



Science & Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)
Annual Spring Meeting
March 14, 2025, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

STAC

Randall Brown (PADEP)

Jessie Buckner (Sovereign Consulting)

Lance Butler (PWD)

Sheila Eyler (USFWS)

Greg Lech (PAF&B)

LeeAnn Haaf (PDE)

Lesley Baggett (AKRF)

Josh Moody (NJDEP)

Alison Rogerson (DNREC)

Scott Ensign (Stroud)

Dave Smith (USGS)

Kelly Somers (EPA Region III)

Namsoo Suk (DRBC)

Bart Wilson (USFWS)

Mike Heller (DRBC)

Kristen Bowman Kavanaugh (DRBC)

Taylor Krolik

Kuo-Liang Lai (EPA Region III)

Megan Mackey (EPA Region III)

Chris Main (DNREC)

Jonathan Malzone (NPS)

Matthew Fritch (PWD)

Naomi Intrator

Elaine Panuccio (DRBC)

Maggie Reilly

Sarah Rikard (DEC)

Kate Schmidt (DRBC)

Lulin Zhong

John Yagecic (DRBC)

Zoltan Szabo (USGS)

MACC

Duke Adams

Thomas Amidon (DRBC)

Carl Bargery (DRBC)

Jake Bransky (DRBC)

Jeremy Conkle (DRBC)

Other Attendees

Haley Burns (PDE)

Leah Morgan (PDE)

Martha Maxwell Doyle (PDE)

Welcome & Introductions

- Elaine called the meeting to order
- Time use as match identification: Josh Moody, Jessie Buckner, Dave Smith, Alison Rogerson, and Lance Butler's time can be used as match.
- Approval of meeting minutes from May STAC meeting

PDE STAC Business

- Approval of minutes from January meeting, time use as match in the Zoom chat thread
 - Jessie Buckner motioned to accept the meeting minutes, Alison Rogerson seconded, no oppositions.
- Acknowledgement of STAC members stepping down
 - As many are aware, our STAC members are a group of standing members from state/federal agencies, but also a mix of elected members from a range of different institutions. Each elected member serves 2 years on the STAC, and can renominate themselves for continued terms, or step down. This election season we extend our gratitude to those who have served and now are moving on to other things: first, we want to thank Dorina Frizzera who served on the STAC since 2012 and was our chair for 2021-2024. Next, we'd like to thank Daphne Munroe who served on the STAC since 2017. And also, thanks to Scott Ensign who served us this past year. We really appreciate the time these members have contributed to the success of the STAC!
- STAC elections – nominations and timeline review (Haaf)
 - Three positions are open because of these people stepping down but we can accommodate up to 5 – we are looking for nominations for elections
 - We are looking for vast experience as we approach 2027 given that we will be writing an update to the TREB
 - Ideally the STAC term begins on July 1, so we will be looking for nominations and elections will be virtual and likely will be rolling. LeeAnn will be sending out that information via email.
- STAC 2025 Workplan check in
 - Onboarding committee and TREB planning subcommittees
 - We're looking forward to setting up 2 subcommittees this year for the STAC—one that will help create an onboarding process for new members, and then another that will be focusing on how we want to carry out our routine status and trends reporting (TREB). If anyone wants to join these, let us know. You don't have to be on the STAC to join the subcommittees.
 - Greg can help on the onboarding committee
 - TREB planning: Josh Moody, Jessie Buckner, Kelly Somers, Namsoo Suk
 - Can we get an onboarding committee ready to help with the upcoming elections?
 - Schubel and Eichbaum 1990

- In line with TREB planning, LeeAnn came across this document not long ago that reviews the state of conservation in the Delaware Estuary in 1990—they create goals for achievement by 2020 and LeeAnn think it's an interesting look at what got us to where we are now. Many things have been accomplished, so just sharing that and hoping that it can be part of our larger TREB discussions.
- What goals did they have that we've already accomplished? What can we broadcast for the next 30 years?
- Previous TREB had feature boxes – can we provide something similar in 2027 for this?
- Shad white paper subcommittee update
 - This will go into the TREB when the TREB gets updated
 - The draft has been completed and is currently being reviewed by the subcommittee
 - If anyone else is interested in reviewing during this time period, please reach out to Sheila
 - Goal is for this to be released in July 2025

MACC Business

- If anyone is interested in becoming a non-reserved or reserved member position on the MACC, reach out to Elaine via email: elaine.panuccio@drbc.gov
- Special Protection Waters Monitoring
 - All of this will take place if funding all comes though via grants; autumn updates may seem scaled back if funding gets cut.
 - Currently in 2023-2025 assessment period
- Non-tidal chloride monitoring is being done now
- A pilot study is being done to implement salt reduction measures as a potential solution to manage chloride
- Cyanotoxin monitoring
 - SPATT (solid phase adsorption toxins tracking) bags are mesh bags with resin inside that lay off fishing piers and boat docks. These are drinking water intake locations and these bags monitor for cyanotoxins.
- Antimicrobial resistance monitoring
 - Monitoring to evaluate risks to public health
 - Developing a monitoring approach in 2025, with a QAPP, and target sampling
- Tributary monitoring
 - DRBC is supporting efforts NJ is leading for water qualities and nutrients in tidal tributaries

