



NJ Water Monitoring Coordinating Council

Measuring What Counts for Clean & Plentiful Water

February 2, 2005
MEETING MINUTES

Attendees

Leslie McGeorge, Rick Kropp, Alena Baldwin-Brown, Kirk Barrett, Randy Braun, Bob Connell, Becky Cosgrove (for Bill Simmons), Jeannine Der Bedrosian, Lisa Galloway Evrard (for Chris Obropta), Jack Gibs, Nancy Immesburger, Mike Kennish, Ed Konsevick, Al Korndoerfer, MaryAnne Kuserk, Karl Muessig, Nick Procopio, Bob Reiser, Boris Rukovets (for Howard Golub), Ed Santoro, Mike Serfes, Amy Shallcross, Dave Stedfast, Bob Tudor, Paula Zevin

Absent

Lisa Barno, Danielle Donkersloot, Jawed Hameedi, Steve Nieswand, Mike Weinstein

Guests

Suzanne Bricker – NOAA
Craig Coutros – NJDEP/OIRM
Eric Volwinkel – USGS

Other attendees – John Kushwara (EPA Region 2), Danielle Kreeger (DRBC), Paul Morton (NJDEP/WM&S), Bob Schuster (NJDEP/WM&S), Mike Stephens (Monmouth Co.)

➤ **Planning for NJ Water Monitoring Technical Workshop**

As part of the \$15,000 grant from EPA HQ to support some of our activities, the Council plans to host a 1-day technical workshop, in Spring 2006, similar to that held by the MD Water Monitoring Council. As part of the grant, the NJ Water Resources Research Institute has agreed to oversee organization and logistics of the workshop. A Planning Committee to coordinate development of the workshop is being formed. Volunteers for the Committee include:

Alena Baldwin-Brown, Leslie McGeorge, Kirk Barrett, Bob Connell, Becky Cosgrove,
Jeannine Der Bedrosian, Danielle Donkersloot, Mike Kennish, Bob Tudor

Additional Council members wishing to volunteer should let Alena know.

Possible themes for the workshop include integrated monitoring, as well as monitoring/management needs arising from previous monitoring-related symposia (e.g., Barnegat Bay, Delaware Bay).

➤ **World Water Monitoring Day Celebration**

2004 - DEP, USGS and the Pinelands Commission partnered for a celebration at Batsto Lake in Historic Batsto Village, Wharton State Forest (Burlington County). 130 students from area middle/high schools participated. A slide show of some of the activities from the event is available on the NJDEP Water Monitoring & Standards webpage: www.state.nj.us/dep/wmm/. IEC reported that, as part of WWMD, they sampled 9 stations in the Long Island Sound and East River. EPA Region 2 also reported that they were involved in many activities related to WWMD, including distribution of WWMD kits as well as publicity for the event at the Volunteer Monitoring Summit.

2005 – Any ideas for 2005 celebrations should be shared with Alena

➤ **Technical Presentations**

The Council heard technical presentations on the following 3 topics:

- Assessing Eutrophication in Estuarine & Coastal Waters (Suzanne Bricker – NOAA)
Suzanne Bricker provided a compelling framework for assessment of eutrophication in coastal waters that includes a translation mechanism from the science to the managers. It includes descriptions of the susceptibility of systems to nutrients, the indicators that should be monitored to the direction and magnitude of change in water quality, and the thresholds that prompt policy and management changes.
- NEMI (National Environmental Methods Index) and its ability to improve monitoring (Eric Volwinkel – USGS)
- Development of a Revised NJ Hydrography Coverage (Craig Coutros – NJDEP)

Copies of the Coastal/Estuarine Eutrophication and NJ Hydrography Coverage presentations have been posted to the Council's webpage. A hot link to NEMI has also been made from the Council's webpage.

➤ **NJ Long Term Water Monitoring Strategy**

Leslie McGeorge presented a summary of the final version of the NJ Long Term Water Monitoring and Assessment Strategy, which was submitted to EPA Region 2 as required for continued receipt of federal 106 grant funds. EPA indicated that, based on their review to date, NJ's strategy was far more comprehensive than other strategies that they had already reviewed. As part of the strategy, NJDEP included a matrix of monitoring gaps and resource/information needs, by waterbody type. The Council may be requested to provide input/feedback on strategy implementation for specific areas/waterbody types. The Strategy has been posted on the NJDEP Water Monitoring and Standards' webpage (<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wmm/wmswhatsnew.html>). Limited hard copies of the plan are also available; if anyone is interested in a hard copy, please contact Alena.

