

# West Virginia Water Gaging Council

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday March 12, 2009

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Headquarters, Kanawha City

### Council Membership Representation

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

### 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 Chair (Chair), called the meeting to order at 1:17 P.M.

## Agenda Review

Campbell, Chair, asked if there were any additions the Agenda. None were voiced.

## Approval of 12/4/08 Meeting Minutes

Campbell, Chair, asked if there were any additions, corrections, or comments to the minutes. Hearing none, he then asked if there was interest in accepting the minutes as presented.

**Action:** John Sikora moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Doug Kirk seconded. Motion passed.

## Unfinished Business

### 1. Council Webpage – Record of use and efforts to publicize:

Ron Evaldi read report prepared by WVCA staff: October 117 webpage hits, December 93, January 159, February 64. Pocahontas County mentioned the Council webpage in their newsletter. Russ will work with staff of the WVCA Public Affairs Office to send the press release out to a wider audience by next meeting.

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

Mike Stratton reported that much progress has been made. Mike plans to meet with personnel of other agencies to seek information to meet plan needs. The Tygart Valley River is the first watershed being examine because it is self contained within the borders of West Virginia. A draft of the Tygart Valley report should be available in a couple of months. This will be the templet for all other reports. No new data is being collected. They artrying to gather all available information and put it into mapable format for evaluation. Ron Evaldi added that the river gages at Macfarland and Little would be installed by the end of March.

Mike also reported that WVDEP has contracted with USGS to log some ground-water wells. WVDEP is working on proposals related to the Stimulus Package for Water Planning that could result in training for County Planners. They are also preparing a grant proposal to characterize mine pools, which is of interest to the State Legislature. Another WVDEP inititive is with Marshall University to develop a Marcellus Shale water use database which will include water use data for other shale layers. This will focus on where the water is taken from and where it is disposed. Questions need to be addressed about large ponds that are being built for oil and gas development related to possible exemptions for oil and gas. Russ asked if the ponds fall under dam safety requirements and Mike responded that it is being look at.

### **3. USACE & WVDHSEM upgrade of gage equipment initiative:**

Stephen Porter updated the Council on the 205 Project trying to get funds for high-data-rate transmitters, IFLAWS transmitters, and for real-time flood inundation mapping. The funding level sought is about \$500,000. The scope of the project will be modified based upon available funds. They need to complete a partnership agreement with the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in order to proceed further.

### **4. State Cooperator Roundtables:**

Hugh Bevans reported that he, Russ Campbell, and Ron Evaldi attended the Mid-Atlantic States Cooperator Roundtable in February. The roundtable was sponsored by the Interagency Commission on Water Policy. The meeting focused on funding for gages and water investigations in cooperation with the USGS. The main problem noted is that the State agencies are having to fund a larger cost share because USGS program funds have not increased with inflation. Agency representatives from Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York, and New Jersey attended to share ideas and plans about how various gage programs are managing to remain viable. Russ gave a presentation about the WVVGC on a panel with Delaware and New Jersey Council representatives. Ron presented a poster on the WVVGC "Switching Station." The format led to much agency interaction and was very positive.

Brian Carr stated that he had attended a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers meeting that also emphasized the value of water gages and listed the following web site: [www.building-collaboration-for-water.org](http://www.building-collaboration-for-water.org).

### **5. National Hydrologic Warning Council Membership:**

Ron Evaldi reported that the WVVGC has joined as a member of the National Hydrologic Warning Council (NHWC) thru the USGS as the member and other Council representatives as associate members. Ron will email Council members information about their logon IDs and passwords.

## **New Business**

### **1. Monongahela River QW Monitors:**

Ron Evaldi briefed the Council about a WVDEP and USGS cooperative program to monitor hourly temperature, pH, and specific conductance at the following sites:

Monongahela River at Point Marion, PA  
Dunkard Creek at Shannopin, PA  
Tygart Valley River at Colfax, WV  
West Fork River at Enterprise, WV  
Monongahela River below Hildebrand Lock and Dam, WV

This monitoring effort is looking at possible affects of oil and gas development in the Marcellus Shale. The monitor data will be hosted on the USGS real-time web page.

Hugh Bevans described a proposal by the West Virginia and Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Institutes, USACE, and USGS for additional water-quality monitoring of Marcellus Shale activities. He noted that many agencies are sharing data on this issue. The grant will not be awarded until July, if approved.

## **2. Monongahela River Basin Raingages:**

Ron Evaldi announced plans to host rainfall information on the web that is being collected at streamflow gaging stations in the Monongahela River Basin. These data are collected thru cooperative agreement with the USACE. The rain gages must first have calibration checked.

## **3. Ohio River QW Monitors:**

Hydropower development at Pike Island Lock and Dam will require monitoring of hourly temperature, pH, specific conductance, dissolved oxygen, and total dissolved gasses above and below the dam and downstream above Hannibal Lock and Dam. Ron Evaldi reported that it is the intention of USGS to propose to FERC to install and operate the monitors and host the data on the real-time web page..

## **4. Other new business:**

Tim Curran reported that Bluestone Dam is now classified a High Hazard Dam and can not now be used for full flood control until repairs are made. Because of this reduced flood-control capacity, real-time information about gage levels in the Kanawha River Basin has increased in importance. Gages in the Kanawha River Basin will be upgraded to transmit hourly. Currently about half of the gages transmit only once each 4 hours. Werner Loehlein observed that increased monitoring is key to gaining public assurance. It was further discussed that the Corps could induce downstream flooding to prevent catastrophic failure, but an event that could result in failure has a fairly low probability of occurrence. Until repairs are made, the Corps will treat all floods as "major floods."

Tim also noted that the Corps has some new requirements for gage operations:

1. Requirement for gage verification of accuracy.
2. Periodic check of gage datum by levels. This year the Corps will verify datums in the Kanawha River Basin. NAVD88 datum will be used.

## **5. Wrap-up comments from the membership:**

Mike Stratton – WVDEP wrote a letter to WV Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) requesting that Handar 555 data collection platforms that have been removed from service be made available for other gage needs. One such need is upgrade of monitoring wells to transmit hourly. Russ Campbell will make a call to DHSEM after a conference call with Mike Stratton and Ron Evaldi to further discuss this issue.

Hugh Bevans – Presented a letter of support for USGS Cooperative Water Program and National Streamflow Information Program signed by 53 organizations.

Ron Evaldi – Presented information on low ground-water levels throughout West Virginia based on monitor well levels early March. USGS will again prepare an assessment prior to the next Council meeting.

Tim Curran – Corps may begin to update a few old stage vs. discharge ratings each year.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:04 P.M.**

*Respectfully submitted*

Ronald D. Evaldi  
Acting Secretary

