

*NOAA-sponsored workshop to link water
quality observations and monitoring with
elements of the Integrated Ocean
Observing System - Delaware Watershed,
Bay and the coastal ocean*



Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
19-21 September 2005

NJ Water Monitoring Coordinating
Council

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My proposal to NOAA's Ecosystem Observations Program (EOP): Support a Workshop to Link Elements of IOOS with the planned National Water Quality Monitoring Network.

Principal Objective

Identify water quality-related issues and develop a monitoring framework -- having links with IOOS -- and recommend monitoring networks or programs that would constitute “the federally-funded backbone” in support of regional needs.

Workshop will also identify:

- Important resource management issues and questions relating to water quality;
- Desired links with IOOS output data and products and the role of MACOORA (the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association) in facilitating those links;
- Networks or programs that would constitute the “federally-funded backbone” in support of regional monitoring;
- The means (i.e., interpretive reports, technology transfer and education materials) and mechanisms (i.e., MACOORA, National Sea Grant College Program, NERRS) to improve public awareness and participation in the stewardship of the coastal environment and resources.

My hope: workshop would also:

- Demonstrate that it would be feasible to **integrate data from existing ocean and coastal observing networks** and programs in order to create value-added products to support resource management goals (water quality emphasis);
- Identify desired features of the “**federally-funded backbone**” of environmental assets and observations in **support of regional monitoring**;
- Facilitate **increased collaboration** among government agencies, and between government agencies and private Regional Associations in order to enhance the capabilities of current and planned national and regional observing systems; and
- Form a basis for **MACOORA to establish and galvanize itself** as a useful and effective forum for observational needs of the region.

The workshop (19-21 Sept) at Rutgers University – USGS, U Del, Rutgers, NJMSC, MACOORA, and NOAA

- Well-attended (more than 50 participants)
- Good collaboration with Federal agencies (USGS, EPA), States, universities, regional entities
- People left the workshop with a good feeling ... bit of enthusiasm ... and guarded expectations

What has happened since?

- Workshop leaders will be invited to present a summary at the Mid-Atlantic Lt. Governors meeting
- Over-arching management have been identified
- “Little steps” are being taken
 - Website
 - Demonstration products (NANOOS Pilot)
 - Framework for a “pilot project”

Over-arching management issues – my take

- Assuring public health (pathogens on beaches, contaminated seafood)
- Channel dredging, and bottom and marshland erosion (habitat degradation and loss, altered hydraulics geometry, contaminant transport and deposition, saltwater intrusion, etc.)
- Freshwater quantity and quality to support diverse needs (municipal, industrial, agricultural, ecological)
- Nitrogen overload and nutrient imbalance (dissolved oxygen levels, harmful algal bloom (brown tide), altered food webs)
- Keystone species, e.g., Eastern oyster and blue crab (sustainable populations, recruitment enhancement, inherent vulnerability to disease and climate changes)