

Shared Waterways Monitoring Workgroup Conference Call

Meeting Notes

Date: April 14, 2015

Time: 10:00am-11:00am

Attendees: Evelyn Powers (IEC), Robert Schuster (NJDEP), Robin Jazxhi (IEC), Ashley Slagle (NJHDG), Brent Gaylord (EPA), Darvene Adams (EPA), Jeff Myers (NYSDEC), Jason Fagel (NYSDEC), Mark Ringenary (NPS), Jason Krumholz (LIS), Bill Shadel (IEC), Rob Pirani (NY NJ HEP)

1. Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Overview

- Robin Jazxhi joined IEC full time May 4th as an Environmental Analyst.
- Robin and Evelyn will continue to coordinate the SWMWG.

2. Updates from Monitoring Programs or Projects in Shared Waterways

- NYSDEC – Jeff Myers and Jason Fagel
 - NYSDEC relies a lot on, and coordinates with, NYCDEP for Harbor monitoring and the wide range of modeling NYC is doing as part of LCTP and consent order) in the Harbor.
 - NYSDEC's focus for past and next 6 months has been and will be trying to align water quality assessment (303d and 305b listings) with the NYCDEP group that oversees NYC WQ compliance and modeling. Specifically those areas in the harbor that NYSDEC has assessed as impaired waters or waters that will have difficulty meeting water quality standards. Efforts are focused on modeling, hoping to produce a matrix or spreadsheet of all harbor waters lined up according to where they fall on 303b and 305b assessments. Will be a robust set of good water quality information and should benefit assessments to link these efforts together.
 - Interesting in continuing conversation with IEC regarding joint monitoring, piggy-backing monitoring to produce joint efforts that can be built upon as we go forward.
- NJDEP – Bob Schuster
 - Continuing monitoring shellfish harvesting waters 10x/yr for pathogens (fecal coliform) for shellfish assessments. Defers to NJHDG on monitoring of Upper Harbor.
 - Will also be conducting sampling for National Coastal Assessment in NJ portion of Harbor this summer (and elsewhere in the State). Full suite of monitoring in conjunction with EPA.
 - Upcoming – Focused sampling in Raritan (“RIBS” or intensive- type of monitoring). Goal is to pull data from multiple source throughout the watershed and look at it on the whole to design a sampling plan.

- NJHDG – Ashley Slagle
 - Routine monitoring on NJ side of Harbor. Weekly during summer, monthly during winter. Minor changes to QAPP, but basically same as past 10 years.
 - 3 sites in Raritan Bay that they monitor routinely
 - Continuous monitoring in targeted locations in Hudson River and Upper Bay
 - Continuous station on Passaic River at PVSC w/HRECOS has been up and running for a year
 - HRECOS has a relatively new station in Yonkers at Sarah Lawrence College's Center for the Urban River at Beczak. Current data available on HRECOS. Station has been up and running for a few months now.
- NYCDOH
 - Beach monitoring started on 4/20 to get the 30 day mean computed by the opening of beaches end of May
- EPA Updates-Brent Gaylord
 - Has been working with NJDEP on designing assessment focus on Raritan Bay.
- NPS – Mark Ringenary
 - Summer weekly monitoring: Monitoring occurs in Staten Island (Great Kills), Jamaica Bay, and Sandy Hook. NPS has expanded the Jamaica Bay monitoring to include a lot of tributaries around the bay (every other week)
 - Monitoring for total, fecal and entero
 - Reports are posted on website when completed and distributed via email.
- LIS – Jason Krumholz
 - Pretty much status quo for this year, will be doing more nutrient sampling this year
 - Working on ramping up embayments- not this year but over the next couple of years, looking to get agency to supervise that embayment monitoring protocol and bring in embayment citizen science groups, get them up and running with QAPPs.
 - NERACOOS proposal -will get real time instrument data real time nutrient sensor on LIS (1 in LIS, 1 in Narragansett Bay, 1 in Massachusetts Bay 1 in Gulf of Maine)
 - Continuing Primary Productivity work with NOAA
- HEP – Rob Pirani
 - No update other than see Raritan Bay conference information below.
- NEIWPC-IEC District updates – Evelyn Powers
 - Most work with monitoring has been QAPP development and updates over winter.

