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**Water Management Advisory Committee**

**MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The DRBC Water Management Advisory Committee (WMAC) was called to order by Ms. Kathy Klein, Committee Vice Chair. Information pertaining to the WMAC, including member listing and past meeting materials, is available at [http://www.nj.gov/drbc/about/advisory/WMAC\\_index.html](http://www.nj.gov/drbc/about/advisory/WMAC_index.html)

**ADMINISTRATION**

- The highlights of the June 22, 2017 meeting were approved and will be posted on the WMAC webpage.
- Membership: There is a vacancy in representation for the League of Women Voters/Civic sector which will be posted on the website.
- WMAC meetings for 2018 were tentatively set for the following Thursdays: February 22<sup>nd</sup>, June 21<sup>st</sup> and October 25<sup>th</sup>.

**UPDATES**

Dr. Ken Najjar, DRBC Director of Water Resource Management, provided an update on DRBC activities, upcoming advisory committee meetings, Commission actions, and other items of interest, among them Resolutions for:

- Approval to enter into a contract with the Wildlands Conservancy for dam removal projects in the Bushkill Creek watershed funded by settlement funds associated with the natural resource damages related to the PPL ash spill in 2005.
- Additional point source nutrient monitoring in Water Quality Zones 2-6 to support the development of the estuary eutrophication model.
- Additional study of fish propagation as a designated use in WQ Zones 3, 4 and the upper portion of Zone 5.
- Directing that draft regulations for certain natural gas development activities in the basin be developed and noticed by November 30th.

Ken announced the recent departure of J. Kent Barr, former WMAC liaison, to NJDEP and the pending retirement of Tom Fikslin, Director of Science and Water Quality Management, in April 2018. Recent meeting materials can be accessed at <http://www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/archive/recent-drbc-mtg.html>. The Commission's next public hearing and business meeting are scheduled for Nov. 15 and Dec. 13., respectively. Ken also announced the finalization of a new 10-year, two-part Flexible Flow Management Program (FFMP) by the parties to the Supreme Court Decree: Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and the City of New York (NYC).

**HYDROLOGIC CONDITIONS REPORT**

Ms. Amy Shallcross, Manager of Water Resource Operations for DRBC, provided an overview of basin hydrologic conditions. Year-to-date, the basin has experienced normal amounts of

precipitation. As of October 23<sup>rd</sup>, groundwater levels in USGS monitoring wells indicated two counties (Chester and Delaware PA) in drought watch and three counties (Sullivan NY, Burlington and Cumberland NJ) below normal. As of October 24<sup>th</sup>, tributary stream flows were normal to below normal, with flows in smaller tributaries more likely to be below normal.

The combined New York City reservoir storage is 67% of usable capacity and above the long-term median for this time of year. Lower basin storage pools in Beltzville and Blue Marsh reservoirs are at or above 100%. On October 19<sup>th</sup>, the salt front was at River Mile (RM) 77 compared to a normal location of 72 miles for this time of year. The long-range precipitation outlook through January 2018 indicates that average precipitation and above-average temperatures are expected. Weekly, monthly and annual hydrologic reports are archived at <http://www.nj.gov/drbc/hydrological/reports/>.

Ms. Shallcross also summarized the new Flexible Flow Management Program effective October 21<sup>st</sup>. The new program is a two-part, 10-year agreement among the parties to the 1954 US Supreme Court decree (PA, DE, NY, NJ and NYC) with features that meet water supply demands, protect fisheries habitat downstream of the NYC reservoirs, enhance flood mitigation, and repel the upstream movement of salt water in the Delaware Estuary. Details of the new program are available from the Office of the Delaware River Master who administers the program <https://water.usgs.gov/osw/odrm/>.

#### **STATE WATER SUPPLY PLANNING – STATUS REPORTS**

**DELAWARE.** *Presentation by Steven Smailer, P.G., WSCC Chair, DE DNREC; Jerry Kauffman PhD, State Water Master, University of Delaware Water Resources Agency.*

Delaware's Water Supply Coordinating Council (WSCC), formed in 2000, is responsible for submitting water supply plans to the governor. To date, 13 plans have been submitted for gubernatorial and legislative approval. Most recently, plans to meet 2030 demand have been submitted for each of three regions: Northern New Castle County (2017), Southern New Castle County (2006) and Kent and Sussex Counties (2014).

Per capita demand in Northern New Castle County, principally served by surface water and reservoir storage, is expected to essentially remain flat through the planning period with ample storage to weather a 75-day drought. Southern New Castle County, relies on groundwater supplies. DNREC, DGS and WSCC have been working to improve estimates of groundwater availability and assessments of the ability to meet peak demands in 2030, when the population is expected to double over the 2005 census count. Recommendations included encouraging the use of treated wastewater for irrigation, especially for golf courses.

Farm irrigation is the greatest water use in both Kent and Sussex Counties, more than double that for public supply. While farmland is decreasing in both counties due to development, irrigated farmland is increasing. Furthermore, a greater number of warmer and hotter days expected with climate change, will increase demand on groundwater supplies. The most recent plan indicates sufficient supply to meet or exceed 2030 peak demands for all sectors except domestic wells. Recommendations include improving ground water availability estimates, expending groundwater monitoring networks and the development of drought operating guidelines for this region. By Executive Order, all Delaware agency plans by must consider the potential effects of climate change.

