



**New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program
TOXICS WORK GROUP**

Meeting Minutes

December 10, 1998 @ 290 Broadway, Room 27B

(DRAFT DEC 22, 1998)

The meeting was convened at 10:00 am by Bob Nyman. The purpose of reinvigorating this work group, as well as the pathogens and nutrients work group was described as being in response to an October 1, 1998 meeting between EPA and the states. A summary memo from Kevin Bricke of that meeting dated November 5, 1998 was distributed. The memo described the need for these groups to address certain issues associated with the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the harbor.

The draft charge to the work group was distributed for discussion. Art Newell felt that the charge of merely updating the list of toxics of concern was too narrow and that the group should oversee implementation of the entire toxics chapter of the CCMP. He also felt that the Toxics Work Groups (TWG) relation to CARP, the Dredging Forum, REMAP evaluation and the Criteria Work Group needed to be spelled out. It was also suggested that a revised organizational chart be developed for HEP. The group agreed that these were good ideas and should be presented to the Management Committee on Dec 14th.

The group then began its discussion of the list of toxics of concern in the water column. The Squibb (1991) report was mentioned as the primary source of data for that area and that any criteria that were available at the time were considered. A list of criteria prepared for the TMDL meeting by Wayne Jackson was distributed for discussion. Bob Nyman posed the question as to whether this was an up to date list for the work group to use for data evaluation. It was noted that NY guidance values were not included. **Tom Belton and John Zambrano agreed to review the criteria numbers on the list and to modify the table of criteria values prior to the next TWG meeting.**

Mick DeGraeve discussed the metals information that was developed by the Harbor Dischargers Group and was distributed to the work group. He noted that nickel was only a problem in the Hackensack and specifically at the Bergen County discharge. He then described the work that was done to evaluate copper and why it was not an issue in the harbor. It was decided that for the water column, nickel would be added to the list for the Hackensack and that copper would be removed from the list. **One page write-ups will be prepared by Bob Nyman or Mick DeGraeve to have a record of why these decisions were made.**

There was no new data to suggest that mercury should be removed from the list. **Information from the December 4th HRF Mercury meeting will be distributed to the TWG.** It was noted that Berrys Creek was a Superfund Site and a significant source of mercury and that there was a \$10 million effort underway there. Additional data may be available on the Passaic River.

It was noted that there will be several significant data sets becoming available over the next year or so for sediment and biota: Corps Harbor Navigation Study in Dec 1999, REMAP 2 in March 1999, and CARP in 1999. **Jim Lodge will look into the Navigation Study and Dennis Suszkowski will be asked to discuss the CARP data and timing for data availability at the next meeting.**

Integrating the CARP data into a GIS was discussed, but Jim Lodge felt that the Corps and the two states would each develop individual systems based on their own needs. The TWG expressed a concern that all three entities work together to obtain a single GIS.

Larry Skinner described the 4 reports on contaminants in biota that he was the lead on developing. He mentioned that there was a fifth report on PCBs that was past due and that he still needed to complete. He said the study was initiated in 1993 and examined the portions of a number of biota that were most commonly eaten. He noted some cultures consumed additional portions of the organisms and that if whole organisms were assessed, exposures may be up to 50% higher. PCBs were the major analyte of concern along with dioxins. DDXs, chlordane, and mercury were noted to exceed criteria in some instances. Bivalves had low levels of organics, but the hepatopancreas of blue crabs and lobsters had high levels of organics and cadmium. In 1997, 37 striped bass were collected to gather additional information on dioxins, furans, PCBs and organochlorines. He noted that there was an apparent decline in dioxin and furan levels between 1993 and 1997. He also noted the analyses for PCBs and organochlorines varied between the DEC lab and the contract lab.

Dr. Skinner then distributed the NYS health advisory report.

There are apparently some issues associated with arsenic criteria. **Charles Abonathy of EPA will be contacted to get additional information.** It was noted that the criteria for lead is based on food commonly sold in lead soldered cans (1ppm).

There was then additional discussion about which criteria should be used for evaluating the HEP list. It was brought up that the Clean Water Action Plan contains an effort to develop uniform criteria to evaluate biota on a nation-wide basis. Some are risk based and some are based on FDA numbers. Water column numbers are risk-based and tissue numbers are then obtained by back calculating. Three potential criteria are currently being evaluated. FDA numbers are generally higher than risk based numbers. Lipid normalization was also thought to be necessary. **Larry Skinner and John Zambrano will develop a modified table for the next TWG meeting containing all criteria that are being considered, based on the table on page 23 of the PAH report.**

John Zambrano also agreed to present an “anatomy of criteria” for mercury for the next TWG meeting.

Other data sets that may be of use for biota include MAXUS, DEC's benthic survey, and a 1995-96 NOAA Bight Apex report.

It was noted by Rollie Hemmett that there was a lot of work going on with sediment criteria and that values may not be available for some time. However to make progress in the meantime, the group suggested comparing new data with the ERL and ERM values as was done for the original HEP list. **Darvene Adams will work with Jim Lodge to summarize REMAP and any other data for the next meeting.**

NYSDEC is in the process of trying to develop ERL and ERM values for chlordane.

The next meeting was scheduled for February 4, 1999. All summaries for the meeting should be gotten to Bob Nyman by January 22nd so that they can be distributed to the TWG.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.