



Meeting Notes – National Water Quality Monitoring Council (Council) WebEx Meeting, Thursday, September 13, 2012

(Agenda and list of participants on pages 4-5, presentations posted on Council website at:
http://acwi.gov/monitoring/ppt/telecon_091312/index.html)

Actions, Decisions and other Information

1. **Council Updates and Charge to Council Members** – Susan Holdsworth gave an update on upcoming November meeting and charged the Council to use this teleconference meeting to build the agenda for the November Council meeting.
2. **Decision:** Upon a motion duly made (Jane Caffrey), seconded (Dave Neils), and carried, the April 20, 2011 Teleconference Council Meeting minutes were approved and will be posted on the website (Kim Martz).
3. **Report on 2012 National Monitoring Conference** - Philip Forsberg, NALMS, Forsberg@nalms.org, summarized the post-conference evaluation sent out to participants including registration, attendee profile, ratings of conference, plenary, concurrent session, posters, special session, field trips, comparison to other conferences, Bridge Day, and a list of constructive criticisms to be considered for future meetings. Most results were positive.
 - **Announcement:** Conference presentations now on Council website: <http://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/2012/index.html>
 - **Action:** Additional analysis of survey results need to be conducted to capture positive responses (what we did well) to compare to the constructive criticism and evaluate tradeoffs. Results should be presented at Council meeting in November. (Cathy Tate will confer with Jeff Schloss)
 - **Suggestion:**
 - Continue to engage participants to participate in Council activities and give us feedback
 - More time for poster sessions
 - Make program "At-A-Glance" easier to navigate
 - Consider having training sessions (e.g., workshops) so that participants can better justify attending.
 - Have the most popular sessions give an encore presentation by Webinar (e.g., sensors tract).
 - Website – consider grouping topics in addition to listing by agenda
4. **Water Quality Portal (WQP)** – Nate Booth, USGS gave an overview of the WQP and the FY13 Draft workplan. The draft workplan included operations and maintenance, map display, data qa/qc analyses and checks, adding additional data providers, integration with NEMI, integration with NHD, and communications. (See presentation)
 - **Action:** The WQP development team will provide an article for the Council's fall newsletter
 - **Action:** Nate Booth will talk with Mary Skopec to develop an ongoing NWQMC communication strategy with the WIS workgroup and will develop a proposal to be presented at the November Council meeting
 - **Action:** Please send any comments on this FY13 draft workplan to Nate Booth, nlbooth@usgs.gov. If you would like to see a copy of the workplan please contact Cathy Tate, cmtate@usgs.gov.
 - **Action:** Charles Kovatch, EPA will check on the links between the WQP and the BASINS program to see if data pulled from WQP can be used in this program
 - **Suggestion:** Leslie McGeorge, NJ DEP, suggested that the WQP might want to provide examples of applications or give url and better clarify that currently the WQP does not provide biological community data but represents tissue data. In other words, define what data/information the WQP provides and what it does not.
5. **Reference Site Network** – Jeff Deacon, USGS, gave an overview of the background, objectives and approach, workplan tasks, preliminary timeline, and ideas for the November Workgroup meeting for the Reference Site Network. (See presentation)
 - **Comment:** Susan Holdsworth was pleased with the progress being made on inventorying and compiling information from reference sites in the northeast and Midwest as well as initial ideas on screening criteria for reference sites and the consideration of other approaches.
 - **Suggestion:** Leslie McGeorge suggested the need to flag reference sites for both chemical and biological data.

