

Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council
Meeting minutes, November 12th, 2010, Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Hill Farms State Transportation Building, 4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Madison

Members Present: Jill Jonas for Bruce Baker (DNR); Kathy Pielsticker (DATCP); George Kraft (Governor's Representative), James Robertson (WGNHS); Dan Scudder (DOT); Lynda Knobloch for Henry Anderson (DHS).

Others Present: Steve Ventura (UW Soils Dept.); Bob Pearson and Michele Gerrits (DOT); Steve Gaffield (Montgomery Assoc.); Ed Morse (WRWA); Mike Fienen and Cheryl Buchwald (USGS); Mike Lemcke, Larry Lynch, and Jeff Helmuth (DNR).

1) Introductions and General Business – A motion by Kraft and seconded by Robertson to approve the May 7th, 2010 meeting minutes passed unanimously.

2) Technical Presentation: Mapping Infiltration Rates in Dane County by Dr. Steve Ventura and Kathleen Arrington, Dept. of Soil Science, UW-Madison – Ventura shared a PowerPoint presentation available for download at <https://mywebspaces.wisc.edu/sventura/GWinfiltrate-GWCC.ppt> (no password needed - just click "OK"). Project goals included developing a database of field-measured infiltration rates (saturated hydraulic conductivity - H_{sat}), soil properties, landcover and topography; establishing a relationship between soil infiltration properties, landcover and topography; and creating a county-wide map of relative infiltration maps. Results were anticipated to improve modeled infiltration rates which currently do not consider macropore flow, landcover or topography and are based on less-detailed soils information. Ventura showed infiltration maps developed for Verona Township and Dane County using both soil properties and landcover. Potential uses for the new maps include township or watershed-based planning e.g., identifying important recharge areas. Finer scale planning e.g. stormwater management practice siting and design still require site-specific measurements.

3) Joint Solicitation – Helmuth reported that the WRI released the call for proposals on October 11th with a deadline for submittals of Wednesday, November 17, 2010. Funding availability is estimated to total from \$220,000 to \$320,000 from UWS and DNR. In addition to the annual Groundwater Research and Monitoring Program (GRMP) request the joint solicitation again includes a separate request by the UW-WRI to support proposals on climate-related water resources issues with approximately \$72,000 in research funds from USGS (104B funds). The project period for these climate-related projects will be March 1, 2011 to February 29, 2012 as opposed to the State fiscal year period used for the GRMP. Multi-year projects may be funded through the process.

The WRI has released several products relating to joint solicitation projects. The first is an article in the fall/winter Aquatic Sciences Chronicle on Microbial Source Tracking (MST). Sam Sibley is featured on the *Fecal Source Tracking Using Human and Bovine Adenovirus and Polyomaviruses* project done with Joel Pedersen, Trina McMahon, and Sharon Long. The second product is a short video produced in conjunction with the MST story available on the ASC YouTube channel:
<http://www.youtube.com/UWASC#p/u/6/ey-xqU0i9PI>

Another video that may be of interest is based on the *DTS as a Hydrostratigraphic Characterization Tool* project by Jean Bahr and David Hart: <http://www.youtube.com/UWASC#p/u/7/gOBCnZGpSiU>

Discussion identified a need for more discussion and information exchange. Robertson added that there was a need to communicate the value of groundwater. Steve Gaffield, current President-Elect of WI AWRA offered to have a special session on joint solicitation projects after the regular meeting.

4) WaterSMART Program – Cheryl Buchwald (WI USGS) shared a PowerPoint presentation on the Dept. of Interior program created by the SECURE (Science and Engineering to Comprehensively Understand and Responsibly Enhance) Water Act (2009). Two primary components of the Act for USGS are: 1) Creation of a National Groundwater Resources Monitoring program and a Brackish Groundwater Assessment, and 2) Creation of a National Availability Assessment program to study water quality and quantity and report to Congress in 2012 and every 5 years thereafter. The act calls for expanding data acquisition and analysis to improve water resource management and for enhancing the understanding of climate change impacts on water availability and energy production. The WaterSMART (Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow) program focus is on sustainability, conservation and improved efficiency efforts.

The Water Availability and Use Assessment Program component includes the Water for America initiative and is likely to become known simply as the Water Census. USGS will be required to report to Congress in 2012 and every 5 years thereafter on availability; trends affecting water availability, including impacts as a result of global climate change; the withdrawal and use of surface water and groundwater by various sectors; trends relating to each water use sector, including changes due to the development of new energy supplies; water use conflicts or shortages; and factors that have caused, or are causing, a conflict or shortage. The Lake Michigan Basin GW availability study was completed as a part of a pilot. Regional groundwater availability studies will be done by the Office of Groundwater, formerly RASA (Regional Aquifer System Analysis) program.

