

**DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
REGULATED FLOW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY
May 24, 2018**



The May 24, 2018 Regulated Flow Advisory Committee (RFAC) meeting was held at the Commission offices in West Trenton, New Jersey. Brennan TARRIER of NYSDEC and Steve DOMBER of NJDEP chaired the meeting. Copies of presentations given at the meeting can be found on the DRBC's RFAC website: http://www.nj.gov/drbc/about/advisory/RFAC_index.html.

Committee Business

The meeting summary of the September 28, 2017 meeting was approved as drafted.

Hydrilla Management for Protection of the Delaware & Raritan Canal

Heather DESKO of the New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) gave a presentation on management of Hydrilla in the Delaware & Raritan (D&R) Canal. Hydrilla is an invasive aquatic plant that was first found in the D&R Canal in 2016. It can limit water flow in the Canal if not controlled. After considering a range of management options, NJWSA implemented a successful hydrilla control program using herbicides. To prevent re-infestation of Hydrilla, an annual program of surveys, sampling and monitoring will be conducted.

Delaware River Juvenile Atlantic Sturgeon Abundance Survey

Ian PARK of the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife gave a presentation on recent abundance surveys of juvenile Atlantic sturgeon. The Atlantic sturgeon is listed as an endangered species by the States of Delaware and Pennsylvania. As part of state and federal efforts to help the recovery of Atlantic sturgeon populations in the Delaware estuary, the Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife has conducted sturgeon surveys since 1991 to estimate the size of the juvenile population. To assess spawning success, juvenile abundance surveys started in 2009. The surveys included four areas between the Philadelphia International Airport and Pennsville, NJ. Most young-of-the-year sturgeon have been detected near the Marcus Hook Anchorage. Sturgeon are measured, weighed, tagged and released.

PWD Water Supply Planning: Introduction

Molly HESSON of the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) gave a presentation on PWD's water-supply planning program. PWD is currently carrying out a multi-year water-supply planning program to support water and wastewater infrastructure planning by developing an understanding of the potential risks to infrastructure, regulatory compliance and public health caused by possible changes in water quality and quantity. Water quality concerns include chloride and sodium, which increase with salinity intrusion in the estuary. PWD is evaluating three drivers of salinity intrusion: climate change (e.g., sea level rise), ambient water quality changes (e.g., chloride concentrations in rivers and tributaries that drain to the Delaware estuary), and policy changes (e.g., Montague and Trenton flow objectives during drought).

operations). PWD is developing watershed hydrology and estuary salinity models to aid their efforts. Planning assessments using these models are scheduled to be completed by summer 2021. PWD will offer further presentations to RFAC on the development of their models.

FFMP 2017

Kendra Russell, USGS Deputy Delaware River Master, gave an overview of the FFMP 2017, the current reservoir releases program. It is a 2-part, 10-year agreement which builds upon previous FFMP programs. Various studies will be conducted in the first five years, focusing on specific components of the current program. A new feature of the FFMP 2017 is the establishment of various storage banks to provide reservoir releases for specific purposes. The FFMP 2017 Agreement is posted on the Delaware River Master website.

Subcommittee on Ecological Flows

Brenan Tarrier reported that DRBC has recently re-established the Subcommittee on Ecological Flows (SEF) under RFAC, and is currently seeking applications for non-reserved membership in SEF. He also noted that the Decree Parties have developed an interim guidance document for implementing the Rapid Flow Change Mitigation Bank (available in the current FFMP) during the 2018-2019 water year. Brenan invited review and feedback on the document, which was circulated to interested parties.

Brenan also indicated that there are several issues on which SEF input would be useful, including evaluations of interim guidance documents for management of storage banks (for Thermal Mitigation and Rapid Flow Change Mitigation) in FFMP 2017. He requested suggestions from participants, which were: (a) invasive species; (b) warm water fisheries; (c) migratory fishes (Shad, American Eel, Atlantic Sturgeon); (d) dwarf wedge mussels and other endangered species; and (e) development of criteria on limiting factors for different species for use in the DSS habitat-evaluation tool.

Open Public Dialogue

The following comments were made by members of the public:

- Inquired about the status of the Upper Delaware Decision Support System (DSS), a tool for instream habitat evaluation (a new version is available).
- Requested a presentation from USGS staff on the current version of the DSS tool.
- Suggested the DSS presentation could include an evaluation of the impact of the FFMP 2017 program on Upper Delaware instream habitat.
- Requested that upcoming RFAC meetings include opportunities for members of the public to make presentations.
- Emphasized the expectation of transparency in RFAC-mediated public processes, including the public availability of simulation models used by various parties.
- Requested release of the new version of the PST simulation model and the model runs done in late 2017 to support the FFMP 2017 negotiations.
- Asked how would various reservoir construction projects and tunnel shutdowns would affect diversions and reservoir releases under the current program. Asked that such plans be made available to the public.



REGULATED FLOW ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RFAC)
May 24, 2018

ATTENDANCE LIST

NAME	AFFILIATION
ANDERSON, Kelly	Philadelphia Water
BACHMANN, Bob	Friends of the Upper Delaware River
BAXTER, Stefanie	Delaware Geological Survey
BITTNER, Laura	USACE
BRANSKY, Jake	DRBC
COCKE, Bill	Delaware DNREC
DESKO, Heather	NJWSA
DOMBER, Steven	NJ DEP
EVANS, Richard	NPS
EYLER, Sheila	USFWS
GARIGLIANO, Jennifer	NYC DEP
HAMILTON, Don	NPS
HESSON, Molly	Philadelphia Water
KOLESAR, Peter	Columbia University
MIRI, Joe	NJ DEP
MONACO, Vince	NJAW
MURALIDHAR, D.	NYC DEP
NAJJAR, Ken	DRBC
OLIVIO, Dana	NYC DEP
ORR, Jenn	PA DEP
PADELETTI, Angela	Partnership for Delaware Estuary
PARK, Ian	Delaware DNREC, Division of Fish & Wildlife
PETTINGER, Garth	Trout Unlimited
PIERCE, Daryl	PA Fish and Boat Commission
QUINODOZ, Hernan	DRBC
RUSSELL, Kendra	USGS - Delaware River Master Office
SALADOR, Keith	PADEP
SHALLCROSS, Amy	DRBC
SILLDORFF, Erik	Delaware Riverkeeper Network
SUK, Namsoo	DRBC
TAMBINI, Steve	DRBC
TARRIER, Brennan	NYS DEC
YAGECIC, John	DRBC