



NJ Water Monitoring Coordinating Council

Measuring What Counts for Clean & Plentiful Water

May 31, 2006
MEETING MINUTES

Attendees

Leslie McGeorge, Rick Kropp, Alena Baldwin-Brown, Lisa Barno, Randy Braun, Bob Connell, Becky Cosgrove (for Bill Simmons), Danielle Donkersloot, Jack Gibs, Jawed Hameedi, Nancy Immesberger, Mike Kennish, Ed Konsevick, Al Korndoerfer, Michael Krug (for Kirk Barrett), John Kushwara, Karl Muessig, Nick Procopio, Bob Reiser, Peter Sattler (for Boris Rukovets/Howard Golub), Mike Serfes, Amy Shallcross, Dave Stedfast, Eric Vowinkel, Paula Zevin

Absent

Jeannine Der Bedrosian, Lisa Galloway Evrard (for Chris Obropta), MaryAnne Kuserk, Judy Louis, Steve Nieswand, Ed Santoro, Bob Tudor, Mike Weinstein

Guests

Kevin Berry – NJDEP/WM&S
Frank Falco – Middlesex Water Company
Russ Furnari – PSE&G/Clean Water Council
Heidi Hoppe – USGS NJ Water Science Center
Jeff Hoffman – NJDEP/NJGS
Virginia Loftin – NJDEP/DWM
Paul Morton – NJDEP/WM&S
Robert Schopp - USGS NJ Water Science Center

➤ **Old Business**

- Revised Minutes from the 1/25/06 Council meeting were approved.
- The DEOS proposal was submitted to MACOORA but was not chosen for funding. Bob Tudor, Bob Connell and Jawed Hameedi will bring back additional information, to the Council, regarding the reasons behind this decision.

➤ **NJ Water Monitoring Technical Workshop/Training Session (April 19 & 20, 2006, Rutgers EcoComplex, Columbus, NJ)**

April 19 Training - Kevin Berry (NJDEP/WM&S) provided a summary of this 1-day aquatic benthic macroinvertebrate training session, which was conducted by Bob Bode from NYDEC. The training, which was attended by 20 participants, focused on midge identification, specifically genus → species level.

April 20 Workshop – 125 people attended the April 20 workshop. The workshop featured a Plenary Session, which included a keynote address from Tracy Mehan (former EPA AA for Water and a panel discussion regarding water monitoring & assessment in NJ. The Plenary Session was followed by 9 breakout sessions. Fred Grassle, Director of Rutgers' Institute for Marine & Coastal Sciences, served as the lunchtime speaker. There was also a poster session,

coordinated by Dave Stedfast & Anna Signor (NJDEP/WM&S), which featured 13 posters from various Council member agencies. Overall feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with multiple requests for another workshop. Each of the Panel Presenters as well as Breakout Session Coordinators provided brief summaries of the highlights of their presentations/sessions, as well as recommendations for enhancements for subsequent workshops. Topics suggested for another workshop include: assessment (including use of GIS techniques), benthic indices, data sharing/data exchange, groundwater monitoring/trends, and national assessments, among others. The workshop agenda, presentations and posters are all available on the Council's website.

➤ **NJ Long Term Water Monitoring & Assessment Strategy**

A draft of the FY05/06 Progress Report was distributed. Council members are asked to review this document, as well as the Monitoring Objectives in the Long Term Strategy, for the September meeting. Council members are also asked to bring their Long Term Strategy documents to the September meeting. If Council members need another hard copy of the Strategy document, please contact Alena (the document is also available, electronically, via the publications section of the NJDEP Water Monitoring & Standards webpage: www.nj.gov/dep/wmm/publications.html).

➤ **Technical Presentations** (Copies of all of the following presentations have been posted to the Council's webpage - <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wmm/wmccmeetinginfo.html>)

The Council heard technical presentations on the following:

A. *NJ's Flood Warning Network* – Heidi Hoppe (USGS NJ Water Science Center)

Heidi Hoppe provided a summary of the components of NJ's Flood Warning Network, including gauge types, weather stations, and real-time telemetry. In addition, she explained that USGS is currently exploring the addition of water quality sensors for brown tide (back bays), DO, turbidity, nutrients, & sediment transport - all gauges provide the basic infrastructure for adding additional sensors. IMCS expressed a desire to explore a partnership with USGS regarding Sediment Elevation Tables (SET). A separate meeting, between these two agencies, will be set up to discuss this potential partnership.

