



# National Water Quality Monitoring Council

Working together for clean water



## Meeting Minutes – National Water Quality Monitoring Council (NWQMC) Web Meeting August 29, 2018

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

### Actions, Decisions and other Information

1. **National Monitoring Conference (NMC):** Planning for the 2019 NMC is on track and the deadline for abstracts was pushed back to September 14 to encourage additional submissions. Jeff Schloss is working to finalize contracting with the Denver venue and hopes to have registration costs nailed down soon; he also mentioned he will should be able to share hotel block information soon. Gary Rowe said that USGS will be submitting their final conference approval package before the end of September with goal of getting it approved as soon as possible so approval/non-approval can be factored into the deliberations of the Conference Planning Committee when the Council meets in Boise week of November 4. Tim Petty, the Department of Interior Assistant Secretary for Water and Science has agreed to be a plenary speaker at the 2019 NMC. The Sponsorship and Exhibits Committee is moving right along and will contact potential vendors when the exhibitor package is finalized. The Local Planning Committee had a kickoff call on August 27<sup>th</sup> and hopes to organize an in-person meeting in September or October.

Monty Porter gave a presentation on the Program Committee for the 2019 NMC and how the group plans to review abstracts (see presentation "[NWQMC Program Comm 8\\_29\\_18](#)"). The group is looking forward to reviewing abstracts for the conference during the NWQMC in-person meeting in Bois, and will need as much help as possible sorting and organizing abstracts. Monty encouraged people to sign up to review abstracts for at least one theme. Gary noted that USGS was submitting ideas for about 20 championed sessions and he's heard there are a number of proposals for non-USGS championed sessions being submitted as well as a large number of extended session proposals the Program Committee will have to evaluate.

2. **12<sup>th</sup> National Monitoring Conference:** Candice Hopkins brought the topic of the next National Monitoring Conference; the group did not reach a decision about when to host the meeting (either Spring of 2021 or Spring of 2022). The Council decided they will discuss the timing of the 12<sup>th</sup> NMC during the in-person meeting in Boise and will coordinate with NALMS to start looking for a venue once they have an idea of a timeframe for the conference.
  - **ACTION ITEM:** Create a list of conferences, conflicts, and potential collaborations for the 12<sup>th</sup> NMC.
3. **Collaboration and Outreach (C&O) Work Group:** Candice Hopkins presented on outreach and collaboration activities. Speakers are needed for the webinar series in the fall months and C&O is seeking newsletter articles for the Fall 2018 Newsletter; the deadline for articles is August 31<sup>st</sup>. Danielle Donkersloot suggested that the Council evaluate topics and speakers included in the championed session proposal for the 11<sup>th</sup> NMC for possible ideas for future Council webinars, a good idea we'll pursue. In addition, Candice gave a charge to NWQMC members to represent the Council at meetings and conferences they attend. The Council has a canned Powerpoint presentation that covers and overview of the Council, as well as posters on the NWQMC and Water Quality Portal that can be easily taken to meetings and conferences.
4. **Volunteer Monitoring (VM) Work Group:** Julie Vastine discussed VM activities since the June 2018 NWQMC call (see presentation "[VolMon Work Group Update 8.29.18](#)"). VM will be hosting extended sessions at the 2019 NMC on bacteria, study design, and QAPP guidance; they will also be encouraging submissions of championed sessions and other abstracts. The VM plans to be active during the 2019 NMC, with a VM booth, VM meeting, dinner for networking, and assisting with the Fluid5K. The VM Work Group is hosting two webinars in the fall, one on NOAA Sea Grant, and one on lake monitoring (Susan Holdsworth suggested that Julie reach out to new Council member Kathleen Weathers to see about including GLEON in the webinar). The group has also been active developing fact sheets for the Water Information Strategies Work Group. As the group continues taking on work, they hope to grow their participant list; the Council discussed ways of recruiting people to the VM group, while recognizing the importance of maintaining a high-quality group of committed individuals to help with VM efforts.

