



**Science and Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
Ocean County College, Technology Building
December 8, 2015, 9:00 am**

Attending STAC Members: Dr. Matthew Poach (Chair, NOAA), Jim Vasslides (BBP), Will Ruocco (Brick Utilities), Dr. Ron Baker (USGS), Charles Caruso (PPA), Matt Csik (OC Health Dept.), Tom Belton (NJDEP, Off. of Science), Barbara Spinweber (USEPA, R2), Dorina Frizzera (NJDEP), Dr. Steve Yergeau (RCE-Ocean), Rob Tunstead (USDA-NRCS), Rob Karl (Brick MUA), Gregg Sakowicz (Rutgers/JCNERR), Alena Baldwin-Brown (DEP/DWM&S), Patrick Burritt (NJ Pinelands Commission).

Guests: Samantha Gilbert (Rutgers), Joe Maggio (Brick MUA), Daphne Munroe (Rutgers), Angela Andersen (CEC/Long Beach Twp.).

Barnegat Bay Partnership Staff: Dr. Stan Hales, Mary Judge, Karen Walzer, Martha Maxwell-Doyle.

Welcome and introductions – M. Poach

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. and introductions were made.

Review of draft agenda and minutes of October 13th STAC Meeting – M. Poach

The minutes were not distributed and will be included in the next meeting's agenda.

STAC Composition – J. Vasslides

Objective: Update STAC on current membership roster and changes

Active membership is down to 22 from 30 (quorum = 11). This will be revisited in the summer and notices will be circulated to members about committing personnel to the STAC. At that time the STAC will review its membership for expertise, size, etc. There are currently three at-large members, whose attendance has been sporadic and this will be revisited at a later time. A decision is still to be made as to whether or not to move the regularly-scheduled date (second Tuesdays) for the STAC meetings. The next meeting will be in February and Mr. Vasslides will let members know before the holiday break when the date will be, as well as distributing a year-long schedule of meetings.

2015 BBP Grant Funding Opportunity presentations – B. Spinweber

Three proposals were received in response to the last GFO. Presentations were made for the STAC to make a funding recommendation to the AC.

Samantha Gilbert, Rutgers University presented on a part of her dissertation research – “Assessment of the population dynamics of bay scallops in a highly eutrophic estuary using both field and laboratory approaches.” She discussed her pilot season, the design, and location (Little Egg Harbor) of her study. Public outreach will be in collaboration with the ReClam the Bay volunteers, who will incorporate bay scallops into their Shellfish in the Classroom curriculum, as well as other outreach tool development. Outcomes will benefit regulatory decisions regarding the establishment of environmentally sensitive areas and generate data to inform future restoration efforts.

Questions and comments were received about the location of the study, biofouling, predation, and the use of artificial SAV (ribbons).

Daphne Munroe, Rutgers University/Haskins Laboratory, presented her proposal “Restoration planning for hard clams in Barnegat Bay: Identifying population sources and sinks.” She reviewed the expertise of her co-investigators and Project Collaborators (who will help with the outreach pieces). She wants to create a model of larval hard clam behavior to plug into an existing hydrodynamic model. Ground-truthing measures were discussed and the outreach piece will include a documentary created with the help of the Mason Gross School of the Arts and the Rutgers Center for Digital Filmmaking. Outcomes will be the creation of a larval connectivity map, observation of larval densities in real time, and public outreach on the importance of shellfish restoration from a social, ecological, and cultural standpoint.

Questions and comments were received.

Rob Karl, Brick Township MUA, together with Will Ruocco and Dr. Ron Baker, presented their project entitled “Protecting a critical coastal New Jersey water supply by developing methodology to systematically predict salinity levels at the Metedeconk River freshwater intake.” An overview of the Brick MUA was given, followed by the statement of the problem – the Metedeconk River is subject to spikes in salinity, both upstream and downstream. They need to quantify and understand these salinity sources and inputs and this information will feed into a salinity prediction tool. Outcomes will include operational improvements in the treatment plant; optimization of the management of the sources; and improvement of the reliability of the water supply. Much-needed data will be generated regarding the vulnerability of a critical water supply infrastructure and this will also inform statewide water supply/water quality planning and policies. The need for, and the components of the project were discussed, which will include the

installation of a new tide gauge by the town. Outreach will provide a road salt education program to bring the applicators to the table and make them aware of the published guidelines, the newest technologies and methods. In addition, this could create a BMP for road salt application in the Metedeconk river watershed.

Questions and comments were received. State of Minnesota is moving towards beet juice as a substitute and the BTMUA will also look at substitute materials.

All STAC members with a conflict left the room for discussion of the projects by the STAC. Mr. Vasslides and Mr. Poach recused themselves and Ms. Spinweber led the discussion. A ranking was requested for the projects, as additional funds may be available in the future to fund more than one of the projects.

2015 BBP Grant Funding Opportunity discussion – B. Spinweber

Objective: Develop a funding recommendation for the Advisory Committee

Available funding of \$50,000 will fund one project.

Two or three external reviewers weighed in on each of the projects and provided a summary of their thoughts.

Hard Clams: Received ratings of “excellent (1),” and “very good (2).” The external reviewers’ comments were summarized for the group by Ms. Spinweber.

Bay Scallop: Received ratings of “very good (1),” and “fair (1).”

Water Quality: Received ratings of “good (2).”

The group voted unanimously to award the funds to the Daphne Munroe Hard Clam study.

If additional funds become available, the group voted to fund the Brick MUA project.

Ms. Spinweber will prepare a summary statement for presentation to the Advisory Committee.

STAC Vice-Chair nominations – M. Poach

Objective: Solicit nominations for the open Vice-Chair position

Vice-Chair position is still open.

State of the Bay Report – J. Vasslides

Objective: Update on SOTB progress and schedule

The working group is pulling together the indicators and will be meeting in January when conclusions will be reached as to the validity of the data, after which Mr. Vasslides will compile the information for distribution and review by the STAC per the QAAP. The e-book version will be discussed in January. The CEC has volunteered to spearhead the State of the Bay conference/event; a working group is forming and they would like STAC member participation. Their next meeting is December 16 at 9:00 a.m. at the BBP office. Questions, call or email Karen Walzer at kwalzer@ocean.edu. This will be a very public-friendly format and will be used as an opportunity for public input and feedback for revision of the CCMP and the USEPA R2 has volunteered to help with this facilitation.

Partner Updates

BBP is closed between 12/24/15 and 1/3/16.

Dr. Hales announced this will be Mr. Belton's last STAC meeting due to his retirement and he was thanked for his commitment to the work, the science, and his collegiality. Dorina Frizzera will be the new STAC representative for the NJDEP.

Rutgers Extension will receive a 319(h) implementation grant for BMP stormwater management in Jackson Township (\$420,000). The RCE held their state-wide meeting recently and an award for volunteer excellence was given to Rick Bushnell, president of ReClam the Bay for promoting shellfish in the Barnegat Bay. Ms. Maxwell-Doyle asked for a write-up to be sent to Karen Walzer.

The Brick MUA is wrapping up the Howell retention basin implementation project.

The recent NJDEP conference was reviewed. Key to the research was an action plan based on the recommendations, which will be prioritized. Recommendations for routine monitoring were made and an assessment report will include policy and management. Gary Buchanan will be the lead on this report. The conference was the first step in educating the public and a series of rollouts in the next six months will be held for additional public feedback. Ocean upwelling events with resultant pollution entering the Bay was discussed. Another USGS report on sediment and its contribution of nitrogen is under review. Point 7 of the Governor's plan will be finalized in the coming year.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.