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# NJ DEP's 2022 VIRTUAL HAB SUMMIT

Speaker Bios and Additional Information

# KATI ANGARONE

Associate Commissioner,  
Science and Policy  
NJDEP



Kati Angarone is the Associate Commissioner for Science and Policy at the Department of Environmental Protection.

In this role she works to develop policy that is protective of New Jersey's environment and public health and to ensure policy cohesion across the Department in furtherance of the Department priorities, including climate, water and environmental health.

The Office of Science & Policy includes, Division of Science & Research, which provides scientific support to programs across the Department, as well as other State agencies; and the Office of Environmental Public Health & Safety, which work closely with the New Jersey Department of Health to provide analysis and data for environmental public health issues.

Kati has worked at the Department for more than 20 years. Prior to assuming the role of Associate Commissioner, Kati spent many years assisting with the development of New Jersey's state land use policies including stormwater management, habitat protection, flood hazard area controls and protection of the Highlands region. She also spent several years at the Department focused on drinking water policy, including the adoption of new drinking water standards, prevention and management of harmful algal blooms and water supply emergency response.

# KERRY KIRK PFLUGH

Director,  
Local Government Assistance  
NJDEP



Kerry Kirk Pflugh is the Director for Local Government at the NJDEP. She is the Department's liaison between New Jersey's 565 Mayors, 21 counties, and the 75 programs in NJDEP. She is responsible for troubleshooting, helping officials navigate the agency, identifying the correct programs and people to resolve problems, conducting research to answer questions officials may have about permits, compliance with environmental regulations, and funding and financing opportunities to implement environmental projects and initiatives. She is also responsible for facilitating meetings between officials and agency personnel.

Prior to becoming Director, Ms. Pflugh was the Constituent Services Manager, responsible for communication planning, consultation, and internal communications coordination. Previously, she was the Manager for the Office of Watershed Education, Estuaries, and Monitoring, coordinating all the watershed education and communication programs for the Division of Watershed Management and a Research Scientist in the Division of Science for 13 years.

Ms. Pflugh's area of expertise is strategic communication planning focusing on citizen participation in environmental management decision making. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including Cabinet Liaison of the Year, New Jersey Conference of Mayors, April 2019; George Hammell Cook Distinguished Alumni Award for Outstanding Achievement in Professional and Civic Endeavors, April 2017; and The Elizabeth River/ Arthur Kill Watershed Association Appreciation Award, October 2016. Her work in fish consumption advisories earned her an Urban Hometown River Award from American Rivers for education. She also was the recipient of the Friends of the Hackensack River Award in 2001. She received an Assembly Resolution from the New Jersey General Assembly for her work on behalf of New Jersey citizens. Other honors include the Wave Award from the Association of Environmental Authorities in 1999 for the Harbor Watershed Education Urban Fishing program; the New Jersey State Customer Service Excellence Award in 2001; the Clean Water Award for the New Jersey Watershed Ambassador Program, and the USEPA Region 2 Environmental Quality Award for the Watershed Watch Network.

# PATRICIA GARDNER

Assistant Commissioner,  
Water Resource Management  
NJDEP



Pat Gardner serves as the Assistant Commissioner of Water Resource Management, overseeing Water Monitoring and Standards, Water Quality, Water Compliance, Enforcement, and Water Supply And Geoscience. She has worked in environmental protection for more than 30 years, starting her career with the DEP in the Radiation programs. She joined the Water Resource Management program six years ago. In Water Resource Management, Pat served as Director of the Division of Water Supply & Geoscience for 4½ years and Director of the Division of Water Monitoring & Standards for 1½ years. Her efforts in Water Resource Management have focused on the revision of the long-term monitoring strategy; restoration grant program; assessment of the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water regulations, with an emphasis on the Lead and Copper Rule; emergency response; water supply planning; water infrastructure; and the development of maximum contaminant levels. She has served on various councils and boards, including the Delaware River Basin Commission, the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, and the Drinking Water Quality Institute. As a career DEP employee, Pat has a strong belief in public service and the protection of public health, safety, and the environment.

