



## POTOMAC RIVER BASIN DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PARTNERSHIP

Quarterly Meeting Summary for August 24, 2016

Location: ICPRB, Rockville, Maryland

### Attendees

#### Utilities

Berkeley County:  
Steve DeRidder

DC Water:  
Saul Kinter  
Melanie Mason

Fairfax Water:  
Mishelle Noble-Blair  
Greg Prelewicz

Leesburg:  
Russell Chambers

Loudoun Water:  
Cathy Cogswell

Washington Aqueduct:  
Alex Gorzalski  
Tom Jacobus  
Anne Spiesman  
Mel Tesema

WSSC:  
Martin Chandler

#### State and Local Agencies

DOEE:  
Collin Burrell  
Shah Nawaz  
Joshua Rodriguez

MDE:  
John Grace

PA DEP:  
Patrick Bowling  
Lisa Daniels  
Kristina Peacock-Jones

VDH:  
Susan Douglas

WV DHHR:  
Monica Whyte

#### Federal and Regional Agencies

EPA:  
Rachel Carlson (phone)

EPA Region 3:  
Amie Howell  
Cathy Magliocchetti

ICPRB:  
Renee Bourassa  
Claire Buchanan  
Curtis Dalpra  
Carlton Haywood  
Scott Kaiser  
Heidi Moltz  
Jim Palmer

MWCOG:  
Steve Bieber  
Lisa Ragain (phone)

#### Other Interested Parties

Water Research Foundation:  
Kim Linton

## Updates on 2016 Priority Projects

### Explore source water protection activities related to toxic and non-toxic algae

Cathy Magliocchetti, EPA Region 3

The algae work group met following the quarterly Partnership meeting in May. Since this meeting, the group has setup a Microsoft SharePoint site to share information about toxic and non-toxic algae. Various group members have participated in several relevant webinars—notes and recordings of webinars have been shared on the SharePoint site.

On August 9<sup>th</sup>, the working group hosted a webinar to learn about the EPA’s strategy on harmful algal blooms. Following the August Partnership meeting, the work group heard a presentation from EPA’s Rick Rogers on efforts to better understand links between nutrients, algae, and public health protection.

The consensus in the working group is there exists a need for more information sharing and compilation related to algal blooms before the group can identify or prioritize future activities. Kim Linton of the Water Research Foundation (WRF) expressed interest in partnering with DWSPP on a research project. WRF has completed a lot of research related to algae in Australia and has identified monitoring and measurements are critical.

### Enhancing chemical contaminant knowledge in our watershed

Mishelle Noble-Blair, Fairfax Water

On July 28<sup>th</sup>, Fairfax Water hosted a work session where 18 individuals from 12 utilities and agencies participated in several WaterSuite activities. The work session was designed to encourage discussion and collaboration and the general consensus is it was a positive and beneficial experience for everyone. A short, follow-up survey was distributed to attendees and summarized:

1. Did you learn something new about potential sources of contamination?
  - a. Already familiar with most major sources, but WaterSuite provided an opportunity to explore other smaller facilities.
  - b. Yes, but number of sites was overwhelming. Recommend changes to data symbology.
  - c. Not really; takes a long time to sort through the data to determine relative importance.
  - d. Corona’s susceptibility analysis includes a lot of noise and results are relatively imprecise in identifying sources of contamination
2. Do you believe WaterSuite can assist your organization with source water protection?
  - a. Yes, it has potential to streamline source water protection with a straightforward means to identify points of interest and easily accessible interface.
  - b. Yes, we see value to having a variety of datasets in one program.
  - c. Yes, it could help to identify potential sources of contamination that were not included in the original DC Water 2002 assessment.
  - d. Yes, it could help DWSPP identify facilities to explore for protection efforts and emergency preparedness.

- e. Yes, the tool is a good first step in identifying what is upstream of our intakes.
  - f. Maybe, WaterSuite is still missing key pieces of Tier II data for MD.
  - g. Unsure whether WaterSuite can make source water assessment more efficient.
  - h. Depending on cost for continued use of WaterSuite; however, we view the tool useful for identifying sites of greatest concern and work with those sites to mitigate threats
  - i. No, we have no plans to use WaterSuite.
3. Is there anything missing in WaterSuite or what kinds of improvements would you like to see?
- a. Data Structure: structure of related feature classes varied too much
  - b. Site Potency and Event Intensity scoring needs to be refined (e.g. deviations from expected values and other inconsistencies)
  - c. Software performance needs improvement to handle greater number of simultaneous users
  - d. Consider additional reference data layers (e.g. sub-watershed boundaries, ZCC for each intake, etc.)
  - e. Improve search capabilities (e.g. facility name, address, etc.)
  - f. Improvements to data symbology

Since WaterSuite was originally released in April, Corona Consulting has been busy adding tool improvements and supporting documentation. Corona is close to releasing a user manual (something that was requested by the utilities). Overall, Corona has been very interested and responsive to user feedback. They are aware of on-going issues and concerns related to server performance and working to resolve them. By all accounts they are committed to the success of the tool.

A few questions were posited during the Partnership's May meeting. Since then, several questions have been answered:

- Who will serve as the data gatekeeper? A final decision still needs to be made but COG and ICPRB have been floated as potential gatekeepers.
- The ability to track changes in WaterSuite is a feature of the tool. Raw data imported from various data sources (e.g. federal, state, local databases) cannot be edited by individual users. Only select Corona layers (i.e. sites of interest) can be edited by users. This information is tracked.
- It's becoming more clear how WaterSuite may be used with other source water protection tools, however, this is still being fleshed out among the utilities.
- Intellectual property rights, data ownership, and security are still being discussed.
- Governance structure needs to be addressed.

MWCOG has been shopping WaterSuite around to various groups and organizations around the watershed and some have expressed interest in using the tool. However, there are outstanding questions related to data security and access which need to be addressed. For example, can data access be restricted by user account? If data security and access issues can be worked out, more data may become available from government agencies (i.e. Tier II).

Monica Whyte of WV DHHR noted a lot of missing data in the upper basin. This is likely due to the fact they are located outside the zone of critical concern for this particular project. Another data acquisition effort is likely needed if West Virginia systems were interested in using the tool.

Washington Aqueduct is not as interested in using the tool due to limited staff resources. They would rather work with or hire a consultant to develop a source water protection plan. Some concerns about data security and results of Corona's susceptibility analysis need to be addressed.

The next steps for the utilities are:

- Determine how each agency wants to use the tool internal to their operations and come to a conclusion as a partnership as how to move forward
- Share the work session summary with Corona
- Hold another work session for those who are interested
- Continue to work on gathering missing data
- Continue outreach to facilities of importance

### **Implement improvements to regional, cooperative spill response**

Carlton Haywood, ICPRB

The work group held a conference call on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to review the list of action items and determine which three items to focus on in the second half of 2016. The group decided to focus on developing a web communication portal, a monitoring plan, and conducting targeted outreach to select facilities upstream of drinking water intakes.

Carlton Haywood gave a demonstration on ICPRB's new web communication portal through groups.io. The working group is piloting this new platform with the intent to migrate future spill event internal communications through <https://groups.io/g/PotomacSpills>. This platform was selected because it best met the working group's criteria:

- Secure to authorized users
- Document uploads/posting
- Easily to use platform
- Can distribute information quickly and efficiently (list-serve)
- Mobile-friendly
- Free/low cost

Initially, ICPRB will register and grant access to everyone currently listed on the spill communications list. Groups.io makes it easy to add and remove users providing flexibility during an event to extend access beyond the existing members if deemed appropriate.

Generally, the tool provides the critical functions the group identified as requirements; however, the working group is still developing protocols for disseminating and organizing information within the site.

Jim Palmer is helping to lead the group working on the monitoring plan along with Niffy Saji. The group has held a series of conference calls since June 3<sup>rd</sup> and has identified the beginnings of a monitoring plan framework using guidance developed by EPA as their starting point. The

overall goal of the monitoring plan is to outline appropriate steps and measures for each utility to follow before, during, and after a spill event with regards to water quality monitoring. Over the coming months, the group will finalize a draft monitoring plan, identify and describe appropriate sampling kits, identify laboratories to use for testing unknown contaminants, identify background sampling locations for flow model calibration and verification, and identify USGS gauges with realtime water quality monitoring in the basin. A draft monitoring plan is expected in October.

The outreach and communication group has had a number of conference calls since the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. The working group has identified six facilities across the basin to reach out to in the coming months. Sites were selected through a combination of information in the WaterSuite tool and geographic representation. The six facilities are:

- Dickerson Generation Station
- A facility at 450005 Russell Branch Parkway
- Elysian Heights STP
- VERSO Paper Mill
- Canam Steel Corporation
- Ox Paperboard Company

The goal of the group is to create a strategy to make initial contact with each facility and begin a dialogue over the second half of 2016. The group expects a wide range of responses and will adjust the outreach strategy accordingly.

## **On-going Efforts**

### **Forest Cover/Treatment Cost Study**

Heidi Moltz, ICPRB, provided the update. The goal of this study is to explore the links between treatment costs, water quality, and forest cover in the basin. In this first year of the project, ICPRB is calibrating the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model for TOC and to identify relationships, if any, between water quality and chemical dosage at the metro area's water treatment plants. The methodology to study the link between water treatment and water quality was approved by the technical advisory committee. In 2017, the focus will be concluding the technical work with final results expected in 2018. A more detailed review of the project's findings and progress can be provided at a future meeting. A [summary](#) of the first six months of work and additional [background information](#) on the study are available from ICPRB.

