



Delaware River Basin Commission

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Carol R. Collier
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 Deputy Executive Director

**MINUTES
 WATER QUALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 MARCH 21, 2012**

ATTENDEES:

Members: NYS DEC (via telephone) Scott Stoner	DE DNREC Not represented
NJ DEP Debra Hammond	PA DEP Thomas Barron
EPA Denise Hakowski, EPA, Region III Wayne Jackson, EPA, Region II (via telephone)	Academia Representative Not represented
Environmental Organization Representatives Maya van Rossum, Delaware Riverkeeper	Regulated Community Representatives Colleen Arnold, City of Wilmington, DE Alfred Pagano, E.I. DuPont
National Park Service Not represented	Local Watershed Organization Abigail Pattishall, Wildlands Conservancy (Alternate for Chris Kocher)
DRBC: Gregory Cavallo, Geologist Thomas Fikslin, Manager, Modeling, Monitoring, & Assessment Bob Limbeck, Watershed Scientist Kenneth Najjar, Manager, Plan. & Info. Tech. Erik Silldorff, Aquatic Biologist Robert Tudor, Deputy Executive Director Hernan Quinodoz, Hydrologist Namsoo Suk, Supervisor, Modeling John Yagecic, Supervisor, Stds. & Assmt.	Other Attendees: Jeff Fischer, USGS-NJ Jacob Gibs, USGS-NJ Leonard Gipson, PWD Robert Hindt, DELCORA Josef Kardos, PWD Angela Padeletti, PDE Kirk White, USGS-PA

Announcements

Erik Silldorff (DRBC) stated that the meeting was originally scheduled to conclude at 2:00 pm and requested that be extended until 3:00 pm to cover all items.

Bob Tudor (DRBC) gave a brief update on activity of short nosed sturgeon which were spawning near the Calhoun Street Bridge in fairly large numbers and encouraged everyone to witness the spectacle. Erik Silldorff added that it was pretty exciting since they are an endangered species, one of the two Endangered Sturgeons in the Estuary. It is encouraging.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the February 8, 2011 were approved without changes.

Organization

Although the Chair typically serves for a one-year term, DRBC asked whether it would be appropriate to have Colleen Arnold serve for the 2012-2013 year since only a single meeting was held during the 2011-2012 year. In addition, we need to select a Vice-Chair.

1. Colleen Arnold was confirmed as Chair of the WQAC through June 2013
2. Denise Hakowski (USEPA-R3) was confirmed as Vice-Chair of the WQAC

Water Quality Assessment Report & TREB

John Yagecic (DRBC) gave a PowerPoint presentation that summarized DRBC's Water Quality Assessment Report for 2012, highlighting both areas where criteria are being met, areas where violations of criteria persist, and the need for revisions to standards and the assessment methodology. This 2012 evaluation against water quality standards was complemented by select longer-term analyses conducted as part of the Technical Report for the Delaware Estuary and Basin (TREB report).

Natural Gas Regulations Update

Tom Fikslin (DRBC) gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled DRBC Monitoring for Natural Gas Development and provided a brief update on DRBC's draft natural gas regulations, highlighting the pre-development monitoring program and the proposed requirements for monitoring contained within the draft regulations.

Nutrient Criteria

Erik Silldorff (DRBC) gave updates on multiple components on the nutrient criteria path. These included the point-source nutrient monitoring in the estuary, the BOD-ultimate testing for this point-source effort, and the initial efforts to quantify the non-point source and tributary loadings to the estuary. For the non-point source loads, there was substantial discussion of the USGS-

SPARROW models, and members recognized the need to ground-truth the model predictions with some independent data.

Task: DRBC and WQAC members to identify and verify candidates for BOD-ultimate workgroup

A broader discussion was then initiated on the use of expert panels to assist in multiple aspects of the nutrient criteria process, a concept first raised by the City of Philadelphia during the work with the Nutrient Subcommittee. DRBC emphasized the need for multiple technical questions to be addressed during the process, and that different sets of expertise would be needed to address the different technical questions. As a result, DRBC staff are recommending separate expert panels be formed to address different technical questions. In particular, D.O. (dissolved oxygen) requirements of different estuarine organisms need to be evaluated and summarized, with the possible benefits to multiple elevated D.O. criteria considered relative to these D.O. needs. Second, development of a eutrophication model for the estuary is beginning and technical expertise is needed on evaluating the range of candidate hydrodynamic and eutrophication models, the parameters to model, and the trade-offs associated with different choices.

Tom Fikslin described how joint meetings between the expert panel and the advisory committee was an important part of earlier work with the expert panel involved in the PCB TMDL and model development, and it is anticipated that such overlap would be planned between the WQAC and the model expert panel (and subsequent expert panels). Multiple members of the WQAC agreed with the value in having this overlap, but also indicated that joint meetings between the expert panel and the WQAC could be limited to an as-needed basis. Finally, although multiple candidates have already been recommended and identified via WQAC recommendations, additional candidates for the model expert panel and the additional expert panels are being solicited.

Task: DRBC to continue soliciting and receiving names of candidates for inclusion on the expert panels

Meeting Dates for 2012

An online poll will be used to select a date in Fall 2012 for the next WQAC meeting.

Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm. The next WQAC meeting to be determined.