

Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program

Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Summer Meeting

August 17, 2007

Virginia Institute of Marine Science

Gloucester Point, Virginia

Minutes

Those Attending:

Dennis Borton	Enrique Reyes	Bill Keeling
Kirk Havens	Michael Rikard	Scott Kudlas
Peter Kalla	Steve Smutko	Ben Longstaff
Jud Kenworthy	Tim Spruill	Jack McCambridge
Wilson Laney	Nancy White	Ken Moore
Lynn Maguire	Abdul Ahmed	Bob Orth
Mike Mallin	Eric Brittle	Jim Wesson
David Mallinson	Mark Brinson	Dean Carpenter
Heather McGuire	Carl Hershner	Lucy Henry
Doug Rader	Scott P. Johnson	

John Wells, Director of the VIMS, provided welcoming comments and a background of the Institute. STAC Co-Chair Nancy White then called the meeting to order at 8:15am and minutes were approved from the spring meeting.

APNEP Update

Dean Carpenter began his APNEP updates by reinforcing the STAC's role as an *independent* advisory committee. He welcomed the Virginia agency liaisons and encouraged them to attend future meetings. He reported that

- there are currently two seats open on the STAC and there have been two nominees submitted. The deadline for submissions is August 29th;
- the APNEP all-hands meeting will be at EPA in Research Triangle Park on November 20th;
- the indicators steering committee has not met recently.

- APNEP will be revising their Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan in the coming year and the CCMP steering committee will begin meeting this fall;
- APNEP's new website has been launched and feedback is welcome.

Other Updates

- the coastal Carolinas are included in the 2008-2015 EPA ORD plan (of four areas in the US) for priority long-term ecological research;
- the South Atlantic Fisheries Advisory Committee (Doug Rader is a member) will be meeting before the November 20th all-hands meeting;
- Cape Lookout will be having public meetings regarding beach driving. Contact Michael Rikard for more information;
- some suggestions for CCMP revision: 1) look at draft versions from initial process; 2) incorporate new topics such as climate change; 3) have the white papers being drafted by the STAC feed into it.

Position Papers

Dr. Carpenter reviewed the outcome of the brainstorm that the STAC went through in the previous meeting to come up with issues that might be appropriate for position papers. This was the third discussion session in as many meetings to develop position papers on technical issues for consideration by the APNEP Policy Board and other policy-makers whose influence impacts the region's natural resources. After the last meeting, Dr. Carpenter grouped all of the topics into three overarching themes that were developed by the STAC during the spring meeting: Monitoring and Modeling Tools, Forecasting, and Management Effectiveness/Efficiency.

Meeting attendees broke into three groups according to these themes with the following task: to look over the list of topics within that theme, discuss the topics and their relevance, remove any topics that were not considered relevant, prioritize the topics, and select a team leader.

Someone suggested that group members look at the Estuarine Research Federation's position paper on sustainable biospheres as an example of a position paper.

Clarification question: What is a position paper? There's a difference between whether a paper is prescriptive or just informative. The Chesapeake Bay STAC's position papers were both.

Group Briefings

Monitoring/Modeling, Team Leader: Enrique Reyes

The group began by dismissing all of the issues and focusing on the theme. They decided that their priority is to recommend the creation of a clearinghouse/database of information that can be used for forecasting and management. This would include resources data, social data, remote sensing data, and modeling tools. Their position paper would outline the resources that are available and identify gaps in information that need to be gathered.

Forecasting, Team Co-Leaders: (David Mallinson, Heather McGuire)

This group decided that their main priority is to focus on the topic of forecasting climate change impacts in the APNEP region. The first part of this is to identify drivers of change and responses to change. They spent their discussion brainstorming what these might be:

Drivers: Sea-level rise, storm intensity/frequency, barrier island dynamics, precipitation, temperature, etc.

Responses (including natural, human, and global): They drafted a long list of responses including everything from exotic species to benthos communities. Someone suggested that they use the CHPP habitats as response categories. Someone else suggested STAC member Lorry King as social science contributor.

