

# West Virginia Water Gaging Council

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday November 4, 2010

1:00 P.M.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Headquarters, Kanawha City

### Council Membership Representation

Organization	Present	Represented By
WV Conservation Agency (WVCA)	X	Russ Campbell Ed Cox
WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP)	X	Mike Stratton Brian Carr
WV Division of Highways (WVDOH)		
WV Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM)		
WV Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR)		
WV Water Research Institute (WVWRI)	X	Glenn Waldron
WV Rivers Coalition (WVRC)		
Canaan Valley Institute (CVI)	X	Todd Miller
Michael Baker Jr., INC. (MBJ)	X	Mohiuddin Shaik
U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)	X	Hugh Bevans Ron Evaldi
National Weather Service (NWS)	X	John Sikora
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	X	Angela Greene
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	X	
Huntington District		Ken Woodard Dana Moses
Pittsburgh District		Robert Yue
Baltimore District		

## Other Representation

Organization	Represented By
West Virginia Rural Water Association	Lew Baker
Assistant Professor of Forest Hydrology West Virginia University	Nicolas Zegre
Engineering Perfection	Jerry Gilbert

## Administration

### Roll-Call

The Secretary conducted a Roll-Call of the member organizations. Upon conclusion of Roll-Call, the Secretary notified the Council Chair that a Quorum had been established.

### Call to Order and Introductions

Russ Campbell, West Virginia Conservation Agency and Council Chair (Chair), called the meeting to order at 1:08 P.M.

### Agenda Review

Campbell, Chair, asked if there were any additions to the Agenda. A request was made to add two individuals to the agenda to make presentations. Campbell, Chair, indicated that Mr. Nicolas Zegre, Professor of Forest Hydrology at West Virginia University, be added to new business and Mr. Jerry Gilbert, Engineering Perfection, also be added to the new business. Campbell, Chair, asked for a motion to accept the agenda as amended. John Sikora, National Weather Service (NWS), made the motion to accept the agenda as amended. Hugh Bevans, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and Council Vice Chair (Vice Chair), seconded the motion. Motion passed.

### Approval of 9/22/09 Meeting Minutes

Campbell, Chair, asked if there were any additions, corrections, or comments to the minutes. Robert Yue, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Pittsburgh District, indicated that a correction needed to be made as Ken Woodard was listed as Pittsburgh District and should have been listed as Huntington District. Campbell, Chair, stated that minutes would be amended and called for a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mike Stratton, WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP), moved to approve minutes as amended, John Sikora, NWS, seconded. Minutes approved as amended.

## Unfinished or Ongoing Business

### 1. Council Webpage:

A report was given by Edward Cox, WVCA, which stated in the prior 90 day period, the web site had been visited 328 times. These visits broke down into three areas of Direct Traffic, Search Engines and Referring sites. The amount of traffic to each was **Direct Traffic 10.67%**; **Search Engines 40.24%** and **Referring Sites 49.09%**.

### **1. Council Webpage continued:**

In response to the request for additional information to determine the reason for web visits, an analysis of data revealed that 125 of 132 visits were from Google searches. Analysis of searches indicated that 44 of 132 were related to gaging or our gaging council. Searches for Virginia water produced 84 searches and the other 4 searches were unrelated. In conclusion, 240 out of 328 site visits were made that were looking for gaging or our gaging council. Ron Evaldi, USGS, indicated that if an agency adds new gages that they should contact him and he will add them to the Switching Station Database for water-monitoring gages.

### **2. Water Resources Protection and Management Act:**

Mike Stratton, WVDEP, reported that progress is slow due to the users withdrawing water and not reporting. Current indicators advise that water not be taken at this time as it is too dry. Some individuals are ignoring these warnings by pulling up their trucks by the creeks and dropping a hose and drawling water. Local residents are calling WVDEP and informing them of this activity and we are reacting to these calls. All this slows our recording of withdrawal. On a positive note, WVDEP has updated its water withdrawal guidance tool by increasing the number of gages we are referencing. Also WVDEP has met with stakeholders in 50% of the state's watersheds. This is in preparation for drafting the water management plan for the state by 2013.

### **3. USACE & DEP's to Fund Upgrades of Gage Equipment and Flood Inundation Mapping:**

Mike Stratton, WVDEP, reported that progress was being made with the inundation mapping. WVDEP is working with a Contractor trying to take the contractor's modeling software for streams and fit it over WVDEP's data. Simplified mapping of 44 forecast stations and a more detailed modeling for two streams would cost \$90,000. Issues concerning funding of this program have been resolved with USACE prior to this date and will move forward. There needs to be a letter of intent signed between WVDEP and USACE. From here we will enter into a USACE feasibility study and cost sharing agreement. Once study is complete we will take the remaining funds to buy the needed equipment for the identified sites. The number of sites that will be upgraded will depend on the amount of funds are available. WVDEP would be willing to work with the Gaging Council members on which sites are deemed of greater value. It is moving slowly, but we are doing it correctly which in the end will give us the product we want.

### **4. 2010 West Virginia Water Conference Summary:**

Glenn Waldron, WV Water Research Institute (WVWRI) reported that this year's conference was held in Morgantown, WV. He stated that prior to the conference; an organizing committee was formed in order to use their expertise to identify the broad topics that we would want to cover at the conference. Once the broad topics were established, a request for abstracts was sent out to water researcher in the state and posted on the WVWRI website. We received over 40 abstracts of which 30 will be presentations and remainder will be poster presentations. These research topics were broken up into specific topics for our conference program. The conference program contained 11 concurrent sessions and 4 preliminary sessions. This was our first conference to have a collegiate debate. The debate topic was water withdrawal from Marcellus Gas well drilling. The topic was divided into more regulation verses less regulation. This was very interesting to all who listened. The conference was very successful with 220 individuals participating this year. Also there were several guest speakers and 10 exhibitors which enhanced the program.

