



National Water Quality Monitoring Council

Working together for clean water



Meeting Notes – National Water Quality Monitoring Council (Council) July 25, 2016

(Agenda and list of participants on pages 3 and 4, presentations posted on Council website at: acwi.gov/monitoring/)

Actions, Decisions and other Information

- Council Membership Updates:** Gary Rowe gave an update on the current Council membership and welcomed new members Chandra Pathak, Nichole Halsey, John Metesh, Amy Kathman, and Erich Emery.
- Future Council meeting dates:**
 - Face-to-face meeting will take place the week of November 28, 2016. Potential locations are Tucson, Arizona, Columbia, South Carolina, and Indianapolis, Indiana. Council members will be informed of the location by August 15, 2016.
- Volunteer Monitoring Work Group Report Out** – Danielle Donkersloot reported on the activities of the Volunteer Monitoring (VM) Work Group since the establishment of its charter. Danielle covered the structure of the Work Group and how they expect to work with the VM community at large (see presentation "[VolMon Work Group 7.16](#)"). The VM Work Group offers various degrees of participation for Council members and currently has needs for various forms of support.
 - Action: Council members are encouraged to contact Danielle Donkersloot (ddonkersloot@gmail.com) if they or anyone on their staff are interested in participating with this Work Group.
- Report on 2014 National Monitoring Conference-** Jeff Schloss, presented the results of the electronic survey sent to conference participants. 240 surveys were completed, with "good" to "excellent" reviews for many parts of the conference, including the oral presentations, venue, and speakers. Suggestions from the surveys included improving moderator guidelines, and improving announcements on the website (see presentation "[NWQMC16 Conf Eval](#)"). Alice Mayo gave an overall review of the 2016 National Monitoring Conference and thanked the seven committees and volunteers for the hard work and effort that it took to host the Conference.
- 2018 Conference Planning Committee-** Alice Mayo covered the 2016 Conference Debriefing Call, and discussed areas for improvement at the next Conference (see presentation "[Report on 2016 National Monitoring Conference July 2016](#)"). Suggested improvements include formalizing the agenda, hiring a contractor sooner, using chalkboards to communicate about locations during the networking session, and finding ways to organize the Conference more efficiently. In future conferences, Committee Chairs need to have more clear directions to streamline planning while maintaining a quality Conference.

In addition, locations for the 2018 Conference were discussed by the entire Council. Suggested locations for the 2018 Conference include New England (Providence, RI and Portland, ME), the Southwest (San Antonio, TX or Santa Fe/Albuquerque, NM), Philadelphia (PA), and "the heartland" (such as KS, MO, NE, or IA).

 - Action: Jeff Schloss will look into potential Conference venues for 2018
 - Action: Council members are encouraged to send Jeff Schloss suggestions for potential Conference venues
 - Action: The Steering Committee will help to guide the formation and organization of the next Conference Planning Committee
- National Network of Reference Watersheds** – Mike McHale updated the Council on the progress of the National Network of Reference Watersheds (NNRW). Currently, the group is working on compiling and refining the data that is served through its website and is working on providing a core watershed list. The website is up and running and Mike is looking for a few individuals to follow up with potential data contributors and help to develop criteria for additional data. The next Work Group meeting will happen in September (see presentation "[NNRW Update 07252016](#)").
 - Action: Council members are encouraged to contact Mike McHale (mmchale@usgs.gov) if they or anyone on their staff are interested in participating with this Work Group.
- Sensors Work Group**— Candice Hopkins presented in place of Dan Sullivan on the activities and future of the Sensors Work Group. The Work Group published a deployment guide and contributed to a number of EPA-led initiatives. Over the next two years, the Sensors Work Group plans to continue activities and produce publications, trainings, and perhaps offer a technical forum or conference focused on sensors (see presentation "[Sensor workgroup July 2016 update](#)").
 - Action: Council members are encouraged to contact Dan Sullivan (djsulliv@usgs.gov) if they or anyone on their staff are interested in participating with this Work Group.
- Water Information Strategies Work Group:** Mary Skopec reviewed recent activities of the WIS group. Recently produced products include a series of fact sheets on "What My Manager Needs to Know." The Decision Illustrator tool needs to be reviewed by a statistician

and will be a focus of the Work Group over the next year. The September WIS meeting will include the formation of a 2-year work plan for the WIS group.

- **Action:** WIS will continue working to produce and release fact sheets
- **Action:** Produce a webinar on Dwane Young's Water Quality Portal tools
- **Action:** Council members are encouraged to contact Mary Skopec (mary.skopec@dnr.iowa.gov) if they or anyone on their staff are interested in participating with this Work Group.

9. **Collaboration and Outreach Work Group** – Candice Hopkins and Danielle Donkersloot discussed current projects of the Collaboration and Outreach (C&O) Work Group. The group is currently working on designing a poster and powerpoint presentation for Council members to use at external meetings and conferences to help promote the Council. Since our April 2016 meetings, three new webinars were hosted and recorded and are available on the website.

- **Action:** **Deadline** for Fall 2016 issue of "National Water Monitoring News" newsletter is **August 26, 2016**. Encourage colleagues to send articles to Candice Hopkins, chopkins@usgs.gov
- **Action:** Council members are encouraged to inform C&O of conferences meetings they will be attending. C&O will help provide powerpoints, hand-outs, and posters to promote the Council.

10. **Water Quality Portal (WQP) Demo**–Jim Kreft presented a new feature in the Water Quality Portal that allows users to see sites with data upstream or downstream of a selected site; this feature will be available to the public by the end of the summer. Jim added that the Water Quality Portal will be further refined throughout the next six months, and the Water Quality Portal Vision document will be finalized along with future plans for Portal activities.

11. Presentations

- Virginia Roberts and Jonana Yu (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) presented on the OHHABS (One Health Harmful Algal Bloom System). Their presentation addressed Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) as an Emerging Health issue and how the new reporting system will be used for Public Health Surveillance (see presentation "[CDC OHHABS demo_NWQMC_25Jul2016](#)"). This presentation also included a live demonstration of current capabilities of the OHHABS system.
- Shane Bradt (University of New Hampshire) presented on Bloom Watch and many of the EPA Region 1 HAB tracking efforts. BloomWatch currently tracks the spatial and temporal patterns of bloom occurrence in New England with the help of Citizen Science (see presentation "[Northeast_cyanos_july2016](#)"). Other methods that are being developed and that could be deployed in other regions include Cyanoscope (an app that helps identify bacteria under a microscope). Region 1 uses a number of exercises to ensure that techniques and methods across the region are consistent.

12. Council Participation and Membership Discussion

- **Member Expectations:** Susan Holdsworth reviewed membership expectations for Council members. Members are expected to spend about 10% of their time, or roughly 200 hours a year, on Council business. Members have had a difficult time connecting and engaging since the reduction of in-person meetings, and Susan encouraged Work Groups to find ways to engage Council members in both passive and active capacities.
- **New Member Engagement:** New members to the Council often have had a hard time finding a way to engage in Council activities. The group discussed ways to reach out to new members, including calls from Work Group chairs and a break-out session at the face-to-face meetings for new members.
- **Suggestions and New Ideas:** Larry Willis mentioned that there is not a structure in place to bring up new ideas or issues. The idea of a common suggestion box or a virtual suggestion box was suggested. Work Groups were also encouraged to distribute their two-year work plans to all Council members so that all members could comment on draft stages of work plans and add new ideas to these plans.

MEETING AGENDA

Monday, July 25th, 2016 – Eastern Daylight Time

- 11:00 am – Welcome and Roll Call (Gary Rowe, Susan Holdsworth)
11:05 am – Council Business -- Approval April, 2016 Council meeting minutes (Candice Hopkins)
11:10 am – Introduction of New Council Members (Chandra Pathak, Nicole Halsey, John Metesh, Amy Kathman, Erich Emery)
11:25 am – Highlight Volunteer Monitoring Work Group (Danielle Donkersloot)
12:00 pm – CDC Discussion on HABs (Virginia Roberts and Joana Yu, CDC)
12:45 pm – Bloom Watch – linking citizens, volunteer monitoring, and HABs (Shane Bradt, University of NH)
1:15 pm – BREAK
1:30 pm – Report out on 2016 Conference (Jeff Schloss and Alice Mayo)
2:15 pm – Council Participation Conversation (Susan Holdsworth, Gary Rowe)
2:30 pm – Collaboration and Outreach Work Group Update (Danielle Donkersloot, Candice Hopkins)
2:40 pm – WIS Work Group Update (Mary Skopec)
2:55 pm – Sensors Work Group and Methods Board Update (Candice Hopkins in place for Dan Sullivan)
3:10 pm – National Network of Reference Watersheds Update (Mike McHale)
3:30 pm – BREAK
3:40 pm – Water Quality Portal Demonstration (Jim Kreft)
4:05 pm – Future meeting discussion (Candice Hopkins)
1:00 pm – Adjourn

Participants:

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