

CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION
Sayre, Pennsylvania
November 8-9, 2007, 2007

The Chesapeake Bay Commission held its fourth quarterly meeting of 2007 on Thursday and Friday, November 8-9, 2007, in Sayre, Pennsylvania.

The following Commission members and staff were in attendance:

Senator Mike Brubaker
Patricia Buckley, Chesapeake Bay Program Coordinator, PA DEP
Secretary Preston Bryant
Delegate John Cosgrove
Assistant Secretary Frank Dawson
Representative Russ Fairchild
MD Citizen Representative Bernie Fowler
Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.
Representative Arthur Hershey
Representative Mike Sturla
Senator Mike Waugh
PA Citizen Representative George Wolff

Staff: Ann Pesiri Swanson
Suzan Bulbulkaya
Matthew Mullin (future Maryland Director)
Marel Raub
Paula Hose

Members not in attendance:

* Senator Brian Frosh
VA Citizen Representative Irvine Hill
* Delegate James Hubbard
Delegate Lynwood Lewis
Delegate Scott Lingamfelter
* Senator Thomas Middleton
Senator Nick Rerras
Rear Admiral Rick Ruehe
* Delegate Mike Weir, Jr.
* Delegate John F. Wood, Jr.

* Members of the Maryland Delegation were attending the Maryland General Assembly 2007 Special Session called by Governor Martin O'Malley and were not able to attend this meeting.

Thursday, November 8, 2007

MEETING LOCATION

Best Western Grand Victorian Inn
Sayre, Pennsylvania

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

The business meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Art Hershey at 8:45 A.M. Following roll call, Representative Hershey announced that the Maryland Delegation had been called into a special session and were therefore, unable to attend the meeting. He then introduced the Commission's new Maryland Director, Matthew Mullin. Matt will officially start on November 21, 2007.

UPPER SUSQUAHANNA 101

Erin Heard, Watershed Specialist with the Upper Susquehanna Coalition

Ms. Heard provided a brief introduction to the Upper Susquehanna watershed, focusing on the economy and geology of the region. Economic challenges that face the area include a decline in the agriculture and industrial economic base. Unlike most other areas of the Chesapeake watershed, the Upper Susquehanna is losing population. Another significant challenge is the glacial history of the area, which has left many unstable soils that contribute to erosion and flooding.

BEING STRATEGIC WITHIN THE STRATEGY: A LOCAL SUCCESS STORY

Mike Lovegreen, Manager of the Bradford County Conservation District

Mr. Lovegreen described the Bradford County Chesapeake Bay Strategic Plan, which included a multi-year effort to prioritize sub-watersheds based on a pollution potential index and actual observable needs across a broad spectrum of sources, including dirt and gravel roads, on-lot septic systems, stream banks and channels, stormwater, non-ag fertilizer, and agriculture. The plan also identified the costs of implementation and then funds were actively sought and leveraged, resulting in funding of \$3.1M from various sources. The plan will address total loads of 331,000 tons of sediment, 11 million pounds of nitrogen, and 3.9 million pounds of phosphorus.

Special Guest – Representative Tina Pickett

Representative Tina Pickett represents the 110th House District of Pennsylvania, the host district for the meeting. She provided a few words of welcome and thanked the members for making the trip to the upper watershed and acknowledging the role and challenges of the region in restoration.

BENTLEY CREEK WATERSHED TOURS:

The members then boarded a bus for a tour of the Bentley Creek Watershed.

BEN & DEAN JACKSON FARM

The first stop on the tour was Mt. Glen Farm, home of the Ben and Dean Jackson families. The dairy farm is new implementer of no-till, and Dean explained the many advantages they have seen from the system, including decreased field time and fuel expense and improved soil health. Although they are currently receiving three-year cost-share for cover cropping, they plan to continue the practice after funding has ceased due to the benefits they have observed.

BILL & LAVERNE JACKSON FARM

At the second stop, Laverne Jackson described the pasture improvements that have taken place on his farm, including rotational grazing and cattle exclusion from the streams. The Jackson family has been very happy with the practices for both conservation and farm management benefits on their farm.

FLOODING IN THE SUSQUEHANNA BASIN: A LOCAL CHALLENGE WITH DOWNSTREAM IMPACTS:

Tom Beauduy, Deputy Director of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission

Mr. Beauduy described the issue of flooding in the Susquehanna Basin, one of the most flood-prone basins in the country. Flood losses in the basin average \$150 million each year. Most flood-control efforts have focused on structural controls, such as floodwalls, and flood forecasting and warning technology. Stormwater management is also a component. A challenge that remains is the historical location and continued development of residential, commercial, and transportation structures in the floodplain.

LEVERAGING LOCAL FLOOD CONTROL EFFORTS FOR DOWNSTREAM NUTRIENT AND SEDIMENT REDUCTIONS – CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS:

Senator Roger Madigan

Senator Madigan represents the 23rd Senatorial District of Pennsylvania, the host Senatorial District for the meeting. Sen. Madigan outlined his process for bringing together the various agencies involved in flood management and response, including federal, state, and local entities. Some of the most important benefits of these roundtable discussions were improved communication between entities and a plan for improved floodplain management at the local level.