# **New Business**

## **1. Alert Flood Warning System Communication Upgrade**

John Sikora, NWS, stated that this was mainly a West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) project as they are doing all the work. DHSEM will be upgrading their entire system with a series of new repeaters and new-wave time wave boxes which utilizes the internet. This will lessen the amount of lost data that the old system would do. Also these new time wave boxes produce more reliable data than before. The Weather Service is working with all the states that use I-FLOWS and funneling these states data into a central computer system and uploaded into the new weather service I-FLOWS site. West Virginia and most of the surrounding states are still in the process of completing this link up to the new site.

## **2. USGS Surface Water Review:**

Ron Evaldi, USGS, reported that during the week of November 15, 2010, the West Virginia Surface Water Gaging Program will be going through a review which is conducted every three years. This review will bring in USGS personnel from outside West Virginia to audit how the West Virginia program is operated. Part of this review will require these personnel to go out to the gages and ensure that West Virginia USGS is operating the gages to the national standard. This is a Quality Assurance program under the United States Department of Interior that ensures USGS has national consistency in our programs so that when we look at the nation as a whole the data is of the same standard. West Virginia USGS will share this report with the council at the next meeting.

## **3. The West Virginia Water Research Institute call for Proposals:**

Glenn Waldron, WWRRI, stated that they currently had one RFP out with USGS. An email blast went out to researchers in West Virginia concerning this RFP. Research priorities with this RFP are energy production impacts on water resources and valley fills. Eligible participants for this program are West Virginia academic Institution researchers and faculty member researchers at colleges and universities. There is \$90,000 available with 2 to 4 projects to be awarded out of this RFP. There is a 2 to 1 Federal cost share match.

## **4. Gage Losses or Needs:**

Ron Evaldi, USGS, reported that during the last gaging council meeting he was asked to prepare a funding spreadsheet for the USGS river gaging program (handout provided). The handout indicates that USGS did lose a gage on Stony River at Mt. Storm and this gage will now be run independently. It was located at the Mt. Storm power plan on a heavily regulated river. Due to the heavily regulation on this river, the data from this gage was only applicable to this river and not useful for region comparison. The USGS did receive a letter from the Boone County Commission requesting a gage be installed on the Little Coal River at Danville, WV. It was noted that the request was received by both USGS and WVDHSEM. The position of USGS is that this gage is recommended to be added under the Statewide Flood Protection Plan. USGS will conduct further discussion with the Boone County Commission. If USGS budget permits, USGS will to match Boone County Commission for such a gage. This is in the early stages as USGS has yet to respond to the Boon County Commission until USGS verifies its budget constraints.

#### **4. Gage Losses or Needs: continued**

Current funding of the USGS River Gaging Program shows that USACE funds 38%, USGS funds 33%, State & County funds 26% and Private funds 3%. This does not include WVCA funding of Reservoir gaging or the ground water monitoring funded by DEP. USGS stated that a new gage cost around \$25,000 to install and \$15,000 each additional year to operate. USGS would cost share 50% on that gage. Russ Campbell, Chair, asked USGS if the county was aware of the annual maintenance cost and did the county understand that in 10 years they would have been responsible for 50% of \$150,000. USGS indicated that it is important to make the county aware of this issue.

#### **5. Budget Forecast Potential Impacts Gage Networks:**

Hugh Bevans, USGS, reported that there has been no action on the federal budget for Department of Interior and USGS may work off a continuing resolution. If issues arise with the state budgets of the state agencies on this council, let us keep each other up-to-date on funding shortfalls that will affect funding of gages.

#### **6. Engineering Perfection Presentation:**

Mr. Jerry Gilbert, Engineering Perfection, presented a product that his company had developed. This product was a flood inundation prototype that it had completed for the town of Tornado, WV. This has been placed on the National Weather Service website and validated from the last storm that hit the town. In this presentation Mr. Gilbert demonstrated that his prototype could be implemented across the state to do flood inundation mapping. He requested any input from the council would be appreciated and if the council felt it would be of benefit to the state of West Virginia. Russ Campbell, Chair, asked Mr. Gilbert the web address to review this product. John Sikora, NWS, indicated that it was on his site and gave out the web address to the council. Council members can review the product and can make comments back to Mr. Gilbert of Engineering Perfection.

#### **7. Assistant Professor of Forest Hydrology from West Virginia University:**

Mr. Nicolas Zegre, Assistant Professor of Forest Hydrology, West Virginia University, stated that he is studying Hydrology modeling in his research at the University, as well as, many other aspects of Forest hydrology. Currently the University has three projects up and running in the state of West Virginia. The University has three new gages on these projects and we would be willing to share the information from these gages to the council. Mr. Nicolas Zegre indicated that he would place a link to the gaging council's webpage for his students to see.

#### **8. Other New Business:**

None.

#### **Next Meeting:**

February 10, 2011, at WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) in Kanawha City Elections to be held at this meeting.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:17 P.M.**

**ACTION ITEMS:**

There were no action items.

*Respectfully submitted*

Edward G. Cox Jr.  
Secretary