

Minutes from the Indiana Water Monitoring Council Board of Directors Meeting (9/5/2012)

Action Items

- Identify theme and potential speakers for fall symposium (Symposium Planning Committee)
- Investigate potential dates and times to host fall symposium at the Indiana Government Center's conference facility (Jeff Frey and Jody Arthur)
- Categorize the current list of resources in order to facilitate tiered organization system on the InWMC Web site (Resources Compilation Committee)
- Board members should ask the heads of their respective organizations if they would be willing to make one-time donations to the Council in order to cover 501 C3 filing fees (all Board members)
- Send out one-page solicitation for student membership (Jody Arthur)
- Speak with Dave Lampe about compiling a list of RFPs that can be posted and maintained on InWMC Web site (Jeff Frey)
- Send a Groundwater Committee mission statement to members of the Communications Committee to post on the InWMC Web site (Tom Bruns)
- Post revised Resources Compilation Committee description and Groundwater Committee mission statement on Web site (Bryan Wallace and Shawn Naylor)

Attendees (12 total)

Douglas Smith, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service

Chris Ritz, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Jody Arthur, Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM)

Jeff Frey, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

Sara Peel, Indiana Lakes Management Society (ILMS)

Logan Garner, Indiana State Dept. of Agriculture (ISDA)

Greg Bright, Commonwealth Biomonitoring

Tom Bruns, Aqua Monitoring, Inc.

Via conference call:

Heather Buck, Christopher Burke Engineering, Ltd.,

Shawn Naylor, Indiana Geological Survey (IGS)

Sandy Clark-Kolaks, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR)

Bob Gillespie, St. Joseph River Watershed Alliance

Jeff Frey calls the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

Jeff Frey asks for a motion to approve minutes from the June 28th Board meeting.

- Jody Arthur moves that the minutes be accepted.

- Tom Bruns seconds the motion.
- All vote in favor.

Jeff welcomes Logan Garner to the Board of Directors. Logan is the new Program Manager for the ISDA Water Quality Initiatives program.

Professor Jennifer Tank (Notre Dame University) makes cameo appearance to discuss continuous nitrate sensors that she is developing

- Notre Dame has invested in a new environmental change initiative focused on climate change, land-use effects on water resources, and invasive species. As part of this initiative, Professor Tank has received funding to develop a low-cost sensor that measures continuous nitrate concentrations in surface water.
- Existing nitrate sensors were too expensive considering her proposed monitoring network included 12 monitoring locations so Jennifer spoke with electrical engineering professors at Notre Dame in hopes of building the sensor “in-house”.
- A prototype sensor is currently being developed and the expected cost to build these instruments is approximately \$2,000. The details regarding how these sensors will be marketed and at what cost remain to be worked out. However, if successful, they will be considerably cheaper than other sensors with similar technology that are currently available.
- Preliminary results indicate that the sensor gives accurate readings even when immersed in turbid water.
- Professor Tank hopes that the sensors and monitoring network will shed light on nitrate concentrations during high-flow conditions when she expects nitrate concentrations are at their highest.

Projects in Committee

Coordination and Collaboration Committee

Water Quality Monitoring Optimization Taskforce

- Jeff Frey noted that the first meeting was held earlier in the day with satisfactory outcomes. A total of six members attended in person or via a Webex call.
- One of the first issues the group is confronting is determining what the distribution of existing networks is and determining where gaps exist in terms of sampling locations and parameters.
- The taskforce will also begin working on identifying reference sites in order to establish background data for surface water quality in Indiana.

- Several spatial datasets have been collected including sampling locations for the USGS NAQWA Program, the IDEM Probabilistic Monitoring Network, and the IDEM Fixed-Station Monitoring Network.
- The group plans to speak with representatives from these agencies to discuss goals of each network such that a common all-inclusive set of initiatives can be established.

Symposium Planning Committee

- Jeff Frey suggested that the fall symposium topic could focus on improving members and users ability to get data from the various agencies. This could build on the planned training by the USGS for new staff at IDEM.
- Workshop ideas included:
 - A workshop on how to pull water related data from various sources, which would mimic a training that USGS will be providing to IDEM staff in the near future. Related to this, Jody Arthur noted that IDEM may revisit earlier attempts at making its water quality data available online.
 - A workshop on using simple watershed models that would either instruct watershed coordinators on using models such as L-THIA, Region-5, Sparrow, and Step-L or provide a model comparison to help water resources professionals choose the appropriate model for their needs. .
- Jeff noted that he will plan on scheduling the symposium for mid-November and agreed to work with Jody to investigate availability of meeting rooms at the Indiana Government Center.

Resources Compilation Committee

- Bob Gillespie noted that he will work with committee members to group the existing list of resources into categories before the next Board meeting.

Organization Structure

- An InWMC checking account has been opened and the 501(c)(3) filing process can be started once the filing fees are secured.
- Jeff Frey noted that each of the Board members should once again bring this up with heads of organizations to see about getting one-time donation to cover 501(c)(3) filing fees. He also mentioned that the USGS should be able to cover these costs, but if others can help off-set this expense it would be appreciated.
- Jody noted that the Articles of Association have been completed but she would still like to run these by legal counsel before moving forward. She requested that anyone with access to legal review through their agencies or companies should notify her if they can help out and provided hardcopy to a few of the board members.

Communications Committee

- Jody noted that she has drafted a message to accompany the one-page solicitation for student membership and will send this out to Indiana colleges and universities soon. Since the contact list is pretty old, Sara suggested sending it out to the board first for any updates they might be able to provide, which Jody will do prior to using it to distribute the solicitation out.
- Jeff Frey asked if the Web site could host a calendar aimed at tracking requests for proposals (RFPs) and their deadlines. Shawn Naylor noted that the existing “Events” calendar could be used. Jeff mentioned that he will inquire with Dave Lampe of the USGS to see if he can develop and maintain a list of active RFPs that can be posted to a stand-alone Web page. Given the time sensitive nature of RFPs, whether it would be better to send these out to the membership as they are received was also discussed. Jody said that the Communications Committee would discuss the best way to steward and deliver this content at its next meeting. Jeff will send the Communications Committee the RFP information he’s having gathered when he receives it.

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New Business

- Jeff Frey announced that he still needs to speak with Cindy Newkirk (Hancock Co. SWCD) before scheduling the next InWMC field day.
- Sara Peel noted that the current plan is to host a meeting focused on sharing sampling methods and data processing approaches in lieu of a data swap since the need exists for a forum focused on methods.
- The newly formed Groundwater Committee met earlier in the day.
 - Tom Bruns noted that one of the focus items included drought impacts on groundwater.
 - the reduction in groundwater monitoring wells was also discussed as was the need to identify resources to expand this network
 - Bruns noted that the committee members hope to reach out to water companies and get more participation from water users
 - a committee mission statement will be sent out to members of the Communications Committee to post on the InWMC Web site
 - the group plans to meet monthly

Next Meeting

- It was decided that we should delay scheduling the next meeting until after the fall symposium in November

Meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.