Colton Weber, Local Government Policy Specialist, Governor's Center for Local Government Services.

Mr. Weber outlined some of the methods of improving local floodplain management identified during Sen. Madigan's roundtables. They include ordinances or policies to promote riparian buffers, model ordinances to limit development in floodplains, policies of "no adverse impact" which would facilitate strategic planning at the local level, and application of a community rating systems that could result in flood insurance premium discounts.

FIELD TOUR: FLOOD AND STORMWATER CONTROL IN A GLACIATED REGION

Mike Lovegreen, Melissa Yearick, Wetlands Specialist, Upper Susquehanna Coalition, and Mark Watts, Manager, Chemung (NY) Soil & Water Conservation District

Following the luncheon, members re-boarded the bus for a tour of the Seeley Creek watershed, focusing on stormwater and flooding. Mr. Lovegreen explained how poorly planned stream restoration and development in the floodplain can exacerbate flooding in a glaciated region. Therefore, it is important to consider these factors when planning projects in the area.

Mr. Watts and Ms. Yearick described an initiative of the Upper Susquehanna Coalition to implement flood attenuation wetlands throughout the region. Located in upland headwater areas, the purpose of these wetlands is to capture and slow water during rain events. By capturing the stormwater, they can lower the volume and speed of water downstream, mitigating the extreme erosion that would otherwise take place.

Following the tours, Vice Chairman Hershey introduced a new Commission member, Pennsylvania Representative Mike Sturla. Members were also addressed by New York Assemblyman Jim Bacalles, who reiterated the importance of flooding as an issue in the region.

Friday, November 9, 2007

MEETING LOCATION

Best Western Grand Victorian Inn
Sayre, Pennsylvania

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

The business meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Art Hershey at 9:00 A.M. Following roll call, the September meeting minutes and the agenda were adopted as proposed.

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

Federal Farm Bill

Ann Swanson, Executive Director briefed the members on the recent activities on the Farm Bill. The Senate Committee passed their version of a Farm Bill which is now being debated on the Senate Floor. They are expected to finish their work by Thanksgiving recess. President Bush has already threatened to veto the bill.

Chesapeake Executive Council Meeting

The 2007 Chesapeake Executive Council meeting will be hosted by Maryland and has been scheduled for December 5, 2007. The meeting will focus on the 2010 goals and how best to ramp up our implementation pace given the fact that we will be far from the achievement of our goals when we reach the deadline in just two years.

Blue Crab Advisory Report

Suzan Bulbulkaya, Virginia Director updated the members on the 2007 Blue Crab Report released in September by the Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee. She further explained

Blue Plains/WRDA

Congress overwhelmingly passed the Water Resources Development Act, however the President vetoed the prior week. The Senate, did, however, override the President's veto on November 8th.

QUANTIFYING THE LINKS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND THE ENVIRONMENT;

The Environmental Health Institute (EHI): Identifying and quantifying the links between environmental health and public health

Drs. Brian Schwartz and Walter Steward, co-directors of EHI

Dr. Schwartz introduced members to the new Environmental Health Institute, a joint project of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Geisinger Health System. The mission of the EHI will be to understand the links between land use, ecosystem health, community health, and human health, and to translate knowledge into sustainable community-based solutions. The EHI's core areas of activity will be research, education, resource development and community outreach. It is believed that land use, energy use, water use, and

food production changes that affect the Bay are the same factors that can affect human health, and vice versa.

The Economic Impact of Environmental Improvement: Analysis of efforts in the West Branch Susquehanna basin

Evan Hansen, President of Downstream Strategies

Mr. Hansen presented preliminary results of a study to determine the economic impacts of environmental improvement in the West Branch Susquehanna watershed, an area with significant impairments from abandoned mine drainage. In a survey, over 30% of watershed residents did not realize that there were environmental problems in the watershed. In the same survey, 51% of the respondents who lived in the watershed and 53% of the respondents from outside the watershed were willing to make a one-time payment for environmental remediation. The average amount they were willing to pay was \$43. One factor for those who responded negatively was the belief that individuals should not be asked to clean-up a problem that someone else created.

In addition to the survey, an analysis of property values revealed that AMD-impaired stream in close proximity can impact property values up to \$5,000 per acre.

The Susquehanna Greenway: Integrating public health, economic development, and the environment into community planning

Cindy Dunn, Director of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Ms. Dunn explained the development of the Susquehanna Greenway, a “mega-greenway” planned for Pennsylvania. The goals of the Greenway will be to create a specific sense of place for the region, connect river communities, and provide public education and recreational opportunities while attracting economic development. Several demonstration projects are currently under development. These and future projects are led by “Regional Lead Organizations” in each of the four regions within the Basin.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 P.M.

The next meeting of the Chesapeake Bay Commission
will be held at the Loews Hotel, Annapolis, MD
on January 3, 2008