

NEIWPC-IEC District Shared Waterways Monitoring Workgroup Meeting

Tuesday, March 21st, 2017

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

USEPA Region 2 Headquarters 290 Broadway, New York, NY 27th floor Room 2734 Conference Room A

Attendees: Evelyn Powers (NEIWPC-IEC District), Jessica Bonamusa (NEIWPC-IEC), Peter Linderoth (Save the Sound), Sarah Powell (NAC/NYC Parks), Rob Buchanan (NYCWTA), John Kushwara (EPA Region 2), Kathryn Drisco (EPA Region 2), Amanda Levy (NYCDOHMH), Stan Stephansen (EPA Region 2), Jacqueline Rios (EPA), Mark Ringenary (NPS), Beau Ranheim (NYCDEP), Shawn Fisher (USGS), Philip DeGaetano (HRWA), Jason Fagel (NYSDEC), Isabelle Stinnette (HEP), Rick Winfield (EPA Region 2), Greg Alber (PVSC/ NJHDG), Biswarup Guha (NJDEP)

On phone: Matt Lyman (CTDEEP), Heather Radcliffe (NEIWPC)

Updates on Monitoring Programs Around the Region:

EPA:

- Lower Passaic project with IEC.
- Contacted by USGS for urban waters-Harlem River.
- National survey is lakes this year.
- Rick Winfield is interested in sediment oxygen demand in Harbor and tributaries.

USGS

- Northeast Stream Quality Assessment (NESQA)—included a number of rivers in N.Y. that are part of the “shared waterways,” including Bronx, Sawmill, Mamaroneck, and Hutchinson. A USGS Fact Sheet developed for the study was distributed (<https://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2016/3021/fs20163021.pdf>).
- Sediment flux into and out of Jamaica Bay is being monitored using an acoustic Doppler velocity meter at Rockaway Inlet (https://waterdata.usgs.gov/ny/nwis/uv/?site_no=01311875). Data are correlated with suspended sediment samples collected near Marine Parkway Bridge where the monitors are deployed.
- The Storm, Wave, and Tide height (SWATH) network continues to operate across the whole Eastern coast. Recently, mounting brackets for high-frequency storm surge sensors were installed in a transect at Piermont marsh (in cooperation with the DEC) in order to assess how waves are attenuated through a marsh.
- Working with New York City Parks under the Urban Waters Federal Partnership to develop scope and sampling schedule for water-quality monitoring. NYCDEP, EPA, and IEC agreed to participate and offered lab services and (or) field assistance. The goal is to assess nearshore pathogens and other parameters (metals, dissolved oxygen) near a proposed recreational access point along Harlem River during dry weather and wet weather. Sampling will include bed sediment sampling for cBOD and other compounds on the DEC contaminants list for impaired waters along the shore where marsh restoration is planned.

National Parks Service

- Jamaica Bay Water Quality Database website. Digitizing 10 years of water quality data. 2000 – 2010ish. Eventually want to get all of the data going back to 1948 (some back to 1909) incorporated.
- Website is in beta testing. It should be operational sometime this year.
- Harmful Algal Blooms in conjunction with EPA, probably next year.
- 2013 report on website
- 2014 is in draft
- Some restoration work from Sandy complete, some ongoing. West Pond Breach filled in.
- Jamaica Bay Data Visualization Tool Link:
<https://ciesin.columbia.edu/jbwq/>
Please note this site is still in the testing phase and is not ready for distribution to the public. I have also attached a user guide provided by Mark Ringenry to this email.

NYSDEC

- Working with IEC on RIBS.

NJDEP

- PVSC is leading CSO modeling. They finished most of it, and plan on having all of the modeling done by the end of the year. They collected pathogen data as well as nutrients, temperature and salinity etc. The data will be used to “recalibrate” their water quality model.
- Lower Passaic pathogen trackdown data could be useful for this effort.
- CARP II project between HRF and NJDOT is in progress.

CTDEEP

- Continuing LIS monitoring June through September

NYCDEP Harbor Survey

- Sampling built out to all tributaries. They sample 92 stations on a weekly basis.
- Ecosystem study in Jamaica Bay starting soon; going to go for 3 years.
- 2016 standalone harbor survey report this year.
- TRC initiative: studying the effect of TRC on the receiving waters; water quality and toxicity.
- Sentinel monitoring: quarterly, dry weather, 108 stations throughout Harbor, data are reported to the state.

WTA

- Monitors enterococcus around the city; more colleges partnering to analyze the data. They are trying to get localized rainfall data but have drawbacks and some problems with availability of data or sensors. Suggestion to use weather stations at treatment plants, airports, Central Park. There are some dry weather hot spots: Hallett’s Cove,

Bronx River, Flushing bay and creek and Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 4. Interest in MST analyses to explore sources (geese?)

NYDOH

- Beach Water Quality: Preseason testing, end of April. They take three samples along a beach (One end, middle, other end) and they average them. They post the daily average and the weekly geometric mean.
- Data available during the season at: <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/beach-homepage.page>. There is about a 6-day delay.
- Data on NYC Open Data
- Can sign up for a text alert service on website. See “know before you go” in above link.
- EPA RWQC planned for implementation in 2018. Some concern over what impact new standards will have on the public perception of water quality (perception may be that water quality is decreasing due to increased beach advisories/closures when the standards change).
- There was some concern about data presentation: whether or not to post all of the raw data instead of the average.

Save the Sound and the Unified Water Study

- Unified water study: there are 72 sampling stations for 10 weeks – May through August. They facilitate the health of bays and harbors in Long Island Sound, and represent all counties. There are 20 groups slated to join over the next two to three years. Funders are willing to support staff time and even boat fuel. Harbor Watch is administering an equipment loan program.

Long Island Sound Study

- LISS will be conducting additional seagrass aerial surveys.

How can this group assist and inform other efforts and initiatives in the region without duplicating tasks?

- HEP developing action agenda as part of CCMP with specific objectives and actions. This group and IEC can assist this by producing specific deliverables that help achieve these objectives and actions.
- Update regional monitoring matrix? (IEC with input from group)
- New Comprehensive water quality report like State of the Estuary
- Deliverables/Action: Being able to compare data across groups, like comparing WTA to Jamaica Bay etc
- NY and NJ have a “Right to know” for sewage discharges. CT has one in development. It would help to have a better understanding about the similarities and differences between the programs. It would also help to have a better understanding of who is reporting what and “Best Practices.” The regional bypass workgroup could also inform this effort. NYC’s reporting, for example has a warning for CSOs that simply states overflows have occurred in “various waterbodies.” NYC: This is a model based on rain, highly localized, and it is difficult measure or monitor. Rain in the same place might not

come out of the same pipe twice. Hundreds of outfalls. To put sensors on each CSO would be expensive and risky: bits of wood and debris would take them out.

Volunteer Monitoring Webinar

The following webinar may be of interest to some members of the group: On Thursday April 13th, the National Water Quality Monitoring Council will be hosting a webinar on *Volunteer Monitoring: Starting Strong*.

You need to register:

<https://doilearn2.webex.com/doilearn2/onstage/g.php?MTID=ea592607c4baa7c6d44711faea5e6799f>

Description:

Are you interested in starting a volunteer monitoring or aquatic citizen science program? Are you curious about the different types of volunteer monitoring programs out there? This webinar will do an overview of the common types of volunteer monitoring programs in the US followed by an exploration of the fundamental building blocks of a strong volunteer monitoring program. Participants will leave the webinar with an understanding of the ten steps in the Study Design process as well as the role of Quality Assurance Project Plans in assuring that your volunteer monitoring data are of known quality.