6. **Roundtable:** Andy Fayram, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources, Great Lakes Representative. Andy reported that in the Great Lakes region, phosphorus, especially related to Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB) and contaminants are some of the major water quality issues. The Great Lakes Commission (GLC) formed a Phosphorus Task Force which submitted recommendations on phosphorus to the Commission. Lake Erie has increased HAB despite a decrease in total phosphorus; but there is a corresponding increase in dissolved reactive phosphorus. Offshore dredge material is being looked into as a possible source. In Lake Michigan, quagga and zebra mussels have altered phosphorus cycling and HAB. EPA and Tetrattech are modeling phosphorus cycling. Great Lake Restoration Initiative continues to fund restoration projects in the region. For more information on these topics, contact Andy, andrew.fayram@wisconsin.gov.
7. **Volunteer Monitoring Committee** – Barb Horn, Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, Volunteer Monitoring Representative. Barb reported the creation of a Volunteer Monitoring Council to serve as a liaison to the NWQMC volunteer monitoring representative and to coordinate VM activities. See presentation for other activities.
 - **Action: State Representatives and USEPA folks**, the committee would like to include a **directory** on the website that has the name of a volunteer monitoring contact for every State, as well as a contact for each of the 10 EPA Regions to help anybody who wants to exchange information with other volunteer monitoring groups. This list would be updated annually by the volunteer monitoring coordinator affiliated with the Council. Please send your contacts and those States or EPA Regional Representatives to Barb Horn, barb.horn@state.co.us.
8. **National Environmental Methods Index and Methods and Data Comparability Board** – Dan Sullivan, USGS, Co-chair, djsulliv@usgs.gov. Dan described NEMI Activities which includes USGS Community for Data Integration's Protocol Library Comparison, release of NEMI 4.0, Integration of NEMI into Water Quality Portal, NEMI_MEMO (Methods for Environmental Measurements and Observations – sensors), NEMI-CBR [Chemical, Biological, and radiological, (Water Security)], and Sensor Workgroup. [See presentation]
 - **Suggestion:** The NEMI-CRB is integrated into the EPA's Water Contaminant Information Toolbox (WCIT) which is a great resource during emergencies. There is no public link to NEMI-CRB but to find out more about WCIT go to: <http://water.epa.gov/scitech/datait/databases/wcit/index.cfm>.
 - **Action:** Sensors data elements are being prepared for submittal to ACWI and will be presented at November Council meeting for approval.
 - **Action:** Dan Sullivan will ask Sensor workgroup about Smart Phone Applications for monitoring
9. **National Monitoring Network for Coastal Waters and Their Tributaries** – Bernice Smith, EPA, Co-chair, smith.bernicel@epa.gov. Bernice explained how the NMN was a major effort for the Council in 2004-2006, seeking to provide a "network of networks." A newly reestablished NMN workgroup co-chaired by Bernice Smith, EPA; Mike Yurewicz, USGS, (mcyurewi@usgs.gov) and Dennis Apeti, NOAA (dennis.apeti@noaa.gov) will hold a Webex meeting on September 17 to further implement the National Monitoring Network. This workgroup will develop a workplan for 2012-2013. Possible steps might include: Assess the status of basic elements of the Network; Develop a communication plan; Assess the lessons learned from the five demonstration studies; Implement elements of the Network design; and, Increase collaboration across agencies. If you are interested in participating, please feel free to contact Bernice, Mike, or Dennis.
10. **Roundtable** – Dave Neils, New Hampshire Department Environmental Services, Represents States of USEPA Region 1. Dave presented a few of the New England Highlights including: 1) Development of Nutrient criteria by the NE States, 2) National Lake Assessments being almost complete in the region; 3) Development of numeric temperature criteria and a strong effort to get an integrated database; and 4) Developing a Regional Reference Site Network in relation to Climate Change. For more information, contact Dave at: david.neils@des.nh.gov.
11. **Water Information Strategies (WIS) Workgroup Update** –Mary Skopec, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Represents States of USEPA Region 7, and Chair of WIS. Mary presented the Draft WIS workplan (see presentation) which included: WIS sponsored webinars; posting of the "Integration of Water Data" white paper in the next month; creation of NWQMC website for Monitoring for Floods and Spills (and other unusual events); developing a strategy to work with Water Quality Portal; developing products and tools around "What your manager needs to know about water quality monitoring"; WIS capacity building; and Update Webpage information. If you are interested in participating or have ideas/information on any of the topics, please contact Mary at: Mary.Skopec@dnr.iowa.gov
 - **Reminder:** The next WIS call is October 10 at 11.00 ET which will feature a presentation by Warren Kimball on "SMART Monitoring".
12. **Water Quality Statistical and Assessment – online "NEMI-SAMS" update** – Doug McLaughlin, National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, Inc. Representative, Co-chair. Doug provided a demo and information on the new NEMI-Statistical and Assessment Methods Search that he gave to ACWI this summer (see presentation). This effort is aimed at adding a new

statistical/assessment component to NEMI, to help fill some of the gaps in the Council “wheel” (i.e., “design monitoring program” and “assess and interpret data”). If you want to be involved in developing and implementing “NEMI-SAMS”, contact Doug McLaughlin, douglas.mclaughlin@wmich.edu, Dan Sullivan, djsulliv@usgs.gov, or Leslie McGeorge, Leslie.McGeorge@dep.state.nj.us