- WLIS QAPP updated and approved by EPA at end of March
 - o Changed to 12 weekly surveys at 22 stations for this season with nutrient sampling during 6 survey at half (11) of the stations
 - o Also adding BOD analyses (in addition to the nutrients, TSS added last year)
- RIBS QAPP in development-Project will add a station to NYSDEC's RIBS network of 19 routine monitoring sites by adding one station in western Long Island Sound (currently no station south of Poughkeepsie).

3. Raritan Bay Discussion

- HEP (Rob Pirani) -Raritan Bay Conference to be held in conjunction with Sustainable Raritan River Initiative June 12th
 - 6/12 on Rutgers Douglass Campus Center in New Brunswick, NJ
 - Bring together stakeholders in 5 areas:
 - o Water quality
 - o Restoration
 - o Fisheries management
 - o Public access
 - o Resiliency
 - Format: Brief plenary panel on each topic followed by roundtable discussions (~10 ppl per table) focused on where Raritan Bay is with the each of five issues.
 - Desired outcome: path forward for Raritan Bay
 - Expecting around 200 people
 - Cooperators include many agencies and organizations including EPA, and NJDEP, academics and stakeholders.
- Raritan Bay-specific monitoring program updates, project design, water quality issues, challenges
 - NJDEP RIBS-Raritan Bay 2016 schedule. Multiple projects looking to be done in that focused area. Freshwater section is looking to do monitoring at ten sites as related to watershed.
 - NJDEP Shellfish monitoring in Raritan Bay – Bob Schuster
 - o Working with IEC to get IEC involved in Raritan and Sandy Hook Bay
 - o Winter delay due to icing (last time out was December 2014)
 - o IEC hopes to be able to take over some runs, and perform analysis of samples from shellfish harvesting waters in Raritan Bay and

Sandy Hook Bay (Since call IEC has joined NJDEP on two monitoring runs in early May)

- NYSDEC monitoring in Raritan Bay – Jason Fagel
 - o Not doing much in Raritan Bay; piggybacking on NJDEP work.
- Other Raritan Bay monitoring programs updates, gaps or needs:
 - o NJHDG (Ashley S) – 3 sites on Raritan-1 actually in NY waters, closer to Staten Island, not duplicative of NYCDEP sites. Sample for pathogens, nutrients and a suite of water quality parameters.
 - o NJDEP (Bob S) – Need for continuous monitoring from buoys in future years. Typically they do see algal blooms in both NJ and NY side during remote sensing overflights in summer. Continuous data would be better at getting a handle on how long the duration is and how low the DO numbers go in response to blooms.

4. Follow-up, next steps, other items to think about: *Please forward Evelyn or Robin any further input or thoughts on these topics:*

- How do we define “shared waterways” for the purposes of this workgroup? Other groups to invite?
 - Hudson River Estuary Program
- Usefulness of Huddle platform vs. distribution list. Resources to add to Huddle workspace.
- Suggestions for next waterbody discussion are welcome-may re-assess after Raritan Bay Conference?
- Tentative schedule for next workgroup meeting: October 2015
- Emergency (short-notice) sampling at the request of state or local partners in response to various events
- IEC discussing with USGS to develop an emergency response monitoring network. Goal is to pull together in region the entities that could play a role in responding to an emergency. Anyone interested in partnering in the response plan to know where the resources are and who the contacts are.
 - HEP: NYC looking at emergency water issues (contact OEM).
 - NJDEP: Different emergencies get handled differently depending on scale and nature of spill.
- Regional Bypass Work Group
 - Any interest in a joint call or meeting of the Shared Waterways Workgroup and Regional Bypass Workgroup?
 - RBWG definitely has more of a regulatory role.
 - If anyone would like to be included in that call or has a contact that should be included in the RBWG please let Evelyn know.

