

**DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION  
FLOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FAC)**

**November 18, 2009**

The November 18, 2009 Flood Advisory Committee (FAC) meeting began at 10:00 AM at the Commission office (DRBC) in West Trenton, NJ. John Moyle of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) chaired the meeting.

**A. Introductions and Review of the Draft Minutes from the August 26, 2009 Meeting**

The minutes were approved with no corrections or changes. The summary will be posted on the DRBC web site. Tapes of the meeting may be reviewed upon request.

**B. FAC Membership Announcements**

Laura Tessieri, DRBC, made two announcements. Delaware County Chairman, Jim Eisel, nominated Richard Bell, Director of Delaware County Emergency Services to serve as the local emergency management representative for New York State. This appointment has been reviewed by DRBC Executive Director, Carol Collier, and will take effect as of the February 2010 meeting.

NPS Superintendent of Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, Vidal Martinez, has moved to a new assignment in Virginia. The current Acting Superintendent is Sandra Schultz.

**C. Hydrologic Conditions Report**

A presentation of the current hydrologic conditions was given by Amy Shallcross, DRBC. As of November 16<sup>th</sup>, the year-to-date precipitation for 2009 ranges from 2.67 inches above normal for the upper basin (above Montague) to a range of 1.1 inches (above Trenton) to 4.1 inches (Wilmington) above normal in the lower basin.

Overall precipitation trends have been very wet for the past several months. To date, for the month of November, streamflow both at Montague and Trenton gages were only slightly above the normal range for that time of year. But, in general, over the past several months we have been well above normal. In June the average streamflow was between 250-300% above normal at Montague and Trenton. In August, the average streamflow was 450% above normal for Montague and 350% above normal for Trenton.

As of November 17, 2009, the total storage for the NYC Delaware reservoirs was 241 BG which is 89% of combined storage; Cannonsville was at 92.8%, Pepacton at 86.2% and Neversink at 91.2%. Cannonsville and Neversink reservoirs were releasing at L1b levels, Pepacton at L1c/c1. Additional supplementary releases have been made at Pepacton in accordance with the Temporary Supplemental Releases Program for the temporary 2009 Rondout West Branch tunnel shutdown. The USACE reservoirs in the lower basin storage (Beltzville and Blue Marsh) were at or slightly above their normal pool indicating that all of flood control storage in the two reservoirs was available.

As of November 12, 2009, the salt line (7-day average river mile location of 250 mg/l chlorides) was at river mile 69 which is eleven miles downstream of its normal position at 80 miles. The next one-three month outlooks show an equal probability of experiencing either higher or lower than normal temperatures and precipitation.

**D. FY-09 Flood Warning Improvements – Delaware River Basin Enhanced Flood Warning System**

Laura Tessieri, DRBC, gave an update on the work being performed using the \$235,000 in federal funds directed to DRBC for the Delaware River Enhanced Flood Warning System. As funds are allocated, identified priorities are being systematically implemented. Flood warning priorities are identified in the

Delaware River Basin Interstate Flood Mitigation Task Force Action Agenda of 2007, commissioned at the request of the four basin governors following the three Delaware River main stem floods of September 2004, April 2005 and June 2006. Priorities for FY-09 work include:

USGS: Flood harden gages (FW-4)

NOAA-NWS:

Inventory and evaluation of non NWS precipitation gages (FW-1)

Improved flash flood forecasts and ice monitoring information (FW-5, FW-13)

Establish flood stages and impact statements for new forecast sites (FW-7)

Develop flood inundation maps (FW-9, FW-11)

Outreach and flood warning operation support (FW-11)

DRBC:

GIS support to NOAA-NWS – Inventory and evaluate precipitation observing stations in the basin and evaluate and upgrade river gage network (FW-1, FW-2)

High hazard dam emergency action plan (EAP) documents (FW-10)

Flood warning education and outreach program (FW-11)

Support a flood coordination mechanism (FW-12)

Clarke Rupert, DRBC staff, mentioned that with the support of our four co-chairs the Delaware Basin Congressional Task Force, Congressman Castle, Holt, Dent, and Hinchey, as well as support from Congressman Hall in NYS, \$200,000 was directed to the Delaware River Enhanced Flood Warning System in the House passed CJS Bill for FY-10. However, despite the support of Senators Lautenberg and Menendez, Carper and Kaufman, no funding was included in the Senate passed CJS appropriations bill. It is expected that by the next FAC meeting, the results of the conference committee will be known.