**NEW JERSEY.** *Presentation by Jeffrey Hoffman, PG, NJ State Geologist, NJ Geological Survey*

New Jersey has been required to prepare and periodically revise a statewide water supply plan since the Water Supply Management Act of 1981. The most recent Plan, adopted In September 2017, is the first published revision since 1996. Assessments of use and availability are made on regional aggregations of 151HUC-11 watersheds. Sources of supply include reservoirs, confined aquifers and surface water (including unconfined aquifers). Assessments compare availability of source water to both current and future demands (2020). Three of the state's 20 Water Management Areas are currently stressed and new withdrawals must be thoroughly evaluated. Nine more would become stressed if pumped at volumes authorized under existing permits. Statewide, per capita potable use has decreased, while consumptive potable water loss has increased. Estimates of available supply exceed projected 2020 demand by 207 mgd; the state has sufficient water to meet demands into the foreseeable future with effective management. Specific recommendations include improving system resilience and asset management; encouraging new water sources and innovative technologies; evaluating impacts of highly consumptive, non-potable uses; detailed regional hydrologic assessments; coordination with Highlands and Pinelands; and maintaining monitoring networks.

**PENNSYLVANIA.** *Presented by Hoss Liaghat PE, Hydrologist, PADEP*

Pennsylvania has a history of state water planning dating from the 1970s. The Water Resources Planning Act (Act 220) of 2002 started the current generation of supply planning. By statute the State Water Plan is to be reviewed and updated every 5 years. The state has one statewide committee and one committee for each of 6 planning regions (based on basin-drainage: Delaware, Susquehanna, Great Lakes, Potomac, etc.). The 2009 State Water Plan focused on the development of a Water Atlas, data sharing, the development of models to assess water availability, the identification of Critical Water Planning Areas and the development of three Critical Area Resource Plans, of which three were completed. PA is currently undertaking a review of the 2009 Plan, completing unfinished work from the 2009 effort, and improving access to water data. Goals include finalizing Critical Area Resource Plans (CARPs), digitizing the Water Atlas, and taking into consideration the influence of withdrawals for unconventional gas well development and prospective effects of climate change.

**ROUNDTABLE: 2018 TOPICS**

Topics proffered by committee members included

- Climate Change: What is being done/ can be done in the basin; is the current Drought of Record an adequate planning assumption?
- What metrics are states using?
- What are pricing rates across the basin and how/do they affect use?
- Emergence and role of storm water utilities
- Changes in consumptive use by power sector and policy review
- Water conservation and water audits

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 by Vice Chair Kathy Klein.

<b>WMAC Meeting Attendance – October 24, 2017</b>			
<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>WMAC MEMBER/ ALTERNATE</b>	<b>REPRESENTING</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
Delaware	Steven Smailer Bill Cocke (A) Allison Diggins	DE DNREC	Present GoToMeeting GoToMeeting
New Jersey	Carolyn Olynyk Jeff Hoffman	NJ DEP NJDEP-NJGS	Present
New York	Erik Schmitt (A)	NY DEC	-
Pennsylvania	Hoss Liaghiat Dave Gordner (A) Mike Hill	PADEP	GoToMeeting
US Army Corps of Engineers	Laura Bittner	Phila. District	GoToMeeting
US Env. Protection Agency	Katie Lynch	Drinking Water Protection	GoToMeeting
US Geological Survey	Dan Goode Kirk White (A)	Water Science Center	- GoToMeeting
City of New York	Dana Olivio	NYC DEP	GoToMeeting
City of Philadelphia	Hesson, Molly (A)	Phila. Water Dept.	GoToMeeting
County Water Agency	Jan Bowers	Chester Co. WR Authority	GoToMeeting
Water Resource Association	Kathy Klein (V) Preston Luitweiler (A)	WRA of the DRB	Present
Industry	Mershon, Jim (C)	Merrill Creek Owners Group	-
Water Utility	John Thaeber Virginia Eisenbrey (A)	Artesian Water	GoToMeeting
Agriculture	Sandra Howland	NJ Dept. of Agriculture	Present
Civic	VACANT		-
Environmental Organization	Mary Ellen Noble	Delaware Riverkeeper Network	GoToMeeting
Watershed Organization	Golod, Pete	Upper Delaware Council	GoToMeeting
Academia	Jerry Kauffman	University of Delaware	Present
Recreation	Ann Pilcher	Pocono Mts. Visitors Bureau	-
Fisheries	Sheila Eyler	US F&W Service	GoToMeeting
<i>(A) indicates Alternate (C) indicates Chairperson (V) indicates Vice Chairperson</i>			
<b>DRBC STAFF</b>	Najjar, Ken	Water Resource Management	
	Pindar, Chad	Water Resource Planning	
	Sanchez, Jessica	WMAC Liaison	
	Shallcross, Amy	Water Resource Operations	
<b>GUESTS</b>	Mary Chepiga	USGS	
	Jon Janowicz	USGS	
	Jeff Hoffman		
	Brian Oram	BF Env. Consultants	
	Meredith Strasser	Talen Energy	
	Eric Vowinkel	Rutgers Univ.-Env. Science	

Approved: June 21, 2018