

**New Jersey Highlands Council
Utility Capacity
Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
10 August 2005**

Summary:

The opening session of the Utility Capacity Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on August 10, 2005 in the Highlands Council office in Chester, New Jersey. The TAC meetings are designed to provide specialized technical input to the Highlands Council within a broader program of public outreach efforts, such as “partnership” meetings with local officials and “network” meetings with the general public.

Highlands staff in attendance included Steve Balzano, Maryjude Haddock-Weiler and Kim Ball Kaiser. Dan Van Abs served as moderator. Lisa Voyce, NJ Highlands Principal Scientist, who was not able to attend this meeting, will serve as point of contact.

Participating as technical advisors were Diane Alexander, Candace M. Ashmun, Karen Emerick, Abbie Fair, Chris Falcon, Michael Finelli, Harry Gerken, Edward Ho, Rick Howlett, Bill Hutchinson, Skip Jonas, Laurette Kratina, Pat Mattarazzo, Tom Mazzaccaro, Peter Messina, Maria Moran, Fletcher Platt, Glenn Schweizer, Matt Sprung, Peter Strom, Pen Tao, James Tripp, Thomas Varro, Eric Wilkinson and Ken Wilson.

Current Capacity - How is this determined, and what additional materials are needed?

- The Highlands Council has access to the following materials:
 1. DEP discharge permits
 2. Existing and approved sewer service area maps
 3. Permitted capacities for ground and surface water supplies
 4. Corresponding withdrawal data
 5. NJ Geological Survey water tracking system database for 1990's

- Suggestions for additional data related to sewer capacity:
 1. Population forecasts for towns and counties in and around the Highlands
 2. Municipal wastewater management plans - Keep in mind that many of these are out-of-date and some are only in the draft stage.
(NOTE: These reports have been requested from each municipality as part of the Council's outreach and information-gathering efforts. Many, but not all, have been received.)
 3. The Council should make an effort to identify the real capacities of sewage treatment plants, which are usually higher than their permitted capacities. Consulting individual plant operators and the information provided by them is the best conceivable way to determine the Highlands real wastewater capacity.

4. TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Loads) reports
 5. Municipalities may have contractual allocations with regional authorities that determine how much capacity is available within their borders. The sum of these allocations would equal the permitted capacity in an area.
- Suggestions for additional data - Drinking water capacity:
 1. Statewide Water Supply Plan is out-of-date, but worth consulting.
 2. County Water Supply Plans will be more region-specific.
 3. Municipalities have data on water service areas and future commitments to expand them that should be reviewed as well.
 4. Consider the difference between firm capacity (with largest source out-of-service) and regular capacity.

New Capacity - What are the limitations and how can future capacity be maximized?

- **Limitations**
 1. Water supply capacity will directly determine sewer capacity.
 2. Capacity is further limited by treatment plant ability and available space to expand.
 3. The degree to which ecological systems can support additional pollution loads will determine the impact of the capacity limiting regulations in place.
- **Solutions**
 1. TDR receiving area designations should be considered in areas with abundant capacity in order to make most advantage of future resources.
 2. Water conservation and reuse practices should be encouraged or actively enforced
 - a. Look at the difference between winter and summer use – water usage varies by season
 - b. Automatic sprinkler systems should be regulated they are huge consumers of water
 - c. Minimize lawns and lawn treatments by clustering development and encouraging alternative yard cover
 3. Capturing and recapturing capacity through innovations should be pursued. The surface water supply sources in the Highlands are depletive in that water is extracted, used and then gets transported out of the region via surface waters. Mechanisms of moving water back into the area would be helpful. See the DEP Interconnection Study.
 4. Pursue other governmental and non-governmental funding sources for infrastructure improvement and development.
- **Other information sources**
 1. Center for Watershed Protection
 2. American Waterworks Association
 3. New Jersey Comparative Risk Project

The Highlands Council would like to thank everyone who participated in this opening meeting of the Utility Capacity TAC. We greatly appreciate any follow-up comments and questions about this summary report. Please contact Lisa Voyce via e-mail at lisa.voyce@highlands.state.nj.us. Notice of future meetings will be provided to the public on the Highlands Council web site, www.highlands.state.nj.us, and via e-mail to Committee participants.