

**DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION  
REGULATED FLOW ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY  
March 18, 2013**



The March 18, 2013 Regulated Flow Advisory Committee (RFAC) meeting was held at the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) offices in West Trenton, New Jersey. Mr. Thomas Murphy of NYCDEP chaired the meeting.

**Approval of Meeting Summaries**

Summaries of the last two RFAC meetings were reviewed. The September 20, 2012 meeting summary was approved with minor corrections. The December 6, 2012 meeting summary was approved as drafted.

**Update on OASIS PST technical review project**

Hernán Quinodoz of DRBC gave an update on the OASIS PST technical review project. DRBC staff had completed the review of the PST model provided by NYC. PST stands for Planning Support Tool and is a subset of NYC's Operational Support Tool (OST). OST is used with real time data to assist with day-to-day operations; PST will be used for planning and evaluation of alternative flow management programs (same as the existing DRB OASIS model). The next step is a presentation to the Decree Party Work Group. The Decree Party Principals will decide when DRBC can release the PST model to the public.

**Update on Decree Party work towards next FFMP Agreement**

Thom Murphy of NYCDEP gave a brief update on Decree Parties work towards the next FFMP agreement. The Principals have been meeting quarterly, with regular monthly conference calls to discuss critical issues, including the long-term sustainability of New Jersey's request for an increase in their drought diversion, alternative CSSO spill mitigation, and thermal mitigation on the mainstem Delaware. Thom stated that the Principals have not made any decisions yet. Comments were made that the fisheries would benefit from moderating the rate of change in river flows caused by directed releases from NYC reservoirs, which could be achieved by averaging the flows at Montague. Thom replied that this issue had been discussed but no suitable alternative has been identified. The typical hydropower generating schedule at Lake Wallenpaupack makes it difficult to adopt and manage a weekly average, because the variability of the generating schedule results in flows occasionally below the target.

**USGS Upper-Delaware decision-support system (DSS)**

Kelly Maloney of USGS gave a presentation on the improvements to the DSS model for ecological flows, funded by the USGS WaterSMART program. The presentation is posted online on the RFAC webpage on the DRBC website. The goal was to design a tool to evaluate how different flow scenarios affect in-stream habitat. DSS is a synthesis tool that relates reservoir releases to river flows, habitat suitability criteria (HSC), water temperature, as well as other relevant information. Detailed evaluations are performed in 11 river reaches in the Upper

Delaware: two in the West Branch; three in the East Branch, three in the main-stem, and three in the Neversink. The project has five objectives: (1) add 2010 hydrodynamic modeling data for three main stem reaches and extend time coverage; (2) update habitat suitability criteria for biota and include additional species (including dwarf wedge mussels); (3) extend meteorological data and test temperature model; (4) develop an improved DSS platform; and (5) extend geographical coverage from the Upper Delaware down to Trenton. A DSS workshop is scheduled for April 2013 in conjunction with a SEF meeting. Colin Talbert of USGS gave a live demonstration of the DSS features, including GUI functions and typical outputs.

### **Guest Presentations**

Garth Pettinger of Trout Unlimited gave a presentation entitled Beyond 2013, which is posted online on the RFAC webpage on the DRBC website. He advocated for a one-year extension of the FFMP program past June 1, 2013 because the Croton Water Treatment plant will come on line during that period. This means a restoration of up to 290 mgd of high quality water to the NYC water supply system.

Peter Kolesar gave a presentation on mitigating thermal stress to trout in the Upper Delaware main-stem, which is posted online on the RFAC webpage on the DRBC website. The presentation covered: (1) water availability for a stress relief program; (2) forecasting of stress events; and (3) the Lake Wallenpaupack stress relief program on the Lackawaxen as a model for what is possible on the Delaware. Peter recommended implementing an experimental thermal relief program for Lordville in the upcoming FFMP revision, based on results obtained so far and on the ability of the PAFBC and NYSDEC to forecast thermal stress events.

