



# NJ Water Monitoring Coordinating Council

## Measuring What Counts for Clean & Plentiful Water

May 19, 2010  
MEETING MINUTES

### Member Attendees

**NJDEP** – *WM&S*: Leslie McGeorge, Alena Baldwin-Brown, Bob Connell, Danielle Donkersloot, Kevin Berry (for Debra Hammond), Al Korndoerfer *NJGS*: Karl Muessig *DWS*: Eileen Murphy  
**USGS** - Eric Vowinkel, Jack Gibs, Bob Reiser  
**DRBC** – Bob Tudor, Tom Fikslin  
**EPA R2** - John Kushwara, Randy Braun  
**IEC** - Caitlyn Nichols  
**NJ Pinelands Commission** – Nick Procopio  
**NJ Water Supply Authority** – Todd Kratzer  
**Rutgers (Coop Extension Service)** – Lisa Galloway Evrard  
**Rutgers (IMCS)** – Mike Kennish  
**Passaic River Institute/Montclair U.** – MeiYin Wu (for Kirk Barrett)  
**Meadowlands Environmental Research Institute** –  
**NOAA** –  
**Monmouth County Health Dept** –  
**Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association** – Alyse Greenberg  
**Musconetcong Watershed Association** – Nancy Lawler

### Guest Speakers/Discussion Leaders

Kathleen Drake – EPA Region 2  
Danielle Kreeger – Partnership for the Delaware Estuary  
Paul Morton – NJDEP/WM&S  
Ashley Pengitore – PVSC  
Kathleen Walz – NJDEP/DPF

### Guests

Tom Belton – NJDEP/OS  
Dean Bryson – NJDEP/WM&S  
Dorina Frizzera – NJDEP/CM  
Ron MacGillivray – DRBC

### ➤ **Council Business**

- Minutes from the 02/03/10 Council meeting were approved.
- Member Announcements: *DEP Reorganization* – Leslie McGeorge summarized the recent DEP reorganization, with an emphasis on the creation of a Water area (Water Resource Management) and the appointment of John Plonksi as the Assistant Commissioner for that area. Water Monitoring and Standards, NJ Geological Survey, Water Supply and Water Quality report to this Assistant Commissioner. She also distributed the new DEP organizational chart. *USGS Reorganization* – Eric

Vowinkel announced that USGS is undergoing some reorganizations, possibly along programmatic themes. He expects to report more at the September Council meeting. *Continuous Monitoring Inventory* – Alena Baldwin-Brown provided the existing Continuous Monitoring Inventory spreadsheet and requested any additions and/or corrections be sent to her by June 15. [NOTE: revised Inventory spreadsheet and accompanying map were posted on the Council’s website on July 9]. *2010 NJ Water Monitoring and Education Summit* – Danielle Donkersloot and Alena announced that this event is being planned for either November or December and will, once again, be co-sponsored by the Watershed Watch Network and the NJ Water Monitoring Council. Montclair University has offered to host the Summit. Additional details will be provided to the Council as they are finalized. Alyse Greenberg, Caitlyn Nichols and MeiYin Wu (Montclair Univ) offered to assist in planning the event [NOTE: the Summit is scheduled for December 1 and 2 at The Conference Center at Montclair State University]. *World Water Monitoring Day* – Alena and Danielle talked about potential plans for DEP’s celebration of WWMD 2010. September 28 is the date being considered (with October 7 as the raindate); location is still TBD [Note: DEP has, subsequently, decided to join with the Pinelands Commission at their WWMD celebration at Batsto Lake on October 21 – see mention below]. Other planned WWMD events include Hackensack River (IEC and EPA Region 2) and Batsto Lake (Pinelands Commission). Council members were asked to share other WWMD events with Alena so she can post them on the Council’s website. *Passaic River Symposium* – MeiYin Wu distributed the agenda for the upcoming Passaic River Symposium. *NWQMC Webinar on Sensor Basics* – The announcement for the May 25/June 3 National Water Quality Monitoring Council-sponsored webinar on Sensor Basics was distributed. Alena will also forward the announcement electronically to Council members. *Delaware Estuary Science Conference* – Danielle Kreeger distributed the announcement for the 4<sup>th</sup> Delaware Estuary Science Conference, scheduled for January 2011. Abstracts for presentations/posters are due by June 30. *WATERALERT and STREAMMAIL* – Bob Reiser announced the availability of both systems which are designed to provide emails or alerts regarding various stream conditions.

- April 2010 National Water Quality Monitoring Conference – Leslie McGeorge, Eric Vowinkel, Danielle Donkersloot and Alena Baldwin-Brown provided summary information from the April National Water Quality Monitoring Conference in Denver, CO. Leslie shared several presentations that she presented (statistics workgroup and water indicators). Eric provided information on the conference in general as well as the status of the National Monitoring Network and emerging contaminants nationally. Danielle described some of the volunteer monitoring activities that occurred as well as the various mechanisms that the volunteer community uses for communication nationally (e.g., EPA’s Volunteer Monitoring ListServ, the Volunteer Monitor newsletter, the national conference itself). Alena summarized the NJ Water Monitoring Council poster that was presented as well as other general water monitoring council information. Other Council members who attended the conference were Jack Gibs and Alyse Greenberg who also shared insights from their experiences there. The Conference agenda and presentations are available online at: <http://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/2010/index.html>.
- MACOORA – Bob Tudor provided an update on MACOORA. MACOORA’s geographic scope extends from Massachusetts to Virginia and includes 5 subregions - one of which is the Delaware Bay Subregion. This area was one of three regions in the country to be selected for Pilot Study status for a gap analysis of the National Water Quality Monitoring Design (Water Quality is one of five business theme priorities of MACOORA). As a direct result of the significant sub-region collaboration on a gap-filling monitoring design for this area, USGS has allocated \$100,000 per year for last three years to grow the monitoring infrastructure. This has taken form of targeted monitoring to capture freshwater inflow from major tributaries, more real time monitoring capacity in the tidal freshwater river, more robust nutrient monitoring, as well as multi-party interest in enhancing data management. This region has also co-sponsored a couple of water quality monitoring workshops - the most recent of which brought MACOORA/SECOORA/NERACOOS together to explore Atlantic Coast-wide monitoring strategies.