# VICTOR PORETTI

Section Chief,  
Bureau of Freshwater and Biological Monitoring  
NJDEP



Vic Poretti, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Freshwater and Biological Monitoring. Manages the sampling and analysis of freshwater monitoring throughout the State. The Bureau provides data and information to serve as a sound scientific foundation for water resource management and to meet federal Clean Water Act requirements. The Bureau also performs all aspects of Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) Freshwater Response including strategy development, sampling and analysis, and communicating data and alerts to the public.

# DR. BRIAN LAPOINTE

PH.D.,  
Florida Atlantic University



Dr. Brian E. Lapointe is internationally renowned for his research on water quality and harmful algal blooms in tropical and subtropical seagrass and coral reef ecosystems. Brian obtained a BA in Biology from Boston University (1973), a MS in Environmental Science from the University of Florida (1979), and a Ph.D. in Biology from the University of South Florida (1982). He has worked at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, and is currently a Research Professor at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) - Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (HBOI) in Ft. Pierce, FL. Since 1974, Dr. Lapointe has assessed nutrient pollution and harmful algal blooms in freshwater, estuarine, and coastal systems of South Florida and the Caribbean region. Although his current work focuses on the declining health of the Caloosahatchee Estuary, Indian River Lagoon, and Sargassum influx to the Caribbean region, he has led numerous research expeditions in Bermuda, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Jamaica, Martinique, Trinidad & Tobago, Bonaire, Curacao, St. Lucia, Barbados, and the Great Barrier Reef, Australia. Dr. Lapointe pioneered the use of ecological nutrient threshold concentrations that initiate harmful algal blooms, as well as the use of stable nitrogen isotopes to “fingerprint” the source(s) of nitrogen enrichment. He established the longest low-level nutrient record for a coral reef anywhere in the world at Looe Key reef in the lower Florida Keys. Dr. Lapointe has published over 120 scientific papers, four book chapters, and was a contributing author of the book “Clean Coastal Waters: Understanding and Reducing Nutrient Pollution” published by the National Academy of Sciences. He has received numerous awards for his work, including the Sigma Xi Outstanding Research Award, a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Award, and inclusion in “Who’s Who in Scuba Diving and Underwater Research” and “Who’s Who in America, Science and Engineering, the Millennium Edition.” He served on the Editorial Board of Harmful Algae for 13 years and as a National Fellow in the Explorer’s Club. His research has been supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Australian Research Council, the Herbert W. Hoover Foundation, Florida Wildlife Research Institute, U.S. Navy, and various counties and cities in Florida. He is currently supported by the Florida Chamber of Commerce for public education and outreach on water quality issues that are critical to securing Florida’s water future.

# Dr. BRIDGET NOREEN SEEGERS

NASA



Dr. Seegers is a NASA lead on the Cyanobacteria Assessment Network (CyAN) project with the goal to validate a cyanobacteria algorithm for US inland waters. Cyanobacteria are an economic and human health problem impacting drinking water and recreational activities.

As an oceanographer she has worked much off the California coast on cruises and with research robots called gliders. She completed her PhD at the University of Southern California in 2015. While there, she combined in situ data with satellite remote sensing to better understand regional dynamics and events such as harmful algal blooms (HABs). Originally from Wisconsin Dr. Bridget Seegers grew up swimming and splashing in lakes and developed a love of being in, on, and around water. Dr. Seegers received her B.A in Biology from Carleton College with a concentration in Environmental Science and Technology. Then, she taught six years in a range of non-traditional classroom settings from the woods of Minnesota to inner city Boston as an AmeriCorps volunteer and at a charter high school in San Diego. She returned to school to earn a M.S. in Water Resources Science from the University of Minnesota as she was curious about the science and policy interface.

