

# APNEP Policy Board Meeting

Duke University, Nicholas School of the Environment

October 26, 2011

## **Attendance**

*Policy Board members:* Jack Thigpen, Kirk Havens, Wilson Laney, Tom Allen, Sara Benghauser, David Knight, Marjorie Rayburn, Richard Rogers, Bill Cox, Todd Miller, Tony Reevy

*Other attendees:* Rhonda Evans, Bill Holman, Sarah Bruce, Ana Zivanovic-Nenadovic

*APNEP staff:* Scott Gentry, Sarah Yelton, Jimmy Johnson, Todd Herbert, Bill Crowell, Dean Carpenter, Jim Hawhee

## **Welcome: Tony Reevy, Chair**

Tony introduced Bill Cox, EPA's new representative to the Policy Board. Bill Cox gave an overview of his position and experience. Tony read the conflict of interest statement. Tony then introduced Dr. Chameides, Dean of the Nicholas School for the Environment at Duke University.

## **Welcome from Nicholas School of the Environment: Dr. William Chameides**

Dean Chameides offered his brief biography, including an overview of his experience relating to air quality research. He noted APNEP's environmental assessment and importance of efforts like these. He welcomed the Policy Board to the Raleigh-Durham area, one of the "smartest" metropolitan areas in the country. He noted that Durham and Duke were built on tobacco, but now Durham is one of the most smoke-free cities in the country. He emphasized that times can change, expressing support for APNEP's efforts. The Albemarle-Pamlico region is among America's largest and most important estuarine ecosystems. Protecting this system offers a technical but also a social challenge. He expressed his thanks and admiration for our work. He emphasized the Nicholas School's mission to develop applied knowledge that benefits the environment. Solutions will come not from single disciplines, but from people who understand the interactions between these disciplines. Dean Chameides noted Duke's Masters of Environmental Management program, which trains professionals to do the applied environmental work we undertake.

## **Public Comments: Tony Reevy**

Tony opened the floor for public comments, and noted that this period will remain open during the meeting. No public comments were made.

## **Approval of June Meeting Notes**

Tony referenced the draft meeting notes. Todd Miller offered a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Richard Rogers. The minutes were approved unanimously.

## **Director's Report: Dr. Bill Crowell**

Due to the presence of new members, Tony asked the members present to identify themselves and discuss their work. Each Policy Board member present briefly introduced themselves.

Bill mentioned that public meetings will be coming soon, pending the results of the PB meeting.

Bill also noted that reports were submitted to the EPA for leveraging funds and lands protected and restored within the region. Rhonda gave an overview of what these numbers signify. David Knight asked for the numbers to be sent as soon as possible. Bill stated that the results are submitted to an online reporting system (NEPORT) and the totals would be report back to him sometime next year. Bill noted some issues with NEPORT and limitations reporting habitat enhancement efforts. One project in particular, APNEP's work at Point Peter, was vastly underreported due to the location of monitoring wells and EPA's desire for more stringent documentation on the project. By APNEP's estimate, the hydrological restoration project resulted in 44,000 restored acres, but only 1,000 could be reported to EPA.

APNEP community specialist Jim Hawhee offered an overview of APNEP's public meeting schedule to solicit input for the CCMP.

Bill referenced APNEP's list of accomplishments for the previous fiscal year. Jim noted that the list provided only include completed projects and not ongoing initiatives or APNEP's participation in working groups. Bill made special note of the SAV mapping project and the coverage it received, which was possible only through the coordination of many partners. It is the first ever comprehensive mapping effort for this resource in the region, but Bill notes that Chesapeake Bay does this every year. He also noted how many people are using this information. APNEP program scientist Dean Carpenter noted that 137,000 acres of SAV were visible in our management area, and Jim Hawhee noted that 36 people have downloaded that information from various state and federal agencies. Work to map the resource again through the SAV partnership is ongoing. A Memorandum of Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation took from November to June to get ready, which has caused some delay. Wilson Laney also talked about the utility of the SAV mapping project. Wilson noted that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife uses this information as it relates to waterfowl organisms and aquatic organisms that depend on it. Stock assessment committees are beginning to understand the linkages between habitat and stocks, so that regulators can factor in changes in the resources. Wilson requested that APNEP offer a presentation for the habitat committee of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Committee. Historically, this organization developed a SAV strategy that launched NC's effort on this project. The committee is meeting in the spring and perhaps should be briefed.

Tony noted Chesapeake Bay's monitoring network as well as their SAV efforts. He noted the feeling that monitoring is often less of a state priority than other efforts. With cuts in the states' budgets, there is a loss in monitoring capacity that could help inform management efforts. Kirk Havens noted that in order to manage adaptively and be accountable, the state's environmental monitoring network must be adequately maintained.