➤ **National Water Monitoring Council**

Meeting Summary

Karl Muessig provided a summary of important information from the December National Water Monitoring Council meeting, which was held in San Jose, CA (San Jose is also the site for the 2006 National Water Monitoring Conference). Council members were provided with a summary of water reuse/recycling in San Jose which includes metals management, organics trends, and sediment criteria. In addition, a copy of "2004 Pulse of the Estuary", a state of the environment report published by the San Francisco Estuary Institute, was passed around (report is available electronically at: www.sfei.org). Karl also provided an update on the USGS Cooperative Program review process. The final report is due out shortly – when available, Karl will provide it to Alena to share with Council members. Once the final report is available, it was suggested that the Council may wish to draft a resolution supporting an increase in federal funding for this program. It was noted that Congressman Pallone is a strong supporter of the Coop Program and, as such, he might be an appropriate person to contact with this resolution.

National Water Monitoring Network Design

Al Korndoerfer, who also attended the December meeting in San Jose, presented a summary of a new initiative being coordinated through the National Water Quality Monitoring Council which is development of a National Water Quality Monitoring Network. The recommendation for development of this network came from the final US Oceans Commission report. This network is to include coverage in both the coastal and upland areas that affect them, and is linked to the development of Integrated Ocean Observing Systems. Al is serving as the coordinator/facilitator for the workgroup charged with developing a design for this network. Two other workgroups are also being developed – Inventory and Methods/Data Comparability (Eric Volwinkel – USGS- will take a lead role with this workgroup). Development of this network proposal is on a fast-track, with the final report due to ACWI by the end of

2005. Council members interested in volunteering for either the design or the methods/data comparability workgroup should contact Al or Eric.

➤ **Subcommittees**

Data Management/Data Exchange

Dave Stedfast (USGS) provided a summary of the activities of the Data Management/Data Exchange subcommittee. The Subcommittee is finalizing its Charter as well as exploring development of an inventory of water monitoring activities in NJ. There are also ongoing discussions regarding development of an Access database to use (via a web portal) for data exchange. This activity may also be folded into an Information Exchange Challenge Grant, if received; the application was recently submitted to EPA. A representative from EPA Region 2 is still requested for this subcommittee.

Growing the Monitoring Infrastructure

As mentioned earlier, Integrated Ocean Observing Systems (IOOS) are a part of developing a national water monitoring network. NJ already has some components of an IOOS and, as articulated in the Long Term Monitoring and Assessment Strategy, is interested in developing additional components. To this end, Bob Tudor reported that this Subcommittee has suggested drafting a letter of support to AWCI (the parent of the NWQMC) for use of an ocean/estuarine area in NJ as a pilot area for development of such an IOOS. It appears that there may be some funding, in the future through NOAA, for such an activity. The Council was in favor of preparing such a letter and, as such, a draft of the letter will be shared with Council members.

(Postscript - A draft letter was prepared by NJDEP staff and circulated for Steering Committee review. It was ultimately decided that the most effective path for linking NWQMC and IOOS moving forward directions was to coordinate directly with NOAA officials and to participate in MACOORA (Mid-Atlantic Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association) development activities. This has been done and efforts are underway to organize a Mid-Atlantic Bight/Delaware Bay workshop that would involve the States of New Jersey and Delaware, the DRBC, MACOORA, and the New Jersey Shelf Observing System (Rutgers).)

➤ **Upcoming Events**

- 2006 Integrated Report (305b & 303d) – Data Solicitation Notice – Nancy Immesberger (NJDEP) shared the data solicitation notice, which has been published in the NJ Register. The solicitation notice details the type of and format for which data will be accepted by NJDEP for use in preparation of its 2006 Integrated Report. The solicitation notice is available electronically at: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wmm/sgwqt/wat/2006-datasolicitation.pdf>; NJDEP will be accepting data until July 1, 2005.
- Delaware Estuary Science Conference, Part 2 – Danielle Kreeger (DRBC) provided information and feedback to the Council from Part 1 of this conference, which was held in Cape May, Jan 10-12, 2005. She also encouraged Council members to consider speaking, presenting posters or just registering to attend Part 2, which will be held May 10-11 at the U. of Delaware. Interested Council members should contact Danielle directly (danielle.kreeger@drbc.state.nj.us or 609-883-9500 x217).

➤ **Possible Agenda Items/Topics for Next Meeting**

- Volunteer Monitoring
- County/Local Monitoring

➤ **Next Meeting**

May 25, 2005 at USGS.