### **Monocacy-Catoctin Outreach**

John Grace, MDE, reported on the outreach effort in the Monocacy and Catoctin watersheds. A meeting was held August 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss interest in forming a collaborative or partnership between drinking water suppliers, local government agencies, and other stakeholders to address common issue with source water protection. Seventeen people attended the meeting in Frederick, MD. There was sufficient interest in a collaborative approach and the group identified spill response as an initial topic to address. A second meeting is tentatively scheduled in the fall at the Thurmont Public Library.

## **Government Partners Committee Update**

Lisa Daniels, PA DEP, updated the Partnership on recent Government Partners Committee meetings. The Government Partners Committee discussed the idea of a MOU for data sharing during spill events. It was decided that state agencies are already willing to share information during an actual event and that an MOU may not be necessary. However, a data sharing agreement may be more appropriate and beneficial within the context of WaterSuite.

A question about member fees for small systems was raised to the Government Partners Committee. Currently, members are encouraged to pay a minimum \$300 or \$66 multiplied by their annual use (in MGD). The Government Partners Committee discussed the pros and cons of membership dues for small systems and suggested possible alternatives. The committee agreed member fees should not be a barrier to participation in the partnership. The committee was interested in hearing other perspectives from the utility committee and broader partnership.

During this discussion, the consensus was fees should not be a barrier to participate in the Partnership and it was pointed out there are many people who receive information about the partnership but who do not pay a fee. Several alternative fee structures were suggested:

- Waive the fee for the first year
- Waive the fee for the first year followed by an incremental fee structure for the next two years
- Cost-share for small systems within a sub-basin
- Consider in-kind contributions (e.g. request specific monitoring efforts with basin-wide benefits)

The question was raised as to whether we know the fee is a barrier to entry for small systems. According to Monica Whyte, WV DHHR, for systems in West Virginia, membership fees are indirectly a potential barrier but more likely staff resources and traveling across state lines to attend meetings.

Patrick Bowling, PA DEP, suggested revisiting the partnership framework to revise the language in addition to any decision related to a change in fees for small systems.

A motion was proposed by Tom Jacobus, Washington Aqueduct, to waive the membership fees for small systems for the first year while the Partnership crafts a formal policy in the next year. The motion was seconded and all were in favor.

It was suggested the outreach committee re-start outreach efforts to other systems in the basin to grow the Partnership's membership. An initial committee activity could be the creation of a partnership benefits flyer.

## **West Virginia Source Water Assessments**

Monica Whyte, WV DHHR, provided an update on the West Virginia Source Water Assessments. Of the systems in the Potomac Basin, 13 plans have been submitted and seven are still being reviewed. The systems have been encouraged to participate in DWSPP as a management strategy in their planning documents. These documents are available through

[District 9](#) and [District 8](#). Some of the West Virginia systems will be at the Partnership's annual meeting in Shepherdstown in November.

### **CSX Outreach**

CSX has expressed interest in holding spill exercises across the region and to showcase a new software modeling tool. As a result of a recent incident, DC's mayor appointed DOEE to head a rail safety program including appointing a rail safety officer to work with railroad operators in the region. Planning for an exercise or other outreach and engagement activities will pick-up once the rail safety program is in place.

### **FY 2017 Budget**

The proposed budget for fiscal year 2017 was distributed prior to the meeting. Expenditures for fiscal year 2016 were higher than recent years due to increased Partnership activities and priority projects. ICPRB will ask for a 5% raise in dues for FY 2018 to help cover costs. Consensus approved the 2017 budget.

### **Annual Meeting Planning**

Jim Palmer is working on putting together the agenda for the annual meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup> in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. ICPRB is seeking volunteers to help craft the agenda and other meeting preparations. If you are interested in helping or have suggestions for meeting topics or presentations, email Jim Palmer ([jpalmer@icprb.org](mailto:jpalmer@icprb.org)) by mid-September.

### **Announcements**

- National Source Water Collaborative has started a new [Learning Exchange](#) initiative webinar series. Each month will cover a new topic on source water collaborative from around the country.
- Mid-Atlantic Conference of the American Water Resources Association, Wilmington, DE – September 15-16
- Maryland Crude Oil and Flammable Liquids PREP Seminar, Perry Point Medical Center, VA – September 13
  - This discussion-based exercise will highlight a crude oil or flammable liquids incident via rail. The scenario will focus on the Susquehanna River; however, a seminar is designed as more of an informational discussion and a learning environment.
- Firefighting Foam Training, Sayreville, NJ – September 23 or 24
  - This program is intended for senior emergency management officers, strategic planners, logistics officers and supply chain supervisors including those with interests associated with the environmental PFOS/PFOA issues relating to AFFF firefighting foams.
- COG NCRWARN Seminar and TTX – September 28
- Chesapeake Watershed Forum, Shepherdstown, WV – September 29-October 2