

**TRIPLE DIVIDE WATERSHED COALITION
MEETING**

March 14, 2012

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Mark Stephens, DEP
Charlotte Dietrich, PCPC
Fern Burdick, NTCH
Lou Karija, Coudersport
Jim Clark, Penn State Ext.
Susan Keffer, PC Commissioner
Bernard Hoppe, Galeton Authority
Doug Morley, PC Commissioner
Coleen Frank, PCCD
Deb Ostrom, PCPC

Shawn Metcalf, Shinglehouse, Borough
Joe Cimino, Galeton Authority
Betty Joe Hillfiger, Ulysses Boro
Don Muir, PRWA
Jason Childs, PCCD
Gareth Gockley, Coudersport
Jim Weaver, Tioga County, Planner
Paul Heimel, PC Commissioner
Carrie Davis, Benchmark Lab
John McLaughlin, PCPC

EXPANSION OF MEMBERSHIP TO OTHER WATER SUPPLIERS

John McLaughlin asked the group if they had any objections to inviting other water suppliers outside of our area to the meetings. He explained that participation in a coalition may motivate those systems that didn't have a Source Water Protection Plan as well as those that did. They would have the option of joining our coalition, or forming a separate organization. All agreed that this was a good idea. John agreed to contact several nearby systems in McKean and Cameron counties and invite them to attend the May meeting.

NEEDS SURVEY

Jim Clark explained that the survey was almost complete. When completed he would distribute to everyone. He explained that this could be a valuable tool. He asked that all those who haven't completed the survey to please do so. Jim Weaver requested a copy of the spreadsheet so that it could be forwarded to the Tioga County coalition members.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE

Ben Hoppe suggested the next meeting be held Galeton, followed by a tour of their water system, weather permitting. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 9, 2012, at Tutors Restaurant starting at 9 AM.

E-NOTICE WEB SITE – DON MUIR, PRWA

Don demonstrated the E-Notice web site, how it could be used to receive email messages concerning new permit actions by various sections of DEP. Don also showed how to locate well sites and other information related to oil and gas well drilling activities.

TERRAQUA TREATMENT PLANT TOUR – JIM CLARK

Jim Clark and Jonathan Huff represented the TDWC last month at a tour of a frac water treatment facility in Williamsport. Jim explained, with the aid of photographs, that this was the first treatment plant of its kind in PA. It is a “no discharge” recycling plant that consists of 96 20,000 gal. frac water tanks with a total capacity for 2 million gallons of storage. They use chemicals and filters for treatment. Solids are pressed to remove liquid and shipped off site for disposal in an authorized landfill. Lycoming County will not allow waste to be taken to their landfill. Some companies only want to reuse treated frac water from their own operations, and the storage tanks actually have their names on them. The facility is open 24 hours a day, but they shut down for 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the evening during peak traffic hours. The treatment facility currently is not running at full capacity processing approximately 40,000 gal a day. According to the plant operator, the quality of the return water varies throughout the state, but they say that Tioga County and the Covington area produce the lowest quality. Commissioner Paul Heimel asked John if this was basically the same treatment process as the proposed wastewater treatment plant in near Ulysses. John explained that the one in Ulysses was more open and will not utilize the addition of any chemicals to the frac water to facilitate the treatment process.. Charlotte explained that they also will handle their solids differently. There was some discussion concerning the safety and the potential negative impacts on an adjacent high quality stream because of the plant location. The engineers developing the project, during a recent meeting with the County Planner explained that additional measures were being taken to protect the area. The Planning office has sent a letter to DEP expressing their concerns.

Jim went on to explain that Penn State was having a webinar on April 15th explaining Act 13. He also explained that Julie Kollar sent email concerning National Drinking Water Week, and that would be a good opportunity for educating the public. Jim explained he would be doing a school program in Galeton and Coudersport and that he was just waiting for a time and date for both.

UPDATE WREN GRANT

Coleen gave a report as to how much money was in the account and what it could be used for.

John passed out copies of the educational brochure explaining that the actual brochures were unable to be printed until the League of Women Voters review and approve the content, but that this is what they would look like with the exception of some minor changes. John asked if those interested would stay after the meeting to discuss how the remaining grant money could best be used.

COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE UPDATE, CHARLOTTE DIETRICH

Charlotte explained to the group that the Planning Commission intends to revise the county subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO) to recognize and impose extra protective measures for any development occurring within a recharge area. Charlotte has developed a form letter to be sent to a water supplier anytime a new plan impacting a recharge area is received. The affected water supplier will have the opportunity to comment on any such proposal as a part of the review process. A copy of the letter was given to those present.

BENCHMARK LABS, JAY BARROWS

Benchmark Lab was asked to explain this type of analysis in the event that follow up testing for methane/ethane should prove necessary. Jay was unable to attend, so his associate Carrie Davis spoke in his behalf. Ms. Davis explained that isotopic testing was basically a DNA Test for gas. In the laboratory the dissolved gasses in the sample are extracted from the water and then the gas is analyzed for radioactive isotopes of carbon and helium, which in turn are used to “age” the gas. When a sample is taken it will be analyzed and compared to source gas. Benchmark does not perform this analysis, but ships the samples to Isotech Lab located in Illinois. The current cost of this test is \$400.00.

IMPACT FEE – PAUL HIEMEL

Paul distributed a handout outlining ACT 13, including how it may impact the county and municipalities. He also explained that Senator Casey’s Office called him requesting a meeting with the Senator to discuss the Triple Divide Watershed Coalition. Paul asked if anyone had any input as to what they would like him to discuss.

OTHER

Mr. Heimel announced that the Triple Divide Coalition has won the Governors Excellence Award, and that John would be attending a ceremony at the Capitol on April 19th to accept the award on behalf of the Coalition.

Jim Weaver stated that he was doing a presentation for Rural Water, concerning zoning protection. He also explained that if any water suppliers had sources or recharge areas in the state forest, they should make the Bureau of Forestry aware of it so that the areas could be designated as High Conservation Value Forest.

There was some open discussion on the different efforts to get the recharge areas included in various databases so that the information was available to regulators and emergency responders. John stated any important work remaining be done as soon as possible.

Again, John made an appeal to the members to submit comments to DEP regarding the usage of a general erosion and sedimentation permit by oil and gas well drillers within a delineated recharge area. Under the regulations recently adopted under ACT 13, drillers may not use the general permit requirements for any new wells proposed near a high quality stream or in a flood plain. Instead any driller seeking a permit to operate in one of these sensitive areas will be required to develop a site-specific E&S plan. It was requested that a letter or email be sent to DEP asking that delineated recharge areas be afforded the same protections as a floodplain or high quality stream. The public comment period on this permit will be open until March 20th.

There was a brief discussion how to select future activities aimed towards implementation of the source water plans. It was suggested that the Coalition be permitted to speak on the behalf of all the members when working with other agencies as opposed to working with each individual system. There were no objections from any of the members present. This will be discussed further at future meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM.