

**DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
FLOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

November 15, 2006

The November 15, 2006 Flood Advisory Committee (FAC) meeting began at 10:00 AM at the Commission office (DRBC) in West Trenton, NJ. Peter Gabrielsen of the National Weather Service chaired the meeting.

A. Introductions and Review of the Draft Minutes from the August 9th Meeting

No comments were made regarding the draft minutes. The summary, once approved, will be posted on the DRBC web site. Tapes of the meeting may be reviewed upon request.

B. Hydrologic Conditions Report

A presentation of the current hydrologic conditions was given by Mr. Fromuth. As of November 14th, rainfall in the basin has been well above normal over the past month; from 5-8" total. The totals equate to 200-300% compared to normal conditions for NJ and 120-150% compared to normal conditions for the upper basin.

Totals for the 7 day time-period ending on November 14, 2006, range from 4-5" for southern parts of the basin to 0.5-1" in the Cannonsville watershed. The maximum 3-day quantitative precipitation forecast outlook for the basin is 1.2" which is forecast for the upper basin.

Flash flood guidance from NWS was presented which is the amount of 12 hour precipitation that would need to occur. As of November 14th, due to antecedent conditions, some areas of the basin would need less than 2" to result in flash floods.

C. Flood Warning Notification - National Product (Laurie Hogan, NWS)

Presentation of AHPS RSS Feeds (aka Email Notification)

A presentation on the potential of AHPS RSS feeds was presented by Laurie Hogan from the NWS Eastern Region Office. RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds are the technology to issue email notifications for weather conditions; flood warning purposes. This is an experimental product of the National Weather Service Eastern Region Headquarters.

Customer feedback on the AHPS system over the years has included requests for automatic email notification. This RSS feed is based on the original development efforts of John Yagecic of the Delaware River Basin Commission. The current DRBC email notification algorithm will remain the same and be replicated as it is expanded into the national AHPS RSS service. The algorithm that gets used for the alert notices looks for a river stage above an action stage and then provides the highest forecast and last forecast point in the time series that was issued by the NWS.

Laurie explained how to select an RSS reader (service to provide the alerts) and the RSS feed type (alerts you are interested in). To download an RSS reader, go to <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/rss>. Some readers are a service that you subscribe to, whereas some other web browsers had built-in reader capabilities. The subscription process will allow you to choose where you would like the notifications to be sent (PDA/cell phone/email). Once you have selected a reader and subscribed, you will then want to select your desired RSS feed type, go to <http://www.weather.gov/ahps/rss/alerts.php> to select a particular gauge or county. To select a particular gauge or region, click on either the forecast or alert XML and copy the url in your browser (.rss) You will then need to paste that feed (.rss) into your subscription service (usually as an "add feed" option). Any questions can be directed to laurie.hogan@noaa.gov.

Action Item:

1. Because the site is coming on-line in December 2006, it was suggested that Laurie Hogan should be

invited back to the next FAC meeting to show the committee a “real-time-review” of an RSS feed.

D. Resolutions passed by the DRBC Commissioners at the 09/27/06 Meeting

On September 21, 2006, a letter was sent to DRBC Executive Director Carol R. Collier from Delaware Gov. Ruth Ann Minner, New Jersey Gov. Jon Corzine, New York Gov. George Pataki, and Pennsylvania Gov. Edward Rendell, who also serve as DRBC commissioners. In their letter to Ms. Collier, the four governors explained their joint action as follows: “Individually, the Basin states can move forward with policies and regulations to reduce and mitigate the impacts of flooding, but we believe that through coordinated effort on a regional basis, we can do more to reduce flood loss within the Basin than we could accomplish acting separately, on our own.” The letter called for DRBC to create an Interstate Flood Mitigation Task Force, develop a flood operation plan for the basin’s reservoirs and committed resources and expressed the need for a flood analysis model to evaluate the reservoirs. On September 27, 2006 the following resolutions were passed by the DRBC Commissioners:

Interim Spill Mitigation Plan (2006-18)

This resolution established a temporary spill mitigation program for Neversink, Pepacton, and Cannonsville Reservoirs to be effective through May 2007. When the total storage of the three reservoirs is greater than 80% then specific releases at each of the individual reservoirs are triggered. The program is designed to make higher releases from the reservoirs when the storage in the reservoirs is high. Under dry conditions, the program could achieve a storage level off at about 90%. However, inflows to the reservoirs have been high lately due to so much precipitation, so that the releases can’t keep up with the inflows. Therefore, reservoir storage has increased since the program started, even though about 40 BG have been released from the reservoirs so far.

Termination of this interim program will coincide with adoption of a new year-round management program for the New York City Delaware Basin reservoirs which will include a spill mitigation component. Implementation of Resolution 2006-18 required the consent of all five parties to the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court Decree -- Delaware, New Jersey, New York State, Pennsylvania, and New York City.