Tony asked for a 10 minute break.

#### **Review of Draft CCMP: Dr. Bill Crowell**

Tony reopened the meeting, and then turned it back over to Bill. Before doing so, Tony read an email from Kay Winn on behalf of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, which was complimentary about APNEP's efforts to develop the CCMP. Marjorie Rayburn discussed the CAC meeting held two days prior, which was focused primarily on reviewing the CCMP and efforts to make it approachable to a non-technical

audience. The CAC also discussed the role of indicators and how they can be incorporated into the plan, which gives the public an idea of the things that will be monitored. Marjorie gave examples of some changes that were made as a result of CAC feedback.

Sarah Bruce (Triangle J Council of Governments) and Bill Holman (Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions) arrived and were briefly welcomed by the Committee.

Bill Crowell noted he was pleased with the draft, and he credited staff and reviewers for their effort on this document. Bill reviewed the table of contents and introductory paragraph. The Policy Board provided feedback, asking staff to consider adding more full treatments of sea level rise, the role of funding in the CCMP process, and the role of adaptive management. The Policy Board also offered suggestions for improvement about the adaptive management figures offered in the introduction. Bill stated that he would work with Dr. Havens on the refinements.

#### **Working Lunch: Sound Learning Teacher Institute: Sarah Yelton**

The group broke briefly as lunch was served. Sarah Yelton, a former member of the N.C. Office of Environmental Education and a current APNEP contract employee, provided an overview of APNEP's Sound Learning Teacher Institute, which the program has funded since 2004.

#### **Continued Review of Draft CCMP: Dr. Bill Crowell**

Bill began again by introducing our plan actions. He discussed the distinctions between lead and key partner organizations, and discussed the philosophy to primarily include partners with regional influence and missions with an environmental focus. The list is not intended to be exclusive or comprehensive in the implementation of plan actions.

An action was suggested regarding the education of regional congressional representatives. Others noted current efforts in the plan that could be inclusive of this approach and suggested this level is sufficient. David Knight also noted that a subgroup of Policy Board members might engage and educate politicians and policymakers with influence on APNEP's mission.

David Knight asked about what "approving" the plan today would mean. Bill gave an overview of our next steps, including public meetings and our rollout schedule for the plan.

Bill discussed how the leadership of North Carolina and Virginia management agencies would be helpful in setting thresholds for the indicators which will be included in the plan. There was further discussion of monitoring in the sounds. After the cut of the FerryMon system, program staff is unaware of any dedicated water quality monitoring efforts occurring in the sounds.

Tony made motion to receive the draft CCMP and approve it for public comments. Todd Miller amended the motion to give staff the flexibility to make minor technical edits. Wilson Laney seconded the amended motion. Tony opened the motion for further discussion, and none was offered. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### **A-P Ecosystem Assessment Update: Dr. Wilson Laney, Dr. Dean Carpenter**

Dean gave an introduction to the ecosystem assessment. He discussed how the assessment indicators were chosen, based on information that was readily available and volunteer authors from the STAC with expertise. This assessment will be an interim product, and APNEP hopes to develop environmental diagnosis and forecasting abilities in future assessments. Dean provided examples of the indicators that we are examining for our assessment and plan. He briefly discussed managing adaptively, the final step in the adaptive management process, which includes senior management engagement and trigger levels in the plan.

This first assessment will focus on measuring ecosystem parameters, but further assessments will follow to assess management metrics as well.

Dean went through an example indicator assessment (Relative Sea Level Rise). The information about each indicator was written in a consistent format answering several questions, along with technical notes.

Tony inquired about the approval process for the assessment. Bill noted it is a statement of environmental condition rather than a policy document. Monitoring and assessment teams are providing peer review for each chapter. After approval by the STAC it will be offered to the Policy Board for acceptance.

David Knight asked about the Climate-Ready estuaries document and how it is guiding the program. Bill responded that it has helped frame some aspects the CCMP. Jim Hawhee also noted that the document prompted two internal initiatives for 2012, and APNEP is currently working to map water infrastructure in the region and work with pilot wastewater utilities on climate vulnerability assessments.

Kirk asked how staff would report to the Policy Board regarding threshold development. Bill responded that this would be through routine correspondence and updates at Policy Board meetings. Bill noted that the development of indicators and threshold is the first action needed following the final approval of the CCMP. David also noted his support working with DENR to help generate these thresholds.

#### **New & Old Business: Tony Reevy**

- **State of the Sounds Conference: Jim Hawhee**

Jim provided a brief overview of the upcoming “State of the Sounds” conference, including the date and an overview of conference presenters.

#### **Adjourn**

With no further discussion, Tony Reevy adjourned the meeting.