5. **Methods and Data Comparability Board:** Dan Sullivan updated the Council on the Methods and Data Comparability Board (see presentation "[Methods Board Aug.2018 Update](#)"). The Biological Assessment and Comparability Workgroup has laid out plans for sponsoring a championed session and facilitated round table at the 2019 National Monitoring Conference. Meanwhile, the Sensors Workgroup has plans to host a 1.5 hour workshop during the 2019 NMC. Some updates are currently being made to the National Environmental Methods Index (NEMI). There were some questions about how to get new methods information to NEMI (people need to contact Dan or submit through [https://www.nemi.gov/submit\\_method/](https://www.nemi.gov/submit_method/)), and how we can help promote the use of NEMI. Danielle Donkersloot suggested that the Interagency Coordinated Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting Group that is headed by Lori Sprague help to encourage the use of NEMI.
6. **Water Information Strategies (WIS) Work Group:** Mary Skopec and Aaron Borisenko updated the group on recent WIS activities (see presentation "[Water Information Strategies to NWQMC 082918](#)"). The Work Group has made progress on many fact sheets, but none have been published since the last meeting. WIS is also working to collect contact information for various states to help NWQMC state representatives periodically check in with other states and have discussions about the Water Quality Portal. The group has been working to support the Interagency coordinated water-quality monitoring and reporting group that is headed by Lori Sprague (discussed in [April's meeting minutes](#)); there are now three individual sub-groups focusing on the three main goals identified by Lori's work group that have met at least twice each. The groups hope to be able to present progress and ways to move towards goals in the Spring of 2019. In addition, Chris Greene reported that the Water Quality Standards Subgroup met at the beginning of the summer and that the group is planning to work on fact sheets on types of guidance (quantitative versus qualitative) with a focus on the human health perspective.
7. **National Network of Reference Watersheds:** Mike McHale gave a quick overview of the National Network of Reference Watersheds (NNRW), what he worked on during the past year, and future directions for next years (see presentation "[McHale\\_NNRWUpdate\\_08292018](#)"). The NNRW is a web resource where people can access watersheds that are mostly natural and is linked to several databases. During the 2018 fiscal year, Mike expanded users and data, developed a revised hydrologic disturbance metric, developed analytical tools in R, and revised the Core Watersheds webpage. In 2019, Mike hopes to maintain the NNRW website, add long-term network late data to NNRW, create an updated fact sheet on the NNRW, and redesign the Core Watersheds aspect of the network. Susan Holdsworth complimented Mike on his work and said she is excited that he is adding lakes watersheds; she suggested Mike reach out to Kathleen Weathers to incorporate GLEON data.
8. **Turning Data Into Actionable Insights:** In a follow-up to his [previous presentation](#), Larry Willis presented on how to tell data into stories that make a difference (see presentation "ACTIONS final 08292018"). Larry emphasized that the importance of collecting data is to protect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of our water; a conversation started on how the Council can help move water-quality data into actionable information that resource managers and policymakers can use to make informed decisions. Larry suggested hosting a round table at the 2019 NMC about taking steps towards managing aquatic systems better and may focus on the cumulative effects of stressors. Larry will continue his conversation on this topic at the November meeting in Boise.
9. **Water Quality Portal Update:** Jim Kreft introduced the Water Quality Portal (WQP) and updated the group on recent activities (see presentation "NWQMC\_WQP\_Update\_August\_2018"). The WQP team has made significant progress on action items outlined in the 2017 Strategic Plan, and are now at the point when they need to establish broad goals for the next three years. Jim Kreft will be at the November meeting in Boise and will lead the Council through goal setting for the WQP.

MEETING AGENDA

<b>Time (EDT)</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
11:00 AM	Welcome and Introductions	5	Susan Holdsworth and Gary Rowe
11:05 AM	Council Business: Approve of June 2018 minutes	5	Candice Hopkins
11:10 AM	Program Committee	20	Monty Porter
11:30 AM	National Network of Reference Watersheds Update	15	Mike McHale
11:45 PM	WIS Work Group Updates	30	Mary Skopec, Aaron Borisenko, and Subgroup Leads
12:15 PM	2019 National Monitoring Conference Update	20	Jeff Schloss, Tim Oden, Lariena Guenzel, Marie DeLorenzo
12:35 PM	12th National Monitoring Conference Dates	10	Candice Hopkins
12:45 PM	<b>Break</b>	10	
12:55 PM	MDCB: Sensors and Bioassessment Workgroup Updates	25	Dan Sullivan
1:20 PM	Volunteer Monitoring Work Group Update	15	Danielle Donkersloot, Julie Vastine
1:45 PM	Collaboration and Outreach Work Group Update	15	Candice Hopkins, Danielle Donkersloot
2:00 PM	National Assessment	30	Larry Willis
2:30 PM	Water Quality Portal Updates	30	Jim Kreft
3:00 PM	Adjourn	5	Susan Holdsworth and Gary Rowe

Attendees via WebEx:

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