



**New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program
POLICY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Sept 21, 1999 @ HMDC Offices, New Jersey**

(DRAFT – July 31, 2000)

Jeanne Fox convened the meeting at 10:20 a.m. and introductions were made. Alan Steinberg of HMDC welcomed the PC.

Mark Tedesco of the LISS and chair of the System Wide Nutrients Work Group provided a handout on the status of their efforts. The group is assessing the System Wide Eutrophication Model (SWEM) for application to dissolved oxygen and nutrient TMDLs. They are in the process of developing a workplan to enhance SWEM as necessary, to apply it, and to evaluate endpoints. It appears that additional calibration work may be necessary in the New Jersey tributaries. There were also concerns about primary production vs. concentration of chlorophyll based on Chesapeake Bay modeling work. Jim Tripp suggested that the group look at all endpoints, including chlorophyll. Mr. Tedesco said that endpoints need to be agreed upon. Gene Flatow said that endpoints for states and HEP may be different from LISS. She added that we may not have all the information on some sources, such as the atmosphere. Jeanne Fox said that the MC should discuss this. Kevin Bricke replied that the work group will develop a workplan and schedule. Ms. Flatow added that we need to keep an ecosystem perspective. Bob Nyman added that Rutgers is collecting atmospheric nitrogen data and that we need to determine if it will be useful for TMDLs.

Jim Olander gave an overview of the work for the Pathogens work group. The group is currently evaluating models for use in TMDL development. He said that indicators need further evaluation and that they scheduled their next meeting for October 7th. Ms. Flatow was concerned with the lack of a Rainfall Induced Discharges work group. She said that oxygen is only part of the picture and that we need to consider other things. Mr. Olander responded that the NYC CSO model was based on bacteria, not dissolved oxygen. He added that it was also on a much finer scale in order to address individual beaches. Kevin Bricke said that there was insufficient staff to convene another work group and that for the time being, these issues would be handled by Pathogens work group.

Jennifer DiLorenzo gave an overview of the CARP work that NJDEP was undertaking. She said that \$9.5 million had been dedicated to the toxics reduction work plan and that they were coordinating with the Toxics Work Group on common issues. There are methodology issues that are currently being worked out. She added that the Hurricane Floyd storm event was captured by field sampling.

Dick Draper gave an overview of the CARP work that NYSDEC was doing. He said that TOPS sampling began last winter and that it was back on track this summer. Work should be completed on the water quality sampling in Spring 2000. Mr. Draper said there were sediment grabs associated with the water quality samples and that a historic database was being compiled. Regarding biota collections, he said that five to six species would be collected at nine locations four times per year. Zooplankton and benthic invertebrate collections were underway and the cormorant samples were being processed. Trackown efforts in tributaries are event driven. Wastewater treatment plants are being sampled. Source identification is to be undertaken with PISCES and other methodologies. There will be 40 samples taken in the Hudson, 45 in the Harbor, and 15 for method testing.

The Army Corps of Engineers has contracted Battelle to undertake data management.

Chuck Warren asked if other point sources were to be sampled, such as industrial sources. They were not to be the main focus.

Dennis Suszkowski said that CARP data management was a big issue. He added that the CARP Management Committee had prepared a Statement of Principles that is currently being signed to help ensure a common understanding of the management of the project and to encourage frequent communication. HRF expected to issue the QA and the modeling RFPs shortly. Dr. Suszkowski also said that a three year position was to be created to oversee CARP modeling, QA and hosting meetings. Kevin Bricke said he would distribute the Statement of Principles to the HEP Management Committee when all the signatures are completed.

Raimo Liias gave a dredging update presentation. He said that the Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) and the DEIS were on the street and that there would be at least a 60 day comment period. There were to be revised options for the DMMP. Upland sites were being made available, so less emphasis was being placed on aquatic disposal. He said that the Harbor Navigation Study was being fast-tracked and that it should be available in draft form shortly.

Bernie Blum said that northeast Jamaica Bay sediment sampling should be looked at. Jim Tripp said he wanted to see habitat restoration moving in parallel with Harbor Navigation.