#### **E. Floodplain Inventory for Future Funding Opportunities: Emergency Watershed Protection – Floodplain Easement Program, Greg Westfall, NRCS**

In the spring of 2009, under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, NRCS received \$125M nationwide towards the Emergency Watershed Program Floodplain Easement Program. There was only a three week sign-up period for interested applicants. In NJ, there were no applicants in the DRBC. In NY, only 3 statewide and PA had 100 statewide. PA targeted dam removal which many states did not. One dam is in the basin.

Greg Westfall, NRCS, presented that there is a need to develop an interested parties database for this type of program or for other programs that affect land owners and land users in the floodplain. Development of a database would help outreach to interested individuals when funding opportunities are made available and sign-up periods are short. One suggestion made was to try and coordinate with Farmland Preservation on the county level.

#### **F. Floodplain Regulations Report – Report from Commission Meeting and Discussion of Implementation**

The Flood Advisory Committee presented its findings and recommendations for more effective floodplain regulations to the DRBC Commissioners and public on October 22, 2009. In advance of the FAC meeting, co-chairs of the Floodplain Regulations Evaluation Subcommittee (FRES) suggested that we follow-up with the Commissioners and provide them with some options for implementation. In response, DRBC staff developed a document handed out at the FAC meeting. The document listed options that included implementing all recommendations, implementing some, to status quo-implement none. A suggestion was made to present information in an outline format. The public cautioned the need for an evaluation of socio-economic impacts.

Action Item: FAC members to comment on implementation guidance for Commissioners over a 30-day period.

#### **G. Discussion on Status of FEMA Funded Mitigation in the Basin**

Laura Tessieri, DRBC, requested that parties inform DRBC of flood mitigation projects on an ongoing basis. DRBC maintains a spreadsheet that tracks mitigation in the Basin and is posted on its website. Mitigation actions include new floodplain studies and maps, mitigation plans, and structural and non-structural mitigation projects.

Action Item: FAC members to send updates on mitigation projects and actions in the Basin to Laura Tessieri, DRBC.

#### **H. Opportunity for Public and Interested Party Comments**

Jeff Mahood, NRCS, mentioned that approximately \$12M in stimulus funds have been directed to the Delaware River Basin. These funds are going to the Neshaminy project to continue acquisitions and elevations; the Emergency Watershed Protection floodplain easement program to remove a dam on the West Branch of the Chester Creek in Delaware County, PA; a wetland mitigation project in the Brandywine watershed; implementation of agricultural runoff controls in the Red/White Clay Creek watershed and Tulpehocken Creek watershed; 14 dam rehabilitation assessments in the Basin; and rehabilitation of two dams, in the Brandywine watershed.

Dean Frazier, Delaware County, made mention of the preliminary DFIRMs available for Delaware County, NY and pointed out that the new studies show communities being added to the floodplain and floodway. He cautioned the socio-economic impact that any new floodplain regulations might have to those at risk communities.

Kendra Jo Gardner, PennDOT, would like to remain an interested party in regards to the implementation of any of the recommendations contained in the floodplain regulations report. Particular interest was mentioned regarding the definition of the floodway, prohibition of linear projects, definition of new transportation facilities, application of buffers and infiltration requirements. PennDOT kindly requested the opportunity to comment during any development of new regulations.

#### **I. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Flood Advisory Committee (FAC) is scheduled for February 17, 2010 at 10:00am in the DRBC Goddard Conference Room.

**FLOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ATTENDANCE  
November 18, 2009**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGENCY</b>
AHNERT, Peter	National Weather Service (NWS)
BANASIAK, Marie	NJ Farm Bureau
BRANDES, Kate	Nurture Nature Foundation
DUNN, Kim	Dewberry
GARDNER, Kendra	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
GARLITS, Skip	Stakeholder
GRUBER, Hank	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Philadelphia District
HAINLY, Bob	US Geological Survey (USGS) – PA
HOGAN, Rachel	Nurture Nature Foundation
JESPERSEN, Eric	Retew Associates
LANIGAN, Senobar	New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP)
MAHOOD, Jeff	Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
MCKILLOP, George	National Weather Service (NWS)
MILLER, Jason	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Philadelphia District
MOLZAHN, Bob	Water Resources Association of the Delaware River Basin
MOYLE, John	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)
RIMAWI, Hani	Medina Consultants
RUPERT, Clarke	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
SCORDATO, John	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)
SHALLCROSS, Amy	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
SURO, Thomas	United States Geological Service (USGS) - NY
TESSIERI, Laura	Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC)
WESTFALL, Greg	Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
WILLIAMS, David	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) Eastern Area
WILSON, Kerry	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP)
WINSLADE, Bill	Yardley Borough Manager & Emergency Management Coordinator