- Emerging Contaminants Subcommittee: Caitlyn Nichols reported that the subcommittee is recreating the inventory of NJWMC member emerging contaminant-related studies, which they will be redistributing to the entire Council for review. The subcommittee is also hoping to have a draft of the white paper ready to share by September. Eric Vowinkel has agreed to assist the subcommittee.
  - Nutrients: Leslie McGeorge summarized the nutrients presentation that was presented at the National Water Monitoring Conference, which is available online, from the National Water Quality Monitoring Council's website at: <http://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/2010/index.html>. Additionally, Tom Fikslin summarized ASIWPCA's comments on the proposed nutrient criteria for Florida. Tom's summary is available on the Council's website.
  - Water Quality Data Exchange Project: Paul Morton provided an update on population and use of the NJ Water Quality Data Exchange System. Since it went "live" in September, 18 organizations have entered over 300,000 results for more than 7000 monitoring locations. Council member organizations whose data are now in WQDE include: NJDEP, DRBC, EPA Region 2, Monmouth County HD, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service, NJ Water Supply Authority, and the Meadowlands Environmental Research Institute. In addition, the NY/NJ Harbor Dischargers Group is entering data and the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association and Musconetcong Watershed Association Tied D data are also available. Next steps for the system include some enhancements to the "Data In" piece as well as development of reports for the "Data Out" phase. Paul requested that Council members email him search parameters that they would like to see available for use in designing these report. Paul's presentation is available on the Council's website.
- **Technical Presentations** (Copies of many of the following presentations have been posted to the Council's webpage - <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wms/wmccpresentations.html>)

#### Wetlands Monitoring

*A. Upcoming EPA National Aquatic Resource Survey for Wetlands* – Kathleen Drake (EPA Region 2)  
Kathleen Drake provided an overview of the upcoming national aquatic resource survey for wetlands, which is scheduled to take place during SFY11. In addition to the schedule for completion of the various phases of the survey, Kathleen also summarized the protocols that will be being used as well as results from some EPA-related wetlands monitoring that has already occurred. NJDEP is expecting to participate in this national survey. [Note: additional information from this presentation is being sought from the speaker]

*B. Developing a Wetland Condition Monitoring Network for NJ: Application of New Assessment Methods* – Kathleen Walz (NJDEP/DPF)

Kathleen Walz presented information on NJDEP's activities related to developing a wetland condition monitoring network for NJ. Since 1997, vegetation, soils and hydrology monitoring data has been collected on some of NJ's rarest wetlands, many of which are globally rare. However, there is little to no data on wetland condition for common wetland types. To date, NJ has not had data to report on the overall condition of palustrine and estuarine wetlands statewide, by region or by watershed. The effort currently underway (funded by an EPA grant) is designed to establish a statewide network of wetland condition monitoring sites at Level 2 and 3 intensification, applying NatureServe's Ecological Integrity Assessment and EPA's National Wetland Condition Assessment survey protocols. The project also includes the establishment of wetland monitoring at selected water allocation permit sites, map and classify NJ's springs and establish long-term monitoring at characteristic springs statewide, augment the existing Floristic Quality Assessment Index with bryophytes and rare plants which can be used to evaluate and track vegetation at mitigation sites, and provide outreach to and collaboration with federal, state, local, private and watershed organizations. Products from this effort are expected to include: 2013 NARS wetlands report, posting the final wetland condition assessment and spring mapping products on NJDEP website(s); provision of Floristic Quality Assessment Index information to Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve (which is the repository for NJ & PA information) for posting on their website; provision of summary information on the condition of NJ palustrine and estuarine wetlands and headwaters springs for land use planning

and wetland/aquatic resources protection and restoration; and provision of site information and monitoring data to groups such as the NJWMC, Watershed Watch Network and Volunteer Monitoring Program.

*C. The Mid-Atlantic Coastal Wetland Assessment: Linking Tide Wetland Status and Water Quality for NJ – Danielle Kreeger (Partnership for the Delaware Estuary)*

Danielle Kreeger provided an overview of the importance of tidal wetlands and related water quality in the Mid-Atlantic area with a focus on the maintenance, enhancement and restorations that are needed based on the changes that have occurred in these wetlands over the years. Her focus was work that the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary is doing in these areas, specifically related to New Jersey. This includes building resiliency, engaging in regional restoration planning, understanding the water quality ↔ wetlands interactions, and engage in tidal wetlands adaptation planning through study and monitoring. Wetland monitoring systems that have been designed, but not fully funded as yet, include the Delaware Estuary Watershed to Ocean Observing System (DEWOOS), the Delaware Estuary Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Program (DEWMAP), and the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Wetland Assessment (MACWA). MACWA, which covers parts of both the Delaware Estuary and Barnegat Bay, includes both core & supplemental metrics for rapid assessment and fixed station monitoring. Information from MACWA is expected to be used for State of the Estuary reporting, water quality management, fish & wildlife management, climate adaptation, regional restoration, regulatory decision-making, and targeted on-the-ground projects.

➤ **Technical Topics for Next Meeting**

Mercury, Quality Assurance

➤ **Next Meeting**

September 22, 2010 at the NJDEP Headquarters