Interstate Flood Mitigation Task Force (2006-19)

This resolution authorized and directed the DRBC Executive Director to establish a task force to recommend a set of comprehensive flood mitigation measures for the Delaware Basin. The first meeting of the Task Force was convened on October 25, 2006. The Task Force is comprised of 32 members representing a broad array of governmental (both legislative and executive), private sector and non-profit interests. Six focus area groups have been formed in which to develop recommendations to be included in the report. The focus area groups are Reservoir Operations, Structural/NonStructural Measures, Stormwater Management, Floodplain Mapping, Floodplain Regulations, and Flood Warning. The time frame for the task force report to be prepared is the end of 2006.

Flood Analysis Model (2006-20)

This resolution authorized and directing the DRBC Executive Director to accept funds from the basin states to be used to develop a model for evaluating the potential for reservoirs throughout the basin to be used to mitigate flooding on the Delaware River and its tributaries. Each of the states has committed funding towards the development of this model. To date, the National Weather Service has said that they are not in a position to lead the model development at this time, but they are willing to contribute in an advisory role. The USGS is currently preparing a proposal to take the lead in the modeling effort. This model will be designed to look at the relative impacts of various reservoir voids and varying design and historic storms at locations downstream.

Snowpack gages- NYC reservoir watersheds (2006-21)

This resolution authorized the DRBC Executive Director to accept funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Automated Flood Warning System Grant Program for the purchase of two snowpack gauges to be installed in the watersheds of the Delaware Basin New York City reservoirs.

E. Opportunity for Public and Interested Party Comments

Questions and comments were received from residents and others impacted by the recent flooding. The following issues were raised during the public comment period:

- The three reservoirs that connect the reservoirs to Rondout Reservoir all have turbines to produce electricity. Why aren't more diversions being made? John Vickers of the NYCDEP responded that diversions are lower because the hydropower agreement for the facility on the East Branch Diversion Tunnel has expired and is being re-negotiated. The hydro unit is not being operated during this time. (Note: The NYCDEP provided additional information subsequent to the meeting. They explained that despite the temporary shut down of the East Branch Diversion hydro facility, decisions on the Delaware Basin diversions are not based on hydropower revenue. The low rate of diversion from the Delaware System during November was due to factors including the repair of Gilboa Dam, and hydrologic conditions throughout the entire NYC reservoir system.)
- Residents south of Easton/Phillipsburg were interested in viewing information on the voids in the reservoirs on the Lehigh (FE Walter, Beltsville). The spillway information can be viewed from the Corp website and AHPS. USGS mentioned that the contents of the reservoirs could be displayed at a line every 5% if requested.
- Barbara Watson, of NWS Binghamton office was in attendance at the meeting because John Chiamonte is retiring January 3rd.

Action Item:

1. Bill Vogt, Delaware Riverside Conservancy, will look at the information on the various websites and see if that meets the needs of the constituents and will report at the next meeting.

F. Request Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair

Mariana Leckner, NJ Office of Emergency Management was due to serve as the Chair succeeding Peter Gabrielsen, but she left the NJ Office of Emergency Management to pursue a graduate degree. Generally, State and Federal representation of the Chair alternates.

The Committee has decided to keep the Chairperson for another year under federal sponsorship due to the past Vice-Chair having to leave her post. Nominations for a state sponsored Vice Chair were taken. Scott Steigerwald was nominated and the nomination was seconded for 2007. Peter Gabrielsen will stay on as Chair for 2007.

G. Overview of Flood Mitigation Plan for the Non-Tidal NJ Section of the Delaware River Basin

The DRBC, along with NJDEP and NJOEM, have joined together to provide planning and technical assistance products to help municipalities in preparing a flood mitigation plan. Four County Kick-off meetings are scheduled to occur in the next few weeks at which the planning process will be described to the municipalities, technical products and services to be provided will be described, and minimum requirements that each municipality need to complete will be presented. Statements of Intent from each municipality will be requested.

H. Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 7, 2006 at 10:00 am.

**FLOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ATTENDANCE**

November 15, 2006

NAME	AGENCY
AHNERT, Peter	National Weather Service (NWS)
FITZPATRICK, Dan	Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (Pa. DCED)
FROMUTH, Rick	DRBC
GABRIELSEN, Peter	NWS/Eastern Region Headquarters
GRUBER, Hank	United States Army Corps of Engineers (US ACE)
HOGAN, Laurie	NWS/ Eastern Region Headquarters
KELCHNER, George	Delaware Riverside Conservancy
LEAR, Kathy	New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJ OEM)
MAHOOD, Jeff	Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
MAZZEI, Vince	New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP)
MERSHON, Jim	Merrill Creek
MOYLE, John	NJ DEP
NECHAMEN, Bill	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC)
NICKELSBURG, Walt	NWS/ Mount Holly Local Office
PEDRICK, Gail	New Hope homeowner
REUBER, Michael	National Park Service/ Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River
RIZZO, Kimberly	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – Region II
RUGGIERI, Joseph	NJ DEP
RUPERT, Clarke	DRBC
SCHOPP, Bob	United States Geological Survey (USGS)
SCORDATO, John	NJ DEP
STEIGERWALD, Scott	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP)
TAMM, Alan	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)
TESSIERI, Laura	DRBC
VICKERS, John	New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYC DEP)
VOGT, Bill	Delaware Riverside Conservancy
WATSON, Barbara	NWS/ Binghamton Local Office
YAGECIC, John	DRBC
ZAGONE, Joseph N.	FEMA – Region III