Dr. Seegers is passionate about outreach and education. She had a grant funded for a month long public outreach tour she created called Sippin' On Science. Sippin' on Science brought exciting NASA earth science and the CyAN project to people at restaurants, bars and breweries primarily in small towns in the lakes region of Wisconsin and Minnesota. The event included a range of engaging hands-on science activities, trivia, and an informal presentation on lakes, algae, research robots and satellite science. Sippin' on Science broke down boundaries and created opportunities for the public to ask questions and talk to a scientist. Overall, Sippin' on Science was an out of the ordinary event that was free and open to everyone, both adults and children.

Dr. Seegers is an avid surfer and sailor and more recently, because of the landlocked location, a cyclist.

# TAYLOR COPPA

Assistant Project Manager for the  
Stormwater Infrastructure Toolkit Project  
NJDEP



Taylor received a Bachelor of Science from Rutgers University. She has worked for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and then went on to pursue a Professional Science Master's in Environmental Science from Stockton University. She currently works for the NJ DEP, Division of Resilience Engineering & Construction focusing on flood risk reduction projects.



# DR. NICK PROCOPIO

Assistant Director  
Division of Science and Research  
NJDEP



Nick (or Dr. Procopio) is the Assistant Director in DEP's Division of Science and Research where he manages the collaboration of the multi-disciplinary research of division. Nick co-led the development of the Department's recent scientific report focused on the impacts and effects of climate change in New Jersey; a product required under Governor Murphy's EO 89. As such, Nick continues to serve as the scientific lead for the development and expansion of policies that recognize and incorporate strategies that adapt and mitigate for the impacts associated with climate change and sea-level rise. His personal expertise is in water resources management, ecology, statistical analysis, and GIS.

# DR. MEIYIN WU

Director,  
New Jersey Center for Water Science and  
Technology  
Professor,  
Biology at Montclair State University



Dr. Meiyin Wu, Director of New Jersey Center for Water Science and Technology and Professor of Biology at Montclair State University, is an ecosystem ecologist whose research focuses on water quality, aquatic ecology, harmful algal blooms, pollution transport and control, and ecosystem restoration. Dr. Wu directs a water analysis laboratory (NJDEP Laboratory Certification # 07105) and coordinates the EcoExplorers Program providing environmental education for k-12 educators and students. The author of more than 50 articles, books and educational DVDs, she also holds three U.S. patents on innovative technologies for water treatment.

# KELLY MASCARENHAS

Environmental Specialist,  
Bureau of Environmental Analysis, Restoration,  
and Standards  
NJDEP



A graduate from SUNY-ESF, Kelly Mascarenhas works on the Surface Water Quality Standards and Ground Water Quality Standards under the supervision of Roop Guha in the Bureau of Environmental Analysis, Restoration, and Standards.

# LAUREN DRUMM

Watershed & Land Management  
NJDEP



Lauren has seven years of experience working in environmental regulatory compliance, beginning her career in private environmental consulting, predominantly working with the natural gas industry, to provide regulatory compliance services including erosion and sediment control monitoring, emergency response and contingency plan preparation, and mandatory federal reporting for chemical storage. For the past five years, Lauren has worked for the Department's Watershed & Land Management (WLM) program (Division of Land Resource Protection) reviewing Flood Hazard Area, Freshwater Wetlands, Coastal Zone Management, Stormwater Management, and Highlands Water Protection and Planning permit applications for compliance with these rules. In addition to permit review, Lauren is also an integral member of WLM's NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats (NJ PACT) team and has spent the past two years working on the program's Resilient Environments & Landscapes "REAL" initiatives, which include an extensive regulatory reform effort. Lauren's permitting and rule writing experience uniquely qualify her to speak on New Jersey's land use regulation. Lauren also serves as a program representative on several internal Department workgroups and serves as a liaison to the Community Collaborative Initiative program, where she served for a year as a CCI liaison and brownfield development area coordinator for the City of Perth Amboy.