

West Virginia Water Gaging Council

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday September 22, 2009

1:00 P.M.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Headquarters, Kanawha City

Council Membership Representation

Organization	Present	Proxy	Represented By
WV Conservation Agency (WVCA)	X		Russ Campbell
U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)	X		Ron Evaldi
WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP)	X		Mike Stratton Brian Carr
WV Division of Highways (WVDOH)	X		Doug Kirk
WV Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM)			
WV Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR)			
WV Water Research Institute (WVWRI)	X		Tamara Vandivort
National Weather Service (NWS)	X		John Sikora
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	X		
Huntington District			Stephen Porter Tim Curran
Pittsburgh District			Werner Loehlein
Baltimore District			
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)			
WV Rivers Coalition (WVRC)	X		Shanda Minney
Canaan Valley Institute (CVI)	X		Todd Miller
Michael Baker Jr., INC. (MBJ)			

Other Representation

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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 1:05 P.M.

Agenda Review

Campbell, Chair, asked if there were any additions to the Agenda. None were voiced. Doug Kirk moved that the agenda be approved, Tim Curran seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by voice vote.

Approval of 7/07/09 Meeting Minutes

Campbell, Chair, asked if there were any additions, corrections, or comments to the minutes. Ron Evaldi asked if the nominations for offices were closed during the 7/7/09 meeting and by general discussion it was decided that the nominations had been closed. Russ then asked if there was interest in accepting the minutes as corrected. Ron Evaldi moved to approve, John Sikora seconded, and the minutes were approved by voice vote.

Unfinished Business

1. Council Webpage – Record of use:

Russ Campbell reported that the Council's web page had 300 hits from 10 different countries since May 2009, with 82% new visits. Ron Evaldi reported that the "Switching Station" basic file had been revised and that the West Virginia Conservation Agency was in the process of updating the web page.

2. Water Resources Protection and Management Act:

Mike Stratton reported that a meeting was held with about 40 interested water users in the Tygart Valley River watershed, which included development council representatives and mayors, to give input into development of the statewide water management plan. Another such meeting is scheduled in the West Fork watershed on October 17. Mike also reported that software is nearing completion for hydrofracing water-use reporting that will soon be available for use by the public. WVDEP is also working on an internet guide intended to tell the water user how much water withdrawal is allowed from a stream for various conditions based on real-time water gage information. This is not approved yet, but is a recommendation. For small ungaged streams, common sense will be needed.

Ron Evaldi reported that wells in McDowell and Monongalia Counties have recently been added to the statewide well network as part of the Water Resources Protection and Management Act. Two additional wells will soon be added in Barbour and Ritchie Counties.

3. USACE & DHSEM upgrade of gage equipment initiative:

Stephen Porter reported that he met with the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) on July 20 and DHSEM declined to participate further in the 205 Project process. He subsequently met with West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection who has interest in participation as the non-Federal partner but is not sure that they can manage the required 35% match. Stephen explained that of the 35% required non-Federal match, 95% could be in-kind services. John Sikora asked if there could be multiple partners and Stephen indicated that it was possible but would be simpler if there was one sponsor agreement with additional sub-agreements. Mike Stratton would like to meet with other agency representatives to discuss partnership possibilities, and he and Stephen will set such a meeting.

Stephen indicated that the funds were available at this time but could possibly be redirected in the event of a National disaster. He also reported that he has requested an additional \$500,000.

New Business

1. Proposal to update Appendix B of the West Virginia Flood Protection Plan:

Russ Campbell proposed that the Council consider update of Appendix B of the West Virginia Flood Protection Plan. Appendix B deals with the West Virginia flood warning system and contains Table 2-4 "Rain and Stream Gages for All of West Virginia—With Proposed Changes." It was noted in the discussion that there have been many changes in the gage networks and equipment needs since the table was prepared. It was also noted that the 205 Project that Stephen Porter is working on was originally intended to address the proposed changes listed in this table. It was suggested that update of Appendix B could be done as part of the 205 Project. DHSEM may have already developed revised plans for the IFLOWS network of gages and it was suggested that they be included in any efforts to update Table 2-4. John Sikora and Ron Evaldi expressed interest in participation.

2. Floodplain Managers Group:

Todd Miller reported that an interim committee of about a dozen persons is currently drafting bylaws for the "West Virginia Flood Mitigation Managers Association." Jerry Gilbert is chair of the organization. The initial meeting was held in Clarksburg in April and attracted about 80 people interested in forming the association. Todd expressed hope that the association will help facilitate communication and understanding of floodplain management issues.

3. Election of Officers:

Russ Campbell excused himself from the meeting while acting secretary Ron Evaldi took a vote of the Council for election of officers. Russ Campbell was re-elected as Council Chair, and Hugh Bevans was re-elected as Vice Chair. When informed of the election result, Russ expressed appreciation for the support of the Council membership. He stated that it is his goal to encourage continued interaction of the membership and that he will strive to increase participation of all member groups.

4. Division of Natural Resources study on Shavers Fork:

Ron Evaldi reported that USGS will install a water-quality monitor on Shavers Fork at Cheat Bridge to measure hourly temperature, specific conductance, pH, and dissolved oxygen. This monitoring effort is in support of a stream habitat improvement project by West Virginia Division of Natural Resources and WVU.

5. Monongahela River water-quality activities:

Tammy Vandivort reported that WV Water Research Institute is sampling at 12 sites every other week. Data are being uploaded to web site www.monwq.net. Several meetings have been held recently for coordination of agency studies.

6. USGS North Carolina Hydrologic Alert System:

Ron Evaldi reported on a system under development in the USGS North Carolina Water Science Center to provide real-time email or text message alert notifications when user-specified thresholds are met at gaging stations. This is intended to be a free service that the public will be able to subscribe to by filling an on-line form describing which gage to base the alert upon and what conditions are to met.

7. Other New Business:

1) Mike Stratton suggested that an alternate meeting location might be desirable to enable face-to-face participation of members who are not located in the Charleston area. Ron reported that he had spoken with Jeffrey Toler with the USACE at Stonewall Jackson Lake about the availability of the meeting room at the Dam's visitor center. The room is available for meetings but needs to be reserved well in advance. The dam is located off I79 exit 96 near Weston. In general discussion it was suggested to try to arrange for a spring Council meeting at this site and Ron Evaldi was assigned to make the arrangements.

The next meeting of the WVVGC is planned for mid January 2010 and the spring meeting at Stonewall Jackson Dam will try for mid April 2010.

2) Tim Curran reported that Huntington Corps of Engineers O&M section may be able to work with the National Weather Service to provide additional rain or stream gages. Huntington Corps will be able to have all gages transmitting at 300 baud by next year. They may also be able to fund USGS for some gage improvements similar to installation of staff gages at 8 stations recently. The Corps will be more proactive in getting verification of gage readings for quality control.

Summersville Dam and Lake gages will soon be converted to 300 baud. The outflow gage is now a pressure transducer system and the lake gage will be instrumented soon with a pressure transducer with a range of about 200 ft. Bluestone will be updated with a pressure transducer that will go above the spillway. A new staff gage will be installed at Hilldale when the new bridge is completed.

Bluestone Dam and spillway is safe for all but extreme events. The Corps will continue to address highest priority issues with a combination of structural and non-structural approaches.

Werner Loehlein added that Pittsburgh Corps received \$720,000 of Recovery Act funds to upgrade Locks and Dams gaging equipment.

Mike Stratton moved and Doug Kirk seconded a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

Ronald D. Evaldi
Acting Secretary