There was then a discussion about sites for disposal. The point was made that the options depend on the sponsors. Tom Creamer asked how long it would take to complete and what the cost was. Mr. Liias said that it would be 10 - 15 years at a cost of \$1.7 billion, not including interest. The Kill Van Kull is to be completed to 45' by 2004. A dredging activities newsletter is available via email.

The Environmental Restoration Study is currently in the mark-up process in-house at the Corps. The reconnaissance study is not tied to any project and can investigate many different project types. Mr. Liias concluded his presentation by mentioning that the drift removal project is focusing on Shooters Island and has ties to habitat restoration and impediment to navigation. Gene Flatow said she was interested in Arthur Kill restoration because of the potential effects of ship wakes and channel deepening on erosion of the banks.

Jim Tripp presented a handout from the DMMIWG. He presented a history of DMMIWG and mentioned the current issues that it is addressing. He stressed the need to integrate economic development with habitat. He mentioned the letters to Brad Campbell, Commissioner Shinn, and Commissioner Cahill requesting \$60 million for habitat restoration. Mr. Tripp requested a reinvigoration of the sediment decontamination work group and said we should seek to join technologies with Superfund sites. An additional request was that the HARS workgroup be brought back into existence to allow for free and open communication. Mr. Tripp acknowledged that the DMMIWG was largely a monthly discussion group. Tom Creamer asked what the source of the \$60 million would be and Mr. Tripp responded that \$30 million was being requested from the federal government, and remaining from the two states.

Ms. Fox requested that the Management Committee and Policy Committee get back with comments in 2 weeks and that the MC discuss the issues at their next meeting.

Marc Matsil then gave an update on the Habitat Work Group. He said that issues maps had been developed for Jamaica Bay and the Arthur Kill and that wetland regulatory coordination in New York State was being addressed by the group. He mentioned that restoration monitoring protocols had been developed and that he was seeking additional funding for printing of the habitat status report. Mr. Matsil introduced new priority sites for Staten Island and Commissioner Shinn requested acreages for the sites. Chuck Warren asked if costs for the sites had been derived and Mr. Matsil responded that some are available and some are not. Bernie Blum said that mosquito control was mentioned 10 years ago. Mr. Matsil responded that Dubose Point is now one of the 12 sites in the Jamaica Bay Recon Study. Jim Mueller added that NYC is a sponsor of that study.

Chuck Warren inquired about CCMP Action H-4.2 which discusses filling of small freshwater wetlands. He requested a report at the next PC meeting. It was noted that comments are due October 7th on a nation-wide permit related to this.

Doug Pabst provided a handout on the proposed use of Battelle to rewrite the CCMP dredging chapter. He said that there would be a focus on updating. Gene Flatow requested a schedule to speed up the process. Mr. Pabst said the contractor process takes time. Tom Wakeman said that if all currently pending authorizations go through, there will be a lot going on with dredging in the Harbor. He added that the chapter could be a template for this. Tom Creamer said that the DMMP was completed and that dredging needs to be better integrated with habitat restoration.

Mr. Pabst continued that the chapter would be primarily an update. He also mentioned that the SERG group had formed and that there was also a Harbor Navigation Study group. Mr. Creamer explained that the SERG group was a group of senior executives at the agencies that met periodically to review issues of importance to the region. Bill Muszynski said that the SERG agreed to put together a port improvement plan. Kevin Bricke suggested further scoping of the (dredging chapter?) work and getting back to the PC at their next meeting.

Regarding the structure of the dredging related groups, it was suggested that the Forum be eliminated as it is no longer a functioning group. It was also suggested that connections be added between the DMMIWG and the MC and PC. No decisions were made as to restructuring.

Gene Flatow suggested adding a public participation group. No decision was made regarding this.

Bob Nyman gave an update on the work of the toxics work group.

Kevin Bricke gave an update on the HEP Office. He said that Bob Nyman was named as the Director and that space had been identified at 290 Broadway to accommodate several staff.

Ms. Flatow suggested that a CAC sponsored conference be held to include HREMP, LISS, and HEP. Topics of discussion could include living resources and expansion of the port. She suggested December 10th for the conference.

The next PC would be scheduled based on MC recommendation.

Don Smith said that there was to be a festival at Liberty State Park in September 2000 and that HEP should consider participating.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.