



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD



**BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND
CONFIDENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE**
For General Scientific and Technical Studies and Assistance

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CURRENT EMPLOYER: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

SAB: _____

Standing Committee: _____

There are two parts to this form, Part I Background Information, and Part II Confidential Conflict of Interest Disclosure. Complete both parts, **sign** and **date** this form on the last page, and e-mail the form to njsab@dep.state.nj.us. **Retain a copy for your records.**

PART I -BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please provide the information requested below regarding **relevant** organizational affiliations, government service, public statements and positions, research support, and additional information (if any). Information is "relevant" if it is related to — and might reasonably be of interest to others concerning — your knowledge, experience, and personal perspectives regarding the subject matter and issues to be addressed by the committee activity for which this form is being prepared. **If some or all of the requested information is contained in your curriculum vitae, you may if you prefer simply attach your CV to this form, supplemented by additional responses or comments below as necessary.**

I. ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS.

Report your relevant business relationships (as an employee, owner, officer, director, consultant, etc.) and your relevant remunerated or volunteer non-business relationships (e.g., professional organizations, trade associations, public interest or civic groups, etc.).

Organization affiliations are listed on pages 3 and 4 of the attached vita. My sole employment is with Rutgers University. All other affiliations are pro bono.

II. GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

Report your relevant service (full-time or part-time) with federal, state, or local government in the United States (including elected or appointed positions, employment, advisory board memberships, military service, etc.).

I serve on a number of advisory boards as listed in the attached vita on pages 2-3 under Committees. These include NMFS and MAFMC working groups and regional advisory boards (e.g. with DRBC). I also coordinate the Delaware Bay Oyster Revitalization Task Force.

II. RESEARCH SUPPORT.

Report relevant information regarding both public and private sources of research support (other than your present employer), including sources of funding, equipment, facilities, etc.

All research support is funded by grants and contracts to Rutgers University. Sources include the State of New Jersey, NOAA, NSF, some regional fisheries organizations such as NFI and PMAFS, and USACE. A listing of active grants and contracts through Rutgers University can be provided upon request.

IV. PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND POSITIONS. List your relevant articles, testimony, speeches, etc., by date, title, and publication (if any) in which they appeared, or provide relevant representative examples if numerous. Provide a brief description of relevant positions of any organizations or groups with which you are closely identified or associated.

A list of publications and related writings are found beginning on page 4 of the attached vita.

I serve as science advisor in my capacity as Director of HSRL, a component of the NJAES, to a number of industry organizations. These include the NFI Clam Committee, NFI Scientific Monitoring Committee, and the Partnership for Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Science (PMAFS). These organizations provide science logistics and participate in cooperative research programs between academic institutions and the NMFS. The clam committee focuses on ocean quahogs and surf clams. The other two are oriented towards finfish and squid. I also serve on the Board of the Seaboard Fisheries Institute. This non-profit focuses on sturgeon, oyster, and other science issues relevant to the Delaware Estuary.

In addition, I coordinate a cooperative assessment program for the Delaware Bay oyster fishery in conjunction with the Delaware Bay Section of the Shell Fisheries Council and the NJDEP. The role of HSRL in this triumvirate is to provide science advise to the other two members pursuant to the setting of the yearly harvest quota.

V. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

If there are relevant aspects of your background or present circumstances not addressed above that might reasonably be construed by others as affecting your judgment in matters within the assigned task of the committee or panel on which you have been invited to serve, and therefore might constitute an actual or potential source of bias, please describe them briefly.

PART II CONFIDENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

INSTRUCTIONS

It is essential that the work of committees of the SAB used in the development of reports not be compromised by any significant conflict of interest. For this purpose, **the term “conflict of interest” means any financial or other interest which conflicts with the service of the individual because it (1) could significantly impair the individual’s objectivity or (2) could create an unfair competitive advantage for any person or organization.** Except for those situations in which the Department determines that a conflict of interest is unavoidable and promptly and publicly discloses the conflict of interest, no individual can be appointed to serve (or continue to serve) on a committee of the department used in the development of reports if the individual has a conflict of interest that is relevant to the functions to be performed.

