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# NJ Water Monitoring Coordinating Council

## Measuring What Counts for Clean & Plentiful Water

**September 27, 2006  
MEETING MINUTES**

### Attendees

Leslie McGeorge, Rick Kropp, Alena Baldwin-Brown, Kirk Barrett, Randy Braun, Bob Connell, Becky Cosgrove, Danielle Donkersloot, Lisa Galloway Evrard (for Chris Obropta), Jack Gibs, Jawed Hameedi, Nancy Immesberger, , Ed Konsevick, Al Korndoerfer, MaryAnne Kuserk, John Kushwara, Judy Louis, Karl Muessig, Boris Rukovets (for Howard Golub), Ed Santoro, Bill Simmons, Dave Stedfast, Eric Vowinkel, Paula Zevin

### Absent

Lisa Barno, Jeannine Der Bedrosian, Mike Kennish, Steve Nieswand, Nick Procopio, Bob Reiser, Mike Serfes, Amy Shallcross, Bob Tudor, Mike Weinstein

### Guests

Darvene Adams - EPA Region 2  
Gary Buchanan – NJDEP/DSRT  
Tom Fikslin – DRBC  
Jeff Fischer – USGS NJ Water Science Center  
Jim Kurtenbach - EPA Region 2  
Paul Morton – NJDEP/WM&S

### ➤ **Old Business**

- Minutes from the 5/31/06 Council meeting were approved.  
- As part of the EPA-funded NJ Water Quality Data Exchange grant that has been received by DEP, Paul Morton (NJDEP/WM&S) presented an overview of the upcoming Business Process Analysis for development of the NJ Water Monitoring Inventory component. The Council was asked for volunteers for the Inventory Design Team, which will be led by Alena. Dave Stedfast (USGS) and DRBC volunteered to participate, along with Leslie and Paul Morton. Other Council members interested in joining the design team were asked to respond to Alena by October 4. (NOTE: IEC & NJDEP/WM&S – Marine Water Monitoring & WQ Standards & Assessment also subsequently joined the design team).

### ➤ **National Water Monitoring Council Meeting**

Leslie & Eric Vowinkel (USGS NJ Water Science Center) provided a summary of the National Council meeting that was held in July in New Hampshire. Updates included status of the National Water Quality Monitoring Network, including potential pilot areas that are being considered by the Steering Committee (inc. Delaware Bay & a “mid Atlantic” location). Eric updated the Council on new developments in the area of the Methods Board which included a request for assistance in developing the habitat data elements of NEMI as well as announcing the formation of a workgroup to develop standardized stormwater monitoring methods. Also announced was that Philadelphia has been chosen as the site for the 2008 National Water Monitoring Conference, which will run May 16-21. Eric shared the presentation he made to the

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National Council, which won Philadelphia this spot (the presentation is available on the Council's website). He also indicated that he has volunteered to be one of the chief organizers of the Conference. As such, the National Water Monitoring Council will be looking for support, in various forms, from the NJ Council for this conference.

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

The FY05/06 Progress Report was distributed. For FY07, Council members were asked to review this document to determine: a) if they have information to help fill any of the identified gaps; b) if there is any interest in seeking joint funding to develop information to fill identified gaps, and/or c) if they are interested in partnering to do any work in particular areas.

➤ **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 related to Fish/Shellfish Tissue Monitoring:

A. *Fish Tissue Data Use in Water Quality Assessments* – Nancy Immesberger (NJDEP/WM&S)

Nancy Immesberger provided an overview of how fish tissue data are used in preparation of the state's Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report, including an overall statewide map of the results for fish consumption advisories as well as a listing of the most common pollutants for which these advisories are issued.

B. *EPA's National Lake Fish Tissue Study* – Jim Kurtenbach (EPA Region 2)

Jim Kurtenbach presented a summary of this study, which is the first national study in freshwater fish based on a statistical design. The study is designed to establish a national baseline for fish tissue contaminants. The Final Report for the study is expected to be published in 2007.

C. *NJ's Fish Tissue and Shellfish Tissue Monitoring Efforts* – Gary Buchanan (NJDEP/DSRT) and Bob Connell (NJDEP/WM&S)

Gary Buchanan and Bob Connell provided overviews of NJ's Routine Toxics in Fish Tissue Monitoring (Gary) and NJ's Shellfish Toxics Monitoring (Bob) efforts. Gary's presentation focused on the state's routine freshwater fish tissue monitoring and resulting fish consumption advisories. Bob presented the state's estuarine monitoring program, including locations and sampling parameters, which focuses on toxics in shellfish. Results from both monitoring programs are used in development of NJ's Integrated Report.

