Technology Regulatory Council (ITRC) on the development of technical fact sheets for PFAS.

Chairs and members of our various Task Forces and Focus Groups worked tirelessly with ASTSWMO staff during the past year to complete and publish numerous research projects and position papers and to provide, and in many instances, fund, opportunities for training, information sharing and networking including:

- Renewable Energy Power Meeting in Arlington, Virginia
- Mid-Year Meeting focused on risk communication in Cleveland, Ohio
- Tanks UST Workshop in Louisville, Kentucky
- Joint Hazardous Waste & Materials Management Training Conference, in Oklahoma City
- Annual Meeting contemplating the next generation of remediation in Crystal City, Virginia

And this next year's Mid-Year meeting is scheduled for April 25th and 26th in Anaheim, California, with a focus on core program accomplishments at a time when a safe and healthy environment appears to be taken for granted.

I encourage you to visit the recently redesigned ASTSWMO webpage providing a much-improved format, greater functionality and more valuable content for members and nonmembers alike (<http://astswmo.org>). And, while you are there, please view the Strategic Plan in its entirety. It provides a detailed account of what we have collectively accomplished over the past four years and plan to accomplish in the coming year.

I have three primary goals for the coming year: 1) develop and implement a sustainable and predictable fiscal strategy to ensure the Association's long-term financial security; 2) encourage greater member involvement and participation at every level and an enhanced role for specific elements of the Association including Voting Members, Past Presidents, ASTSWMO alumni and new members and 3) expand our outreach and cooperation with academic institutions and students.

With the guidance of Secretary-Treasurer April Webb of Kentucky, the Board of Directors recently completed a detailed evaluation of the Association's finances which confirmed that our fee-related expenses have begun to exceed revenues collected from State fee assessments. This information was shared with the Voting Members at the Annual Meeting. Following a more in-depth discussion, Voting Members unanimously endorsed the Board's recommendation to increase fee revenue by an overall 25 percent in the near-term and, rather than considering and proposing fee increases on an as-needed basis, establish a regular, predetermined fee increase schedule consistent with the Association's anticipated expenses. I want to thank the Voting Members for their unequivocal affirmation of ASTSWMO's value and their support for the Board in developing a strategy that places the Association on a sustainable and predictable fiscal path. Before proceeding further, however, the Board will be soliciting additional feedback from the Voting Members.

Pardon the cliché, but ASTSWMO's greatest asset is its membership. We have unmatched experience and incredible diversity --- in geography, in culture, in education and in age. Yet our greatest resource remains largely underutilized. This is our Achilles' heel.

I cannot express enough my appreciation to those who serve, whether on the Board; as a Subcommittee Chair; or as a Task Force, Focus Group or Workgroup Chair or member. We still, however, routinely have Task Force and Focus Group vacancies and each year we struggle to identify candidates for Vice-President and every other year for Secretary-Treasurer. Our next Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer are among you. Let me dispel any misconceptions about leading this organization: 1) You are not expected to be an expert in every program area; we have Subcommittee and Focus Group/Task Force Chairs who do have that expertise and inform the decision-making process, 2) Unlike some organizations, you will not be saddled with all the work; we have a very active and engaged Board of Directors and a very talented and hard-working ASTSWMO Executive Director and staff and 3) You do have the time, and the return will exceed whatever time and energy you invest.

Voting Members play a critical role in the governance of the Association. Those who attended the 2017 Annual Meeting and the Voting Members' luncheon to discuss ASTSWMO's financial status and fiscal strategy provided direct and immediate input and feedback that was invaluable to the Board and instrumental in adjusting the course of action approved by the Board prior to the Annual Meeting. The Past Presidents' Caucus provides valuable leadership from those who have already chosen to serve, and members of our ASTSWMO Alumni, a body that grows larger each year, stand ready and willing to share their expertise.

ASTSWMO, like my own organization, is dominated by more "seasoned" professionals. Creating opportunities and encouraging our new staff to become involved exposes them to an entire nation of new ideas and innovative approaches to environmental protection. What better way to encourage creative thinking and problem solving for your own organization.

Those of you who attended the 2016 Annual Meeting heard my vision for great collaboration with academia and students. I see our ability to attract the best and brightest to public service as critical to our future success in a very competitive market. Students (and their advisors) need to better understand, appreciate and value our role as public servants and stewards of the environment. You may have noticed for the past year we have included students and faculty in our meetings and conferences, but there is so much more we can do, and I welcome your suggestions and feedback.

In closing, I again want to thank those who take an active role in your Association. With your continued feedback and support, we can work together to ensure that ASTSWMO will be here to represent and support all 50 States, the 5 Territories and the District of Columbia for many more years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Kloo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kenneth J. Kloo (NJ)
President