The term “conflict of interest” means something more than individual bias. There must be an *interest*, ordinarily financial, that could be directly affected by the work of the committee.

Conflict of interest requirements are *objective* and *prophylactic*. They are not an assessment of one’s actual behavior or character, one’s ability to act objectively despite the conflicting interest, or one’s relative insensitivity to particular dollar amounts of specific assets because of one’s personal wealth. Conflict of interest requirements are objective standards designed to eliminate certain specific, potentially compromising situations from arising, and thereby to protect the individual, the other members of the committee, the Department, and the public interest. The individual, the committee, and the department should not be placed in a situation where others could reasonably question, and perhaps discount or dismiss, the work of the committee simply because of the existence of conflicting interests.

The term “conflict of interest” applies only to *current interests*. It does not apply to past interests that have expired, no longer exist, and cannot reasonably affect current behavior. Nor does it apply to possible interests that may arise in the future but do not currently exist, because such future interests are inherently speculative and uncertain. For example, a pending formal or informal application for a particular job is a current interest, but the mere possibility that one might apply for such a job in the future is not a current interest.

The term “conflict of interest” applies not only to the personal interests of the individual but also to the *interests of others* with whom the individual has substantial common financial interests if these interests are relevant to the functions to be performed. Thus, in assessing an individual’s potential conflicts of interest, consideration must be given not only to the interests of the individual but also to the interests of the individual’s spouse and minor children, the individual’s employer, the individual’s business partners, and others with whom the individual has substantial common financial interests. Consideration must also be given to the interests of those for whom one is acting in a fiduciary or similar capacity (e.g., being an officer or director of a corporation, whether profit or nonprofit, or serving as a trustee).

Much of the work of this department involves scientific and technical issues across a broad range of activities. Such activities may include, for example: defining research needs, priorities, opportunities and agendas; addressing questions of human or ecological health; providing scientific and technical assistance; assessing the state of scientific or technical knowledge on particular subjects and in particular fields. Such activities frequently address scientific and technical issues that are sufficiently broad in scope that they do not implicate specific financial interests or conflict of interest concerns.

However, where such activities address more specific issues having significant financial implications — e.g., funding option A versus option B, government development or evaluation of a

specific proprietary technology, — careful consideration must be given to possible conflict of interest issues with respect to the appointment of members of committees that will be used by the department in the development of reports to be utilized by the department.

The overriding objective of the conflict of interest inquiry in each case is to identify whether there are interests – primarily financial in nature – that conflict with the committee service of the individual because they could impair the individual’s objectivity or could create an unfair competitive advantage for any person or organization. The fundamental question in each case is does the individual, or others with whom the individual has substantial common financial interests, have identifiable interests that could be directly affected by the outcome of the project activities of the committee on which the individual has been invited to serve? For projects involving advice regarding awards of contracts, grants, etc., this department is also guided by the principle that an individual should not participate in any decision regarding the award of a contract or grant or any other substantial economic benefit to the individual or to others with whom the individual has substantial common financial interests or a substantial personal or professional relationship.

The application of these concepts to specific scientific and technical studies and assistance projects must necessarily be addressed in each case on the basis of the particular facts and circumstances involved. The questions set forth below are designed to elicit information from you concerning possible conflicts of interest that are relevant to the functions to be performed by the particular committee on which you may be invited to serve.

1. **FINANCIAL INTERESTS.** (a) Taking into account stocks, bonds, and other financial instruments and investments including partnerships (but excluding broadly diversified mutual funds and any investment or financial interests valued at less than \$10,000), do you or, to the best of your knowledge others with whom you have substantial common financial interests, have financial investments that could be affected, either directly or by a direct effect on the business enterprise or activities underlying the investments, by the outcome of the project activities of the committee on which you may be invited to serve?

(b) Taking into account real estate and other tangible property interests, as well as intellectual property (patents, copyrights, etc.) interests, do you or, to the best of your knowledge others with whom you have substantial common financial interests, have property interests that could be directly affected by the outcome of the project activities of the committee on which you may be invited to serve?