B. *Delaware River Flood Task Force Report* – Bob Schopp (USGS NJ Water Science Center)

Bob Schopp presented information from the Delaware River Flood Task Force Report, including findings and recommendations. Included among the recommendations is the addition of rain-gauges to eight (8) existing gauging stations.

C. *Drought Monitoring Network* – Bob Schopp and Jeff Hoffman (NJDEP/NJGS)

Bob Schopp and Jeff Hoffman provided an overview of the Drought Monitoring Network and drought monitoring data uses in NJ. The Drought Monitoring Network was established in 2000 as a result of an articulated need for a more systematic process for drought declaration. The network divides the state into drought "regions" which are based on water supply characteristics and township boundaries. Indicators in the network include reservoirs, stream flow, precipitation, and ground water levels. During declared drought periods, updates are provided weekly via email as well as on the NJDEP drought monitoring webpage (www.njdrought.org).

➤ **National Water Monitoring Conference**

Leslie, Danielle Donkersloot, Paula Zevin, Eric Vowinkel and Jawed Hameedi attended and/or presented at the National Water Monitoring Conference, May 8-11, in San Jose. Information of interest from the conference included: state experiences with probabilistic monitoring, national monitoring network design, national surveys (National Coastal Assessment, Wadable Streams Assessment, Lakes), TMDL development (Hg and nutrients, in particular), real-time monitoring, NAWQA (pesticides, VOCs and nutrients), and connections between volunteer monitoring and state monitoring. Attendees received CDs containing abstracts/bios from all presenters. If anyone is interested in seeing particular abstracts, please contact Alena. Proceedings from the conference will be available on the National Water Monitoring

Council's website (www.acwi.gov/monitoring/). The site for the 2008 National Conference is to be decided at the July meeting of the National Water Monitoring Council.

NOTE: NJ's perspective on NAWQA will be presented, by USGS, at a future NJWMCC meeting.

➤ **Subcommittees**

Data Management/Data Exchange

Paul Morton, NJDEP/WM&S, provided a presentation on the NJ Information Exchange Grant which included an update on receipt of the grant for development of a NJ information exchange network, data exchange needs, list of users for the network, components of the network as well as a draft design for the network. Danielle Donkersloot also provided an update on development of the volunteer monitoring on-line data management system.

Monitoring Methods

Eric Vowinkel provided the Council with an update as to the activities of the National Water Monitoring Council's Methods and Data Comparability Board (which he co-chairs), as well as useful information/applications for the NJ Council. There are new ESAR and data standards that are available in the new *Water Quality Data Elements: User Guide*, which is available for download from the Methods and Comparability Board portion of the NWQMC website. Eric also mentioned that a future focus, for the Methods Board, will be habitat.

➤ **Clean Water Council**

Russ Furnari attended the meeting on behalf of the NJ Clean Water Council (CWC). Russ explained that as part of EPA's PART (program evaluation), NJDEP's Division of Watershed Management has asked CWC to provide assistance in areas of implementation. Russ, on behalf of CWC, is looking to link to other groups/councils (e.g., Water Supply Advisory Council, NJ Drinking Water Quality Institute) who collect water quality information which can be used to determine/achieve clean water – this includes the NJWMCC. Using the water quality information from these groups, CWC plans to draft recommendations, including an overall strategy for assessing clean water effectiveness, which – once complete - they plan to share with NJDEP's Division of Watershed Management. Russ expressed interest in continuing to attend future NJWMCC meetings. He will be added to the Council mailing list.

➤ **Member Updates**

Michael Krug (representing Kirk Barrett) provided a reminder regarding the Mid-Atlantic NJ American Water Works Association's conference in June. The conference will focus on stream restoration and protection in the Mid-Atlantic.

➤ **Topics for Next Meeting**

- NJ's Long Term Water Monitoring & Assessment Strategy – Year 2
- Fish/shellfish monitoring

➤ **Next Meeting**

September 27, 2006 at NJDEP HQ (401 E. State St., Trenton).