- Sampling began in April, grab samples being collected monthly
 - Sites were chosen by NJ
- Toxics monitoring
 - 6-PPDq is a chemical that is found on tires and can affect aquatic ecosystems via runoff and is being monitored by DRBC.
 - Sites were chosen because they were brook trout habitat sites; 100 nanograms of 6-PPDq per liter will kill YOY or juvenile brook trout
 - July 2024 quarterly sampling coincided with a rain event, and sites at Valley Creek next to the turnpike had a high concentration; this environment also supports brook trout.
- Boat run monitoring
 - In the Delaware Estuary, water quality parameters at 22 stations from the head of tide to the Atlantic Ocean from March to October are monitored once per month
 - Low level bromide parameter was recently added to the boat run; this parameter is used to estimate the proportion of road salt vs terrestrial salt
 - All boat run monitoring is available on the National Water Quality data website
- Drone based monitoring
 - FAA part 107 – numerous DRBC staff are licensed flyers under this
- Bacterial monitoring
 - Starting in summer 2024, an expansive project in support of PADEP began; 135 sites were sampled six times in a 30 day window

Roundtable Updates

- EPA Region III – Kelly Somers
 - EPA staff still don't have final FY25 allocations but EPA staff are being advised that they are coming
 - Once this information is shared, EPA will be able to help get further monitoring objectives moving.
 - A new regional administrator was appointed: Amy Van Blarkum Lackey
 - Potential for her involvement in NEP will be shared when the time comes
- NOAA – no updates
- USFWS – no updates
- Delaware Water Gap – Jonathan Malzone
 - In a holding pattern right now
 - SPW monitoring starting this summer
- USGS – Zoltan Szabo

- There have been layoffs due to the federal funding; things have been “slower” but data was collected on halides and other indicators to be shared and used to better understand the river.
- NJDEP – Josh Moody
 - Recently released [NJDEP tidal wetland monitoring network website](#): organization of 15-20 cross sectional partners that monitor over 200 SET sites in NJ. Questions can be allocated to Josh.
- PADEP – Josh Lookenbill
 - New data collection protocols
 - Data collection protocols on streams and rivers have been developed. Various methods are new
- PA Fish and Boat – Greg Lech
 - Monitoring dwarf wedgemussel – Jake Bransky and perhaps an intern would be joining to help with this; Kelly Somers can also help get volunteers out to help with field work
- DNREC – Chris Main
 - There is limited space on the upper part of the river but in the next 1-1.5 years there will be a bigger boat to accommodate bigger groups.
- NY DEC – Sarah Rickard
 - Entering data solicitation period from end of May/early June through September
- Stroud – Scott Ensign
 - PFAS and biosolids publication
 - Effects of dam removal on fish passage in White Clay Creek
 - Stroud is in a NFWF project looking at NZ mud snails, trout, and shad populations; this work is underway.
- PWD – Matthew Fritch
 - On April 14, flow was reintroduced to the Manayunk Canal; closed to flow for 80 years – water quality goals include increased oxygen, decreased algal blooms
 - Public opening/ribbon cutting on June 26 in Philadelphia
 - Physiological rate processing studies, propagation R&D for mussels – propagation is occurring at FWW and open to others who may want to learn

Roundtable discussions

- Not much is currently happening with the CCMP update; this is not technically required at this time so the focus is shifting to the priorities currently in the CCMP.
- The next update of the CCMP will likely be 2028; the next big NEP report will be TREB in 2027, so we have some breathing room with regard to these.

- MACC members should be encouraged and feel welcome to join STAC subcommittees; these members would have a good idea of what might be missing and what needs to be fulfilled. Is it possible for the TREB subcommittee to be joint with MACC members since they are the ones collecting the data?
 - Namsoo can be a liaison between DRBC staff and PDE/STAC. Not everyone needs to attend every meeting, but Namsoo can tap specific people depending on topics and needs
- Updated vulnerability assessment is needed
 - This has not been discussed yet with STAC
 - Newly conveyed funding guidance
 - In 2018, PDE undertook a climate vulnerability action; however, in 2021, there was an adjustment to the Clean Water Act that requires this as a part of the CCMP.
 - STAC will likely lead coordination of this report.
 - Zoltan would potentially have data on groundwater that could contribute to the vulnerability assessment. There is a section on this in the report.
 - Previous climate vulnerability report:
https://s3.amazonaws.com/delawareestuary/PDE+CCMP+Climate+Vulnerability+Report_05.01.2017.pdf
 - Workbook used to develop the vulnerability assessment:
<https://www.epa.gov/cre/risk-based-adaptation>
- Anyone interested in joining the SIFT workshop, reach out to Elaine; the group focuses on salt impacts to waterways
- EPA is evaluating types of plastics and their sources; currently waiting on data to be uploaded and shared; this work is outside the watershed but will be available soon
- EPA is working with office of R&D to finalize a habitat suitability model for restoration of SAV in the tidal DE river; samples are currently under lab analysis

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Chris Main, seconded by Alison Rogerson.