D. *NOAA's Mussel Watch Program* – Jawed Hameedi (NOAA)

Jawed Hameedi presented the Mussel Watch program, as it applies to NJ. As he explained, Mussel Watch is a national program, focusing on both mussels and oysters, with 10 sites that are located in NJ. These sites are located in the NY/NJ Harbor area, along the Atlantic coast, and in Delaware Bay. Of those 10 NJ sites, 5 are sampled for oysters and 5 are sampled for mussels.

E. *Fish Tissue Monitoring in the Delaware Bay/Estuary* – Tom Fikslin (DRBC)

Tom Fikslin provided an overview of the fish tissue monitoring efforts that take place in the Delaware River. These efforts include sampling at both tidal and non-tidal locations. Depending upon the location and program under which the sampling is conducted, parameters measured include metals (including mercury), PCBs, pesticides, and dioxin, among others.

F. *NJ Meadowlands Commission Aquatic Biota Inventory* – Ed Konsevick (MERI)

Ed Konsevick presented a monitoring effort, undertaken by the NJ Meadowlands Environmental Commission, that focused on the analyses of aquatic biota in the Lower Hackensack River. The resource inventory portion of this effort stretches from 1987-2003, and focuses on percent contribution of the 10 most abundance species in this area of the river. The other portion of this effort looked at contaminants, focusing primarily on white perch.

*Council Input to Long-Term Strategy re: Fish/Shellfish Tissue Monitoring*

Areas that were discussed for possible future action/information to fill gaps in the strategy included:

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- collaboration on collection efforts (e.g., using existing assemblage work for other collection needs/efforts such as future collection assistance for NJDEP/DSRT fish tissue monitoring, etc.)
- sharing of past monitoring information
- utilizing archived tissue specimens for emerging contaminant work
- technology advancements (which would reduce sample analyses costs)
- 1 lab contract for different types of analyses (bulk rate)

## Actions:

- link existing activities to Monitoring Inventory design to enhance future collaboration efforts
- pursue trends information if appropriate monitoring information exists (e.g., Hg)

## ➤ **Subcommittees**

### Data Management/Data Exchange

Dave Stedfast, USGS-NJ Water Science Center, provided an update on data management/data exchange activities including the fact that USGS is in the process of making XML's available on NWIS. He also reminded the Council that the subcommittee had provided a recommended list of data fields for the on-line Water Monitoring Inventory to the full Council in Sept '05 (Council members were asked to contact Alena if they wished to see this list again). Once built, other suggested potential links to/from the Inventory include: a bibliography of previous water monitoring research by Council member organizations, the NJ Environmental Digital Library (housed at Rutgers U.), as well as a link to the National Environmental Research Center. Council members agreed with the recommendations that, as the Inventory is designed, the Design Team (& consultant) look at the existing Chesapeake Bay Inventory and the MDDNR's "Eyes on the Bay" website as examples. Danielle Donkersloot also provided a brief update on development of the on-line Volunteer Monitoring database, which is almost complete and is scheduled to debut at the upcoming Volunteer Monitoring Summit (Nov 2-3).

## ➤ **Member Updates**

The following upcoming events were announced by Council members:

- *World Water Monitoring Day (Oct 18)* – Alena announced plans for celebrating WWMD with an event planned for high school students at Round Valley Recreation Area in Clinton, NJ on Oct 18. In addition to NJDEP, USGS and S. Branch Watershed Association were planning to participate (NOTE: due to lack of school availability for participation, this event had to be canceled). Alena also announced that NJDEP also planned to hold an in-house WWMD display, staffed by members of WM&S, in the lobby of the NJDEP HQ building, on Oct 19. IEC announced that it had just completed its sampling efforts for WWMD. EPA announced that it would be participating in Rapid Bioassessment Training, at Jockey Hollow, on WWMD.
- *ISS/NESSA Shellfish Conference (Oct 24-26)* – Bob Connell provided the agenda for the upcoming ISS/NESSA shellfish conference that was occurring in Cape May, Oct 23-26, and encouraged any Council members interested in attending to contact him.
- *Volunteer Monitoring Summit (Nov 2-3)* – Danielle Donkersloot provided an announcement card regarding the Volunteer Monitoring Summit, scheduled to take place Nov 2-3, at Monmouth University. Council members wishing to participate should contact Danielle.
- *New Council Member* – Gary Buchanan, NJDEP/DSRT, indicated that he would be interested in joining the Council.

## ➤ **Topics for Next Meeting**

- Microbial Monitoring & Recreational Use Assessment

## ➤ **Next Meeting**

January 31, 2007 at USGS (Snow date – Feb 7).