- **Action:** Council members are encouraged to try the prototype at: <http://cida.usgs.gov/nemi/sams/search/> provide feedback, spread the word, and add methods! Help populate this database to continue the momentum to get this product to the full blown mode.
 - **Action:** WQSA workgroup will prepare resolution or general statement of support to ACWI for moving forward with NEMI-SAMS. This document will be presented to the Council at the November meeting for approval.
13. **Roundtable** – Martha Clark Mettler, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA) Representative. Martha is responsible for Water Quality Standards in her shop and they are finalizing their strategy with EPA. Martha is the treasurer of ACWA (Association of Clean Water Administrators) making her a part of the Executive Committee. She chairs the Monitoring, Standards and Assessment committee of ACWA which meet by teleconference once per month. These calls are primarily a discussion forum with State Staff on a variety of topics. Martha also serves as liaison to the EPA’s Monitoring Assessment Partnership. For more information, contact Martha at: MCLARK@idem.IN.gov
14. **Collaboration and Outreach Workgroup** – Cathy Tate, USGS, cmtate@usgs.gov and Barb Horn, Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, barb.horn@state.co.us, Co-chairs. Cathy and Barb presented the general workplan for the workgroup including webinars, social media, newsletters, communication with State/Regional/Tribal Councils, marketing of Council products, and National Monitoring Conferences. In addition, Cathy presented results of work with Water Words That Work to refine the “Council Brand” (see presentation)
- **Action:** Please send along any ideas or volunteer for any of the C&O’s usual activities: web seminars; social media tools; twice-yearly newsletter; collaboration with State, regional, and Tribal water monitoring councils, or website ideas.
 - **Action:** Deadline for Fall 2012 issue of “National Water Monitoring News” newsletter is September 21, 2012. Send articles to Cathy Tate.
 - **Action:** Barb Horn will present results from the inventory of State, regional, and Tribal councils conducted to learn their composition, scope, finances, objectives, and leadership at the November meeting or webinar prior to meeting. If you are involved in one of these Councils and have not filled in the inventory; please do so.
 - **Action:** Please send any comments on updated Council slogan, mission statement, or elevator speech.
 - **Action:** C&O workgroup will continue to update/reformat website navigation to make more usable prior to deciding which webpages to update first. Council workgroups are encouraged to let us know what updates are needed.
 - **Suggestion:** Add Dennis Helsel to list of webinar presenters when feasible to give talk on statistics.
15. **Selection of 2014 Conference Site** – Cathy Tate, USGS and 2014 selection committee. Cathy presented locations of past conferences, factors considered in site selection for the 2014 conferences, sites considered, and information on the two sites, Cincinnati, OH and Hartford, CT. These two sites are equal with respect to selection criteria. Selection committee would like to get Council member input.
- **Action:** Send your thought, opinions, and insights to Cathy (cmtate@usgs.gov) on either or both sites with regards to facilities, potential audiences that would be attracted to a particular site, and any other information you think useful for the selection committee by **Thursday, September 20th**.
16. **Agenda Items for Council Meeting** – November 27 – 29, 2012 in Arlington, Virginia
- Updated Report on 2012 National Monitoring Conference survey results
 - Water Quality Portal –
 - Develop an ongoing Council communication strategy particularly with WIS workgroup (or subgroup of WIS) and develop a proposal of how this will work.
 - Data checks
 - Interaction with NEMI
 - Optimize data going into portal
 - National Network of Reference Watersheds
 - Develop a process for categorizing existing sites in the Northeast-Midwest pilot
 - Develop a ‘criteria’ document for submitting a site to the network
 - Develop a process for reviewing, documenting, and making data available
 - Select 2-3 constituents for designing the initial framework
 - Discuss extrapolating to other regions
 - Volunteer Monitoring vs Citizen Science – support communications

- Methods Board and NEMI
 - Sensor data elements will be presented for Council approval
 - NEMI-MEMO (Aquatic Sensors Workgroup) strategic planning – protocols, statistical tools to be built and supported.
- National Monitoring Network
 - Results from Conference calls
- Water Information Strategies Workgroup
 - Integration White Paper and examples of success
 - What managers need to know
 - Response to unusual events
 - Finalize 2012 – 2013 workplan
- Water Quality Statistical and Assessment workgroup
 - Present to the Council for approval, a resolution/recommendation/expression of support from ACWI for moving “NEMI-SAMS” forward.
- Collaboration & Outreach workgroup
 - Work with Council workgroups and committees on outreach/marketing
 - Updating Council website
 - Presentation on Inventory of State/Regional/Tribal Councils by Barb Horn
 - Finalize workplan for 2013 – 2014
- Preparations for 2014 National Monitoring Conference
 - Program agenda or format for conference
 - Establish general timeline for conference milestones
 - Themes, save-the-date, call for abstract
 - Set up subcommittees
- Additional ideas to be considered by Steering Committee
 - Monitoring in support of nutrient criteria
 - Presentation on results from previous NARS activity that are coming out.
 - Hierarchy of Names of Networks in collaboration with ACWI workgroups
 - Chesapeake Bay presentations dealing with nutrients and the role of monitoring
 - Effectiveness of Monitoring Programs
 - Hydrofracking

17. **Announcement:** Susan Holdsworth will hold a MAP meeting associated with Council meeting; timing TBD.

