



Delaware River Basin Commission

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Steven J. Tambini, P.E.
Executive Director

Water Management Advisory Committee

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday, February 23, 2017

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The DRBC Water Management Advisory Committee (WMAC) was called to order by Chair Jim Mershon. Materials and presentations from the meeting are available online at http://www.nj.gov/drbc/about/advisory/WMAC_feb232017.html

ADMINISTRATION

- Membership: One application has been received for the Fisheries representative and is under review. Mary Ellen Noble was re-appointed to represent Environmental Organizations. Applications are now being accepted through April 1, 2017 for the Civic and the Agricultural representation. Current members are invited to re-apply.
- The highlights of the October 27, 2016 meeting were approved and will be posted on the WMAC webpage.
- Upcoming WMAC meetings for 2017: Thursday June 22 and Tuesday Oct. 24.

UPDATES

Ken Najjar, DRBC Director of Water Resource Management, provided an update on DRBC activities, upcoming advisory committee meetings and Commission actions.

- Water Resource Planner Doug Rowland was introduced as the most recent addition to the DRBC planning staff
- February 15th was the Commission's public hearing
- March 15th is the Commission business meeting – among items to be considered are a) adoption of the 2017-2019 Water Resources Program and b) approval of 17 dockets.
- Changes to Fees – Changes to the project review fee structure approved in December 2016 will become effective this year. More information is available at: http://www.nj.gov/drbc/home/newsroom/news/approved/20161214_newsrel_fees.html

HYDROLOGIC CONDITIONS REPORT

Amy Shallcross, DRBC Water Resource Operations Manager, presented an overview of hydrologic conditions in the basin. Dry conditions in the fall resulted in low storage in the reservoirs. DRBC held a special hearing on November 9 to hear public comment about the dry conditions as well as provide notification about the potential use of drought operations. The criteria were met for drought operations to begin on November 23, at which time the Commission held a special meeting to initiate drought operations. DRBC terminated drought operations on January 18, but many of the basin counties remain in either a drought watch or warning as declared by their respective states. The presentation also included historic context and information about the salt front. Committee discussion included the current condition of groundwater resulting from dry conditions in the basin and the potential effects of low precipitation and warmer-than-normal temperatures on seasonal hydrology. The presentation is available online.

WATER CONSERVATION

- **Water Utility Auditing in the DRB.** Ken Najjar presented background and an update on the results of DRBC’s water audit program. Public water supply systems are required to evaluate and report annually on several metrics, including *Non-Revenue Water* (NRW), both Real and Apparent, which are new efficiency metrics replacing the antiquated “unaccounted-for water” metric. AWWA pioneered the standardization of a method for assessing NRW, where DRBC and a few states nation-wide were early adopters. In 2014, the third reporting year, DRBC received responses from 276 (90%) of the 306 public water supply systems subject to the reporting requirement. One hundred ten systems (110) account for 95% of the total volume of public water supply used. While the water audit process provides better indicators for better management and suggestions for system improvements, additional validation will be needed before new standards are set. Discussion items included the degree to which system age correlates with high percentage of NRW (high NRW amounts correlate with system size) and whether NRW should be valued at the (retail) price of public water. New Jersey reported on pending legislation and efforts to improve electronic reporting of water use and system loss. The presentation is available online at http://www.nj.gov/drbc/library/documents/WMAC/02232017/DRBCwater-audit_barr.pdf
- **EPA WaterSense Program.** Janice Whitney, WaterSense Liaison for EPA Region 2, explained the purpose and successes of EPA’s Water Sense program, a partnership program that seeks to protect the future of our nation’s water supply and change behavior by a) offering people a simple way to use less water with water-efficient products and services, b) promoting water efficiency labeling and consumer information, c) encouraging innovation in manufacturing, and d) reducing strain on water resources and infrastructure while providing energy savings. Energy Star labeled products use at least 20% less water. Ms. Whitney provided examples of successful partnerships including those with the City of Camden and Camden County NJ and with New York State’s *Climate Smart Communities* program. EPA has a menu of monthly campaigns and marketing plans—some bi-lingual—that partners can tailor to their needs. Committee discussion included the salience of providing additional intrabasin comparisons, tracking improvements by state and the importance of focusing educational messages for teachers and children. The presentation is available online at http://www.nj.gov/drbc/library/documents/WMAC/02232017/EPAr2_water-sense_whitney.pdf. For more information, visit: <https://www3.epa.gov/watersense/>
 - Ms. Whitney is the WaterSense liaison for EPA Region 2: Whitney.Janice@epa.gov
 - Ms. Kimberly Scharl is the liaison for EPA Region 3: Scharl.kimberly@epa.gov

DRBC LONG-RANGE PLANNING

- **Long Term Planning and Climate Considerations.** DRBC Executive Director Steve Tambini reviewed the issues of concern that form the foundation of DRBC’s planning for 2030 and 2060. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emission scenarios are providing inputs to USGS’ hydrologic modeling of precipitation, temperature, land use and runoff that will provide a foundation for DRBC evaluations of future demand, water availability and drought resiliency. The presentation is available online at http://www.nj.gov/drbc/library/documents/WMAC/02232017/DRBCplanning-climate_tambini.pdf

- **Modeling Hydrology for Water Supply Planning.** Building on Mr. Tambini’s presentation, Amy Shallcross provided a more detailed explanation of the IPCC scenarios and the USGS’s *Water Availability Tool for Environmental Resources* (WATER). Ms. Shallcross also provided a preliminary look at how temperature, precipitation and evapotranspiration may change water availability, including snowpack and streamflow, using the watershed above Pepacton Reservoir as an example. The presentation is available online at http://www.nj.gov/drbc/library/documents/WMAC/02232017/DRBCplanning-modeling_shallcross.pdf

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Jim Mershon.

WMAC Meeting Attendance – February 23, 2017

WMAC MEMBER/ ALTERNATE	REPRESENTING
Bowers, Jan*	County Water Agency - Chester Co. (PA) Water Resources Authority
Eisenbrey, Virginia*	Water Utility – Artesian Water - Alt
Golod, Pete*	Watershed -Upper Delaware Council
Hesson, Molly*	City of Philadelphia (PWD) - Alt
Holt, Mike*	New York
Klein, Kathy	WRA of DRB
Liaghat, A. (Hoss)*	Pennsylvania
Mershon, Jim	Industry - Merrill Creek Owners Group
Noble, Mary Ellen	Environ. - Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Olivio, Dana	New York City
Olynyk, Carolyn	New Jersey
Oram, Brian	Agriculture - BF Environmental Consultants
Schmitt, Erik*	New York - Alt
Tatham, Betty	Civic - League of Women Voters
DRBC STAFF	
Najjar, Ken	Water Resource Management
Pindar, Chad	Water Resource Planning
Rowland, Doug	Water Resource Planning
Sanchez, Jessica	Water Resource Planning, WMAC Liaison
Shallcross, Amy	Water Resource Operations
Tambini, Steve	Executive Director
GUESTS	
Fischer, Jeff	USGS – NJ Water Science Center
Luitweiler, Preston	Water Resource Assoc. of the DRB
Whitney, Janice*	USEPA Region 2 – WaterSense Partnership Program
* Attended via webinar/phone	

Approved: June 22, 2017