

Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council
Minutes of meeting held May 4, 2012, 10:00 – 12:00
At Wisconsin Geologic & Natural History Survey

Members Present: Henry Anderson (DHS); Ken Johnson (DNR); James Robertson (WGNHS); John Petty (DATCP); Anders Andren (UW-System), Eric Scott (DSPS); George Kraft (Gov. Rep.).

Others Present: Jim Hurley (ASC); Ken Bradbury and Peter Chase (WGNHS); Chris Babiarz (UW System); Lori Bowman (DATCP); Mary Ellen Vollbrecht, Jill Jonas (DNR)

1) General Business – The February 2012 meeting minutes were unanimously approved following a small change to reflect the status of WGNHS work on the Hydroviewer (motion by Robertson, 2nd by Anderson).

2) Technical Presentations

Jean Bahr presented results of GCC-funded research testing the concepts of distributed temperature sensing (DTS), an improved method of borehole dilution testing, that can help to measure subsurface heterogeneity in hydraulic properties and processes. Jean described the system of fiberoptic cables and light pulsing that result in a temperature profile of water movement in the well over time. Two multi-aquifer wells (Oak Creek, WI aquifer storage well and a flowing well in Iowa County, WI). The method is an improvement as it does not involve the addition of water or chemical dyes. A new heat source is in design so that the method can become even more broadly useful by measuring narrower permeability ranges and smaller wells. The work will be the subject of a paper in the upcoming issue of *Groundwater*.

3) Joint Solicitation

Chris Babiarz distributed the final list of funded research projects (see below).

4) Subcommittee Reports

Several members of each subcommittee met to follow up on specific GCC assignments.

Monitoring and Data Subcommittee - Mary Ellen Vollbrecht reported for Jeff Helmuth that DATCP and DNR staff met to discuss the potential for increased integration of groundwater data systems and delivery based on the DATCP internal geographic, partial real-time groundwater sampling data access system. The staff of the two agencies reviewed lessons learned from DATCP's consolidation of several data systems that was presented to the GCC in November 2011.

Outreach and Planning – Mary Ellen Vollbrecht reported on UWEX, SLOH and DNR staff follow-up on GCC's request for recommended improvements to lab reports to increase well owner understanding. DHS found that while 96% of well owners who tested their wells thought they were safe, 47% of all wells tested exceeded at least one health standard. After review of options, the team will explore greater access to basic test result explanation by DNR's Call Center staff; review of UWEX-MCOW focus group work to see if survey work on this issue is reasonable; and future consideration of an additional simplified summary of results.

5) Legislative Report

GCC members agree to continue the effort to make the Legislative Report more concise and appealing to readers with limited time to convey groundwater issues and needs. The 2012 report should consist of an issue-oriented printed fact sheet and a 10-13 page summary document with any needed technical

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appendices on-line only. The list of recommendations should be consolidated to focus on realistic actions that could be taken on top GCC priorities. WGNHS, UWEX and ASC staff will meet with DNR staff to scope and mock-up the fact sheet. Members will review a draft of consolidated recommendations in May and will also look at their agency sections and technical appendices for any needed updates.

Agency Updates

DATCP – Petty noted that the agency is beginning work on the state budget and that funds will continue to be limited. Bowman invited members to view the U-Tube video about the Royster-Clark agriculture chemical clean-up project and mentioned that DATCP plans to deliver more key program information in this format. DATCP is still awaiting legislative confirmation of revision to the atrazine rule (mapping improvements only; no changes in location or extent).

UWS – Andren welcomed Jim Hurley as the new ASC Director who is expected to be appointed to the GCC shortly. He noted that the UWS research funding is expected to be at the same level next year despite other UW budget cuts.

WGNHS - Robertson reported that WGNHS will be hiring four science staff positions in the next year. WGNHS staff is in the midst of a review of groundwater impacts of sand mining in Chippewa County as well as a study of geothermal properties of deep basement rock in northern Wisconsin, including drilling to 100 foot depths. Ken Bradbury noted that intensive sampling will begin this month around City of Madison municipal wells as part of ongoing virus research.

DSPS – Eric Scott announced Roman Kaminski's recent retirement; Roman was the long-standing manager of the private on-site wastewater treatment program. Replacement schedule is unknown. PECFA funding issues may force delays in PECFA-funded site clean-up this year.

DHS – Anderson announced the retirement of toxicologist Linda Knobeloch slated for this summer. DHS is involved in a county health impact study on hydraulic fracture sand mining as well as risk assessments for gastrointestinal illness in communities from high rain events. The University of Illinois is examining the health outcomes in communities with atrazine in municipal wells with results expected about one year from now. Anderson confirmed that budget cuts to the State Lab of Hygiene will likely end the Women, Infant and Children well testing funds or limit the scope of available analysis.

DNR – Johnson reported on DNR's work to remedy problems that EPA found with Wisconsin's implementation of the federal Clean Water Act. He noted the need for the state to begin work on identification of areas at risk of flooding from high groundwater. Jonas reported that EPA's 5-year cycle of unregulated contaminant monitoring is about to begin (more information at <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/rulesregs/sdwa/ucmr/ucmr3/index.cfm>). DNR continues work to determine the source and extent of molybdenum found in private wells in Racine and southern Milwaukee Counties. Jonas thanked GCC members who participated in advising on selection of subwatersheds for intensive work to avoid unsafe levels of nitrate.

Kraft – George Kraft commended the group for examples of increased inter-agency collaboration. He would like to see a statewide groundwater quantity picture.

5) Adjourn and Next Meeting - Robertson moved (Anderson 2nd) to adjourn. The next meeting will be on August 10th at DNR.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen Vollbrecht