

**Virginia Water Monitoring Council Steering Committee Minutes**  
**Thursday, July 17, 2008**  
**VA Department of Forestry, Charlottesville, VA**

**Steering Committee representatives attending:**

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (ACB) – Chris French  
Chesterfield County, Department of Environmental Engineering (CDEE) – Weedon Cloe  
County of Henrico, Department of Public Works (HDPW) – Robin Wilder  
Longwood University (LWU) – David Buckalew  
Newport News Waterworks (NNW) – Ron Harris  
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) – James Beckley  
Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOT) – Bill Lakel  
Virginia Department of Health (VDH) – Dan Dietrich (**Chair**)  
Virginia Save Our Streams (VSOS) – Stacey Brown  
Virginia Water Resources Research Center (VWRRC) – Jane Walker, Stephen Schoenholtz

**Organizations without a representative at the meeting:**

Clean Virginia Waterways (CVW)  
Ferrum College (FC)  
James River Association (JRA)  
Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Districts (NVSWCD)  
United States Geological Survey (USGS)  
Virginia Association of Counties (VACo)  
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD)  
Virginia Citizens for Water Quality (VCWQ)  
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF)  
Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)  
Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)

**1) Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Dan Dietrich, Chair of the Steering Committee, at 10:30 am in the conference room of the VDOT offices in Charlottesville, VA. Several members of the committee who van pooled from Richmond were detained due to traffic conditions. Therefore, the members present agreed to cancel the first 4 items listed on the meeting agenda including: welcome/introductions, review/edit of meeting agenda, review/edit of the May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, and the financial report.

**2) Announcements:**

**a. DEQ updates:**

1- The RFP for the 2009 Citizen Monitoring Grants was released on July 1 with deadlines for application set for September 5. Please contact James Beckley (email: [jbeckley@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:jbeckley@deq.virginia.gov) or phone: (804) 698-4025) or visit the VDEQ Citizen Monitoring website at: <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/cmonitor/homepage.html>.

2- A draft of the VDEQ 2008 305 (b)/303 (d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report is a summary of the water quality conditions in Virginia from January 1, 2001, to December 31, 2006. It has been posted since June 16 and can be found at: <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/wqa/305b2008.html>.

This report is available for public comment through Friday, July 25, 2008. The VDEQ website mentions that 'comments or questions about the report can be submitted to: Darryl M. Glover, VDEQ Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Manager, via e-mail attachment (in Microsoft Word or PDF) to [dmglover@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:dmglover@deq.virginia.gov), or via first-class mail to P.O. Box 1105, Richmond, Virginia 23218. Please include your name, (US mail) address, telephone number, and e-mail address so DEQ can add you to its notification list for future assessments.'

A combined response to comments will be prepared after the public comment period and will be available on the above website.

3- VDEQ plans to attend the World Water Monitoring Day (WWMD) kickoff event to be held in Washington, DC on September 28. WWMD activities occur each year for one month starting September 18 through October 18. James has many water monitoring kits available at his office and needs to know who's planning an activity for this year's event. The VDEQ's participation in World Water Monitoring Day activities this year will be coordinated by Stuart Torbeck (email: [cstorbeck@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:cstorbeck@deq.virginia.gov) or phone at: (804) 698-4461). Contact him if you would like VDEQ participation these or any events. VDEQ will distribute water monitoring kits to anyone who requests them while supplies last.

#### **b. Clean Virginia Waterways:**

The CVW rain barrel workshop is to be held at Forest Hill Park, Richmond, VA on August 6, 2008, 5:15 – 7:45 pm. Volunteers are still needed. Please contact Katie Register (email: [cleanva@longwood.edu](mailto:cleanva@longwood.edu) or phone: (434) 395-2602) if interested.

#### **c. VA Save Our Streams:**

The annual summer VCWQ summit meeting is scheduled for Saturday, August 9 at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. Please visit the SOS website for further details and complete summit agenda at: <http://www.virginiacwq.org/> Interested individuals can register for the meeting at the website as well. This summer's agenda is filled with exciting and informative speakers on such topics as fish kills (Don Orth, VaTech), citizen engagement in the TMDL process (Kelly Hazelgrove, VDEQ), hands-on watershed activities, fecal coliform assays using Coliscan gels (James Beckley, VDEQ), streamside habitat assessment (Stacey Brown, VSOS), and much more! For only \$9.50 you even get a box lunch! Register early!! If you or your agency is interested in exhibiting at the summit, please contact Stacey Brown (email: [Stacey@vasos.org](mailto:Stacey@vasos.org) or phone: (804) 615-5036).

### **3) Old Business:**

**a. Steering Committee Member elections:** Both Matt Ellinghaus (VACo) and David Buckalew (LWU) were re-elected to 3-year terms on the VWMC Steering Committee extending from 2008 through 2010.