Mike Fienen (WI USGS) coordinates a multi-state effort doing background work and hopes to submit a formal proposal for the Fox River (IL/southern WI) Watershed study. Water supply issues in the basin include: 1) deep bedrock withdrawals resulting in large cones of depression and water-quality issues; 2) shallow withdrawals resulting in declines in baseflow; and 3) urbanization and population growth resulting in increased water demand. Project goals include refined water-use accounting; increased understanding of localized baseflow, seepage and stormwater infiltration; historical evaluations of streamgage records; compilation of ecological data; and real-time, decision support for optimized pumping. GCC members expressed interest in a presentation on the Fox River study if the project is funded by WaterSMART.

About \$9,000,000 has been proposed for WaterSMART funding for 2011 to be divided among the topics of a nationwide analysis system, water use, ecological flow, groundwater and brackish studies and focus area studies. If that happens, grant amounts will be up to \$250,000 for each state but it is unlikely that each state will receive the entire amount or that each state that applies will receive funding in the same year. The funding period for this grant opportunity is 2009-2013 with a one-time total of 12.5 million to be appropriated. Guidelines and the application/decision process have yet to be drafted.

5) Education Subcommittee Report – Some members of the subcommittee had met on September 15th. Carolyn Betz will soon be circulating a 4-page draft of the *Pathogens In Groundwater* fact sheet. WRI has also released a video on the topic that should serve as an additional method of communicating with the public and stakeholders.

6) GCC Direction/Interagency Discussion – In response to the GCC decision in August to produce a strategic plan, Jonas handed out a draft *2011 Strategic Plan and Timeline* that she had prepared with Chuck Warzecha (DHS) and Lori Bowman (DATCP). Jonas asked if there was interest in pursuing the strategic plan. There was general agreement that a plan is a good idea. Copies of the draft plan will be sent with a goal to finalize by the end of 2010. Comments were requested by November 30th particularly on the subcommittee roles and activities, ties to state statutes, and preferences on face-to-face meetings versus conference calls. [Note 1: Subsequent to the meeting, based on comments received, goal for completion of the GCC Strategic Plan is the first quarter of 2010. We will distribute an updated draft

prior to February's meeting. Note 2 : Subsequent to this meeting it was determined that the GCC could have conference calls in place of any meetings beyond the two/year required by statute if a room was provided for public participation and properly public-noticed.]

7) Agency Updates

WGNHS

- WGNHS has received a large EPA grant for studying viruses in Madison
- Mike Parson has been hired to update the Dane County groundwater flow model (a new 2-year position).
- The survey has purchased some new downhole logging tools including a high-definition camera.
- Former State Geologist, Meredith E. "Buzz" Ostrom passed away on November 11th. (http://www.uwex.edu/wgnhs/ostrom_obituary.htm)

DOT

- NR 151 stormwater regulations are being revised.

DATCP

- ATCP 30 (Pesticide Product Restrictions) is being revised. There is public interest regarding the new atrazine prohibition areas. Comments range from complete opposition to the proposed new areas to wanting a statewide ban on the herbicide.
- ATCP 51 (Livestock Facility Siting) has been opened. DATCP formed a technical advisory committee and is gathering stakeholder input.
- A follow-up to the ATCP 50 (Soil and Water Resource Management Program) revision is planned for the next few months.

DNR

- The new Great Lakes Compact rules are moving forward with NR 854 (Water Supply Service Area Plans) open for public comment; NR 860 (Water Use Permitting) having public comments incorporated into Final Rule and going to the NRB in January 2011; NR 852 (Water Conservation), NR 856 (Registration and Reporting,) and NR 850 (Fees) are effective January 1, 2011.
- The Cycle 9 Groundwater Standards (15 new, 15 revised) are being published.
- Safe Drinking Water Act rules NR 809 and 811 have been revised and NR 810 has been created.
- The Drinking Water and Groundwater program has been looking at nitrate and pesticide impacts on public and private wells.
- Mike Lemcke, Groundwater Section Chief, will move to Chief of the Wastewater Permit Section in the Bureau of Watershed Management. Jonas and the GCC expressed their appreciation for Mike's great support of the GCC.
- Larry Lynch added that the conflict in siting well #7 for the City of East Troy nearby Lake Beulah would come before the State Supreme Court in March. The decision will clarify the application of the public trust doctrine to groundwater.

8) Adjourn and Next Meeting – The meeting was adjourned at 12:15. The next meeting will be February 11th at the UW Aquatic Sciences Center in Madison.

Respectfully submitted by Jeff Helmuth