(c) Could your employment or self-employment (or the employment or self-employment of your spouse), or the financial interests of your employer or clients (or the financial interests of your spouse’s employer or clients) be directly affected by the outcome of the project activities of the committee on which you may be invited to serve?

(d) Taking into account research funding and other research support (e.g., equipment, facilities, industry partnerships, research assistants and other research personnel, etc.), could your current research funding and support (or that of your close research colleagues and collaborators) be directly affected by the outcome of the project activities of the committee on which you may be invited to serve?

(e) Could your service on the committee on which you may be invited to serve create a specific financial or commercial competitive advantage for you or others with whom you have substantial common financial interests?

If the answer to all of the above questions under FINANCIAL INTERESTS is either “no” or “not applicable,” check here (NO).

If the answer to any of the above questions under FINANCIAL INTERESTS is “yes,” check here (YES), and briefly describe the circumstances on the last page of this form.

2. OTHER INTERESTS.

(a) Is the central purpose of the project for which this disclosure form is being prepared a critical review and evaluation of your own work or that of your employer?

(b) Do you have any existing professional obligations (e.g., as an officer of a scientific or engineering society) that effectively require you to publicly defend a previously established position on an issue that is relevant to the functions to be performed in this committee activity?

(c) To the best of your knowledge, will your participation in this committee activity enable you to obtain access to a competitor's or potential competitor's confidential proprietary information?

(d) If you are or have ever been a NJ State employee, to the best of your knowledge are there any state conflict of interest restrictions that may be applicable to your service in connection with this committee activity?

(e) If you are a NJ State employee, are you currently employed by a state agency that is sponsoring this project? If you are not a NJ State employee, are you an employee of any other sponsor (e.g., a private foundation) of this project?

(f) If the committee activity for which this form is being prepared involves reviews of specific proposals for contract, grant, etc. awards to be made by NJDEP, do you or others with whom you have substantial common financial interests, or a familial or substantial professional relationship, have an interest in receiving or being considered for awards that are currently the subject of the review being conducted by this committee?

(g) If the committee activity for which this form is being prepared involves developing requests for proposals, work statements, and/or specifications, etc., are you interested in seeking an award under the program for which the committee on which you have been invited to serve is developing the request for proposals, work statement, and/or specifications — or, are you employed in any capacity by, or do you have a financial interest in or other economic relationship with, any person or organization that to the best of your knowledge is interested in seeking an award under this program?

If the answer to all of the above questions under **OTHER INTERESTS** is either “no” or “not applicable,” check here (NO).

If the answer to any of the above questions under **OTHER INTERESTS** is “yes,” check here (YES), and briefly describe the circumstances on the last page of this form.

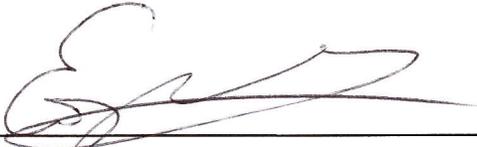
EXPLANATION OF "YES" RESPONSES:

Explanation: To the extent that the committee will be involved in fisheries or estuarine-related questions, certain research projects ongoing at any particular time may constitute a conflict of interest relative to committee deliberations. It will be necessary to evaluate such occurrences on a case-by-case basis, as the extent of overlap between funded research and committee agenda items is likely to vary significantly over time. I am unaware of any conflict of interest of this type at the present time, however.

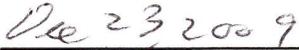
Explanation: As the coordinator of the assessment team that develops the status of the stock and management advice documentation each year for the Delaware Bay oyster fishery, it will often be necessary for me to publically defend both the assessment and regulations promulgated by the NJDEP with the advice of the Delaware Bay Section of the Shell Fisheries Council based on that assessment.

As a member of a number of working groups associated with NMFS assessments of finfish and shellfish stocks, I may be called upon to publically defend or explain the documentation provided by those groups to NMFS Stock Assessment Review Committees and MAFMC committees.

During your period of service in connection with the activity for which this form is being completed, any changes in the information reported, or any new information, which needs to be reported, should be reported promptly by written or electronic communication to the NJDEP Office of Science staff representative.



YOUR SIGNATURE



DATE

Reviewed by:
NJDEP

DATE