#### **b. The VWMC ad hoc Website Committee report:**

Committee Chairman James Beckley provided a presentation/overview of the recent changes to the website as agreed among fellow committee members. As of today's date, updates are still being added. Among the list of website changes were:

- improved, more professional layout and color scheme (black and burgundy) which provides greater contrast for readers/visitors with boxes surrounding page topics
- improved and updated links to other water sites that are current and active

James mentioned that the newly changed website may be finished in time to present at the VCWQ Summer Summit meeting in Charlottesville on August 9.

#### **c. World Water Monitoring Day**

Presently, there are many opportunities for those interested in organizing a WWMD event in their community. James Beckley has many water monitoring kits for distributing at his office and would need to know of your plans as soon as possible. Mr. Gary Speiran at the Va USGS in Richmond is serving as the lead contact for posting activities for WWMD in Virginia. Mr. Speiran's email is: [gspeiran@usgs.gov](mailto:gspeiran@usgs.gov) and phone is: (804) 261-2642. The Va USGS posts a WWMD report on their website, and James at VDEQ collates data obtained from WWMD activities and relays them to the WWMD online database.

Stacey Brown mentioned that she will make an announcement about WWMD at the VCWQ Summit. Stacey also mentioned a possible interest in coordinating an activity in Chesterfield County, possibly with Weedon Cloe (CDEE).

David Buckalew asked about recent participation from schools in the Piedmont region – Alecia Daves organized a water monitoring activity during a past Forestry Day event in Buckingham County and may serve as a good contact for a future activity in that region.

Robin Wilder (HDPW) mentioned that she may check on possible middle school activities scheduled for Henrico County.

### **4) New Business:**

#### **a. Implementation planning**

Recently, the ad hoc VWMC Operations Committee met via conference call to discuss past goals and suggestions for VWMC activities. Ten (10) goals were identified from a previous (2005) VWMC planning meeting. As a result of this meeting, the members of

the Operations Committee agreed that the Steering Committee would need to be surveyed for their interest in such an endeavor. So a vote was raised among those present which asked the question:

**Q#1: Should the VWMC set implementation goals for the coming year?  
(In other words, does the VWMC want to become more active?)**

**The vote resulted in a majority in favor of setting implementation goals or a “YES” vote in favor of Question #1.**

Accordingly, a second vote was cast to decide on a “doable” list of 3 goals to work on/implement for this year among the 10 goals that the Council had earlier identified. There was general agreement that, as a group, we could begin by setting small, achievable goals that could be accomplished.

Each of the Steering members present was asked to personally rank their top 3 goal choices from a paper ballot list.

The ten (10) goals listed in an abbreviated fashion were:

- 1- water monitoring inventory up to date
- 2- conduct an annual conference
- 3- elevate concerns about development impacts on water quality
- 4- increase awareness of VWMC
- 5- expand WWMD activities
- 6- educational programs for localities and citizens for each physiographic region over 2 years
- 7- explore helping localities with unfunded mandates
- 8- invite nearby WMC's to a meeting about funding, identity, and services
- 9- become a professional organization
- 10- identify potential members and set membership goals

After some discussion of the role of active Council membership, which many believed to be a good idea, a ranking of the top 3 goals was tallied with the following result:

**1<sup>st</sup> Priority: water monitoring inventory up to date**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Priority: educational programs for localities**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Priority: conduct an annual conference**

After the ranking of VWMC goal priorities, Dan asked that the members of the Steering Committee should continue dialog on ways to achieve these 3 priorities over emails before the next VWMC meeting occurs.

Several suggestions were offered and/or discussed related to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority including:

- a- VA Naturally (<http://www.vanaturally.com/vanaturally/homepage.html>) has resources or links for educational programs. David Ruble at VDEQ has been very active in his capacity as environmental education coordinator (email: [dnruble@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:dnruble@deq.virginia.gov) ) and may be a good person to invite to VWMC?
- b- Chesterfield County and other VA counties have a separate office(s) in charge of educational programs. For instance, see: (<http://www.chesterfieldriverfront.org/conservationBrownWilliamson.asp>) or (<http://www.chesterfield.gov/HumanServices/ExtensionServices/exthome.asp>)
- c- Perhaps the newly revised VWMC website could provide such links to water-associated sites from around the state and beyond?

As for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority, the following topics were discussed and vote cast:

A motion was offered and seconded on a decision to: **team up/join with the VCWQ for a Friday/Saturday joint meeting in early 2009 (i.e., the VWMC conference would meet the Friday before the traditional Saturday Winter summit meeting)**

**The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

- a- A grant application for funding an annual conference was submitted to the Altria Foundation.
- b- A variety of topics and suitable audiences were discussed with no particular idea holding sway at this point.

Please communicate your thoughts concerning possible topics and speakers for our upcoming VWMC conference!

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The next meeting of the VWMC Steering Committee should take place on either a **Tuesday** or a **Friday** in **mid-late October**. (At this time, Jane has already contacted you via a fancy Internet scheduling program...)

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.