Management Effectiveness, Team Leader: Pete Kalla

This group spent a great deal of time trying to better define their theme and to clarify the topics within the theme. They decided that the best approach would be to come up with a list of questions that they might answer in their position papers about each topic. They divided up the topics and individually evaluate each topic by considering the following questions:

- What is the management context now? What might be the management context in the future? (e.g., demand for new regulation?)
- What information is needed to address this management context and management questions?
- Is that info being gathered now? Is it good enough to answer the management questions?
- What else could be done to gather needed information? How hard would that be? How costly?
- What factors make this topic a higher or lower priority?

They will prioritize topics after they have drafted the papers and have a better idea of what the nuances of each topic are. They assigned all but #3C, buffer location prioritization, and thought one of the absent members might like to take this topic on.

Carl Hershner, Chair of the Chesapeake Bay STAC

Dr. Hershner began by discussing how the Chesapeake Bay STAC went about writing position papers. The Chesapeake Bay STAC operates by responding to a group of organized managers and policy-makers. Their approach to creating position papers was to extract the scientific topics from the agreements and goals set out by these managers/policy-makers. They first wrote 3-5 page summary papers that "had absolutely no value" because they were too dense and lengthy. Next, they made a second pass and selected only the top 3 issues, but again "no impact." Finally, they grouped into teams and assigned teams to issues (e.g., climate change) and are now responding to issues as they come up. They came to understand that policy-makers want them to identify a specific "tipping point," which led them to develop a workshop on tipping points for decision-makers to help them better understand the difficulty in setting these values.

Dr. Hershner's main suggestion for position papers: "put a group together with *limited time* to complete their objective," come up with a 30-second, 3-minute, and 30-minute versions of the position. The 30-second is the most influential, but the 30 minute is useful as background information if requested.

Dr. Hershner then discussed the current challenges with the Bay program. The big emphasis now is on implementation - they are focusing on getting things going on the ground. Therefore, their STAC is focused on preventing them from dropping all monitoring initiatives, which has been the consequence of a focus on implementation. His argument: the only way to know the impacts of on-the-ground projects is large-scale monitoring. The challenge is to be strategic about monitoring and to understand that it's an evolving system and that the drivers change. Another challenge is to integrate monitoring with environmental conditions and with management decisions.

Updates from Virginia Attendees

Virginia Marine Resources Commission (Jim Wesson) - aquaculture is an emerging issue, and increasing compatibility of aquaculture with other waterfront uses.

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (Scott Kudlas) - There's a new model from USGS for the eastern shore that is used to determine groundwater permits; there is a new regional flow model with hydrogeologic framework to look at confined aquifers; there is still not a good understanding of base flow impacts on the A/P sounds; Virginia has a case study of optimizing groundwater storage from a tributary into the James River; the Potomac Interstate Commission is identifying non-traditional water contaminants such as endocrine disruptors.

Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation (Bill Keeling): Agricultural Cost-Share Program - focusing on non-point source pollution; developed a phase 5 watershed model; Virginia has 1 foot resolution statewide remote sensing data.

Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries (Eric Brittle) - studying shad and herring related to flow and other environmental conditions; conducting routine monitoring; completed an angler survey; working with a company that experiences frequent chemical spills on Nottoway River to reduce incidences; working with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission to collaborate on herring harvests. Virginia considering

moratorium on herring, while North Carolina is reviewing six different options.

Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (Scott Johnson) - dealing with lots of poultry litter issues and biosolids being applied on farmland. They have an agricultural stewardship program designated for reviewing complaints.

Virginia Department of Transportation (Jack McCambridge) - Virginia is moving towards a privatized transportation system; there are nine district DOT environmental offices.

Other comments about current trends in North Carolina/Virginia

- North Carolina's Renewable Portfolio Standards passed and will impact land use (e.g., windmills in the sounds);
- corn is a big issue in Virginia and there is a new ethanol plant proposed for Suffolk - increased corn = increased nitrogen inputs onto agricultural land;
- the Chesapeake Bay STAC is advocating for other cellulosic products for ethanol other than corn;
- there is also the possibility that the Renewables Portfolio Standard might increase hydropower in North Carolina.

Presentations

"The Chesapeake Bay Program's Approach to Developing an Environmental Report Card" *Dr. Ben Longstaff*

"A Science Basis for Optimizing Mitigation Investments" *Dr. Mark Brinson*

"Chesapeake Bay Program's Approach to Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Monitoring, Assessment, and Restoration" *Drs. Bob Orth and Ken Moore*

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 1:30pm.