MEETING AGENDA

11:00 am – Welcome and Roll Call (Susan Holdsworth, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Council Co-chair)

11:05 am – Council Updates -- Meeting in November: logistical details (Susan Holdsworth, USEPA, Wendy Norton, USGS)

11:15 am – Council Business -- Approval of April 20, 2012 Council WebEx meeting (Cathy Tate, USGS, Council Executive Secretary)

Report on 2012 National Monitoring Conference

11:20 am — Registration, Feedback from Survey (Philip Forsberg, NALMS, Cathy Tate, USGS)

11:45 am – Additional Feedback/Suggestions (ALL)

Updates from Council Workgroups and Committees

11:55 am – Water Quality Portal (Nate Booth, USGS)

12:20 pm – Reference Site Network (Jeff Deacon, USGS)

12:40 pm – **Roundtable** – Andy Fayram, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources, Great Lakes Representative

12:50 pm – Volunteer Monitoring Committee (Barb Horn, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Volunteer Monitoring Representative)

1:00 pm – Break

1:15 pm – Methods Board/Sensors (Dan Sullivan, USGS, Co-chair)

1:45 pm – National Monitoring Network (Bernice Smith, USEPA, Co-chair)

2:00 pm – **Roundtable** – Dave Neils, New Hampshire Department Environmental Services, Represents States of USEPA Region 1

2:10 pm – Water Information Strategies Workgroup (Mary Skopec, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Represents States of USEPA Region 7, Chair)

2:35 pm – Water Quality Statistical and Assessment - online "NEMI-SAMS" update (Doug McLaughlin, Western Michigan University, National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, Inc. Representative, Co-chair)

3:05 pm – Break

3:20 pm – **Roundtable** – Martha Clark Mettler, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA) Representative

3:30 pm – Collaboration & Outreach Workgroup (Cathy Tate and Barb Horn, Co-chairs)

4:00 pm – 2014 National Monitoring Conference (Selection Committee – Cathy Tate, USGS)

Next Steps for Council

4:15 pm – Agenda Topics and plans for November meeting (Susan Holdsworth and Cathy Tate)

4:35 pm – General Discussion and Closing Comments (Susan Holdsworth)

5:00 pm -- Adjourn

Participants:

Aaron Borisenko

borisenko.aaron@deq.state.or.us

Alice Mayo

mayio.alice@epa.gov

Andy Fayram

andrew.fayram@wisconsin.gov

Barb Horn

barb.horn@state.co.us

Bernice L. Smith

smith.bernicel@epa.gov

Cathy Tate

cmate@usgs.gov

Charles Kovatch

kovatch.charles@epa.gov

Chuck Dvorsky

charles.dvorsky@tceq.texas.gov

Curtis Cude

curtis.g.cude@state.or.us

Dan Sullivan

djsulliv@usgs.gov

David Graves

gravesda@dhec.sc.gov

David Neils

david.neils@des.nh.gov

Donna Myers

dnmyers@usgs.gov

Doug McLaughlin

dmclaughlin@ncasi.org

Gary Kohlhepp

kohlheppg@michigan.gov

Jane Caffrey

jcaffrey@uwf.edu

Jeff Deacon

jrdeacon@usgs.gov

Jeff Ostermiller

jostermiller@utah.gov

Jeff Thomas

jthomas@orsanco.org

Jim Dorsch

jdorsch@mwr.dst.co.us

Kim Martz

kimmartz@usgs.gov

Leslie McGeorge

leslie.mcgeorge@dep.state.nj.us

Martha Clark Mettler

mclark@idem.in.gov

Mary Skopec

mary.skopec@dnr.iowa.gov

Michael Brennan

brennan.michael@epa.gov

Mike Eberle

mbeberle@fs.fed.us

Mike McDonald

mcdonald.michael@epa.gov

Mike Yurewicz

mcyurewi@usgs.gov

Nate Booth

nlbooth@usgs.gov

Philip Forsberg

forsberg@nalms.org

Sharon McKinney

slmckinn@usgs.gov

Sheri Alcalde

salcalde@usgs.gov

Steve Wolfe

steven.wolfe@dep.state.fl.us

Susan Holdsworth

holdsworth.susan@epa.gov

Tony Shaw

tshaw@pa.gov

Tracy Hancock

tchancock@fs.fed.us

Wendy Norton

wenorton@usgs.gov