

**DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION  
REGULATED FLOW ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY  
April 17, 2015**



The April 17, 2015 Regulated Flow Advisory Committee (RFAC) meeting was held at the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) offices in West Trenton, New Jersey. Mr. Hoss Liaghat of PADEP chaired the meeting.

**Committee Business**

The meeting summary of the last RFAC meeting, held on March 18, 2013, was reviewed and approved as drafted. Thom Murphy, past committee chair, introduced Hoss Liaghat of PADEP, committee chair for the current 2015-2016 term. Hoss Liaghat requested nominations for vice-chair for the 2015-2016 term. Brenan Tarrier of NYSDEC was nominated and unanimously elected by committee members.

**Update on DRBC proposal request to Army Corps under WRRDA to optimize the utilization of Corps reservoirs in the DRB**

Steve Tambini, DRBC Executive Director, briefly described a proposal that DRBC submitted to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in December 2014. A copy of the proposal is posted online on the RFAC webpage on the DRBC website. The proposal is for a feasibility study under the Water Resource Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014. The objective is to optimize the use of storage volumes in three federal reservoirs in the Basin (Blue Marsh, Beltzville and F.E. Walter) to meet multiple flow management objectives. No new construction or structural modifications are likely to result from the study, only the better utilization of existing storage.

**Update on DRB-PST model**

Hernán Quinodoz of DRBC gave a presentation on the DRB-PST model, recently released to the public by DRBC. The presentation is posted online on the RFAC webpage on the DRBC website. This collaborative project between DRBC and NYC DEP produced a new version of the model that is regularly used by the Commission and stakeholders to simulate and develop alternative flow management rules for the basin. The new model simulates reservoir operations according to the current FFMP-OST program, including the periodic determination of Forecast-based Available Water (FAW) and corresponding release rates from the three NYC Delaware basin reservoirs. The main PST input file, made up of historical incremental inflows, has been extended and now spans the [Oct.1927-Sep.2012] period. Copies of the new model were mailed to all licensed users of the DRB-OASIS model.

**WaterSMART improvements to USGS Upper-Delaware Decision-Support System (DSS)**

Heather Galbraith and Jeff Cole of USGS gave a presentation on the DSS model for ecological flows, posted online on the RFAC webpage on the DRBC website. The DSS is a tool that relates reservoir releases to river flows, habitat suitability criteria (HSC), water temperature, and other

relevant information. This is on an ongoing USGS research project that builds upon the original Upper-Delaware DSS completed in 2007. A number of improvements have been completed and others are underway. Future work includes ground-truthing model output with biological data, refining instream temperature modeling, and exploring habitat persistence metrics. Jeff Cole gave a live demonstration of DSS features, including GUI functions and typical outputs. A new version of the Upper-Delaware DSS model is available for download and testing. Users are asked to provide feedback to improve this tool.

### **Update on Flexible Flow Management Program**

Paul Rush, NYCDEP Deputy Commissioner and Dan Kennedy, NJDEP Assistant Commissioner gave an update on Decree Party negotiations on a new Flexible Flow Management Program (FFMP) agreement. Paul Rush stated that the Decree Party Principals are meeting frequently and continue discussions but have not yet reached an agreement. Many comments from stakeholders have been received by the principals, commissioners and governors and are being considered. Dan Kennedy stated that New Jersey's objectives include reclaiming the right to its historical D&R Canal diversion rates and utilizing the Interim Excess Release Quantity (IERQ) in a manner that benefits all parties. He also indicated that New Jersey is developing a RiverWare model of the Delaware basin and NYC surface water reservoirs that can be used to inform the Decree Party negotiations. Questions and comments from the public were addressed by both speakers (see below).

### **Stakeholder Input and Public Dialogue**

Comments included:

- Request for the Interim Excess Release Quantity (IERQ) in the FFMP to be reevaluated when the Croton Treatment Plant comes online later in 2015.
- Request for NYCDEP to provide OST summaries more frequently than monthly.
- Request that any possible improvements for fisheries and flood protection be incorporated in the next FFMP, since a recent Delaware County, NY economic study demonstrated the positive impacts of having more consistent releases from the three NYC Delaware basin reservoirs.
- Request for incorporating into the next FFMP agreement any spill mitigation improvements that all decree parties may have already agreed upon and asserted that this small improvement could be adopted even in the absence of agreement on larger issues to protect public health and safety. It was noted by others that flooding is not the only public health and safety issue to be addressed by the FFMP.
- Warning that using reservoirs for flood control may have negative impacts on other water users. Request to focus instead on flood mitigation and keeping people out of the floodplain and out of harm's way.
- Request for more transparency and at least two RFAC meetings per year, as required in the committee bylaws.
- Request for improved releases on the East Branch Delaware and Neversink rivers.
- Comment that going back to the Rev1 releases program in the absence of a new FFMP would not be such a bad outcome for the fisheries, because Rev1 includes releases from a thermal protection bank.

**REGULATED FLOW ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RFAC)**

**April 17, 2015**

**ATTENDANCE LIST**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
ANDERSON, Kelly	Philadelphia Water Dept.
BAXTER, Stefanie	DE Geological Survey
BEIDLER, Kim	CDRW
BITTNER, Laura	USACE
BONOS, Mary	ACU
BRAND, Tom	NJ DEP
CEBALLOS, Joseph	TGF
COLE, Jeffrey	USGS
DOMBER, Steven	NJ DEP, NJ Geological Survey
DIFRENNNA, Vin	USGS, ODRM
EVANS, Richard (via phone)	NPS
FRAZIER, DEAN	Delaware County, NY
GALBRAITH, Heather	USGS
GRIMBILAS, Peter	NJOA
HAMILTON, Don (via phone)	NPS
HARTLE, Mark	PA FBC
HARTMAN, Lee	Trout Unlimited
HENSON, Fred (via phone)	NYS DEC
HESSON, Molly	Philadelphia Water Dept.
HYNES, Marie	USGS, ODRM
KENNEDY, Dan	NJ DEP
LIAGHAT, Hoss	PA DEP
MCNUTT, Richard	Tidewaters Gateway
MIRI, Joe	NJ DEP
MURPHY, Thomas	NYC DEP
MUSZYNSKI, William	DRBC
NAJJAR, Ken	DRBC
NOBLE, Mary Ellen	Delaware Riverkeeper

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
OLIVIO, Dana	NYC DEP
PETTINGER, Garth	NYS Trout Unlimited, Delaware Committee
PLUMMER, Dan	Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR)
QUINODOZ, Hernán	DRBC
RESTI, Sherri	FUDR
RUPERT, Clarke	DRBC
RUSH, Paul	NYC DEP
SANKO, Jessica	DRBC
SCANNAPIECO, Alycia	Resident – flood concerns
SHALLCROSS, Amy	DRBC
SHIELDS, Don	NJ American Water
SILLDORFF, Erik	DRBC
SKELDING, Jeff	FUDR
TAMBINI, Steve	DRBC
TARRIER, Brenan	NYS DEC
TESSIERI, Laura	DRBC
THARP, Diane	Nordel Conservancy
THOMAS, Rich	NJ Trout Unlimited
VAN ROSSUM, Maya	Delaware Riverkeeper
VOWINKEL, Eric	USGS
WO, Jeromy	NorDel Conservancy