Dan Plummer of FUDR gave a presentation representing the Delaware Watershed Conservation Coalition. The presentation is posted online on the RFAC webpage on the DRBC website. He listed four requests related to the next FFMP: (1) have a public comment period on the proposed plan; (2) limit the duration of the new program to one year; (3) include a protocol to ramp directed release changes over a few days; and (4) include a thermal relief program for the mainstem Delaware River up to Lordville, NY.

### **Next meeting date**

The next RFAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 2, 2013 at 10:00 am at DRBC offices in West Trenton, NJ. [*Note – this meeting was later canceled*] In addition, a meeting of the Subcommittee for Ecological Flows (SEF) will take place on Wednesday, April 24 at 10:00 am at DRBC offices. Information on the SEF meeting will be circulated by Mark Hartle (SEF Chair).

### **Opportunity for public comments**

Comments included

- Advocacy for the next FFMP to include year-round reservoir storage voids for flood protection. Protecting people from flooding should receive the same consideration as protecting fish and ecosystems.
- Support for the flood mitigation component of the current FFMP, which the commenter stated was already commendable, with 10% storage voids over 8 months of the year and advocated more for the fishery.
- A committee member stated that there should not be a dichotomy between the flood constituency and the fisheries, noting that there are ways to deal with both issues and achieve multiple objectives.

- Request for the Decree Party plans to memorialize long-term initiatives. A committee member replied that a separate strategic plan, not part of the FFMP agreement, is being considered.
- Request for DRBC to update the Water Code with the new FFMP program. DRBC staff noted that it would depend on the duration of the agreement: only a longer term agreement would be incorporated due to the length of the rule-making process.

**REGULATED FLOW ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RFAC)**

**March 18, 2013**

**ATTENDANCE LIST**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
ANDERSON, Kelly	Philadelphia Water Dept.
BAXTER, Stefanie	DE Geological Survey
BITTNER, Laura	USACE
BOUSUM, Peter	FUDR
CARLUCCIO, Tracy	Delaware Riverkeeper
DOMBER, Steven	NJ DEP, NJ Geological Survey
ERIKSON, Glenn	WTF
EVANS, Richard (via phone)	NPS
HAMILTON, Don (via phone)	NPS
HARTLE, Mark	PA FBC
HARTMAN, Lee	Trout Unlimited
HENSON, Fred (via phone)	NYS DEC
HESSON, Molly	Philadelphia Water Dept.
HOLMQUIST-JOHNSON, Chris (via phone)	USGS
KELLY, Kathleen	NYC DEP
KOLESAR, Peter	Columbia University
LIAGHAT, Hoss	PA DEP
LOVELL, Stewart	DE DNREC
MALONEY, Kelly (via phone)	USGS
MIRI, Joe	NJ DEP
MURALIDHAR, D.	NYC DEP
MURPHY, Thomas	NYC DEP
NOBLE, Mary Ellen	Delaware Riverkeeper
OLIVIO, Dana	NYC DEP
OLSON, Roger	Trout Unlimited
PADELETTI, Angela	PDE
PAULACHOK, Gary (via phone)	USGS
PEDRICK, Gail	ACU

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
PETTINGER, Garth	NYS Trout Unlimited, Delaware Committee
PHILLIPS, Jan	Consultant
PLUMMER, Dan	Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR)
QUINODOZ, Hernán	DRBC
RESTI, Sherri	FUDR
SANCHEZ, Jessica	DRBC
SCANNAPIECO, Alycia	Resident – flood concerns
SERIO, Jim	Delaware River Foundation
SHALLCROSS, Amy	DRBC
SILLDORFF, Erik	DRBC
STEWART, Marie	USGS
TALBERT, Colin (via phone)	USGS
TARRIER, Brenan (via phone)	NYS DEC
VAN ROSSUM, Maya (via phone)	Delaware Riverkeeper
ZIGON-RICHARDSON, Valerie	DRBC