

Nebraska Ground Water Monitoring Advisory Committee (NGWMAC)
Wednesday, May 2, 2012, 10:00 AM-12:00 Noon
NDEQ Van Dorn Street Facility
Lincoln, Nebraska

MEETING NOTES

1. Introductions/Program-Project Updates

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:05 AM. The following individuals were present:

Russ Callan, LLNRD	Tylr Naprstek, LLNRD	Jane Griffith, GWF
Ginny McGuire, USGS	Mike Archer, NDEQ	Colleen Steele, UNL
Dan Inman, NDEQ	Pat O'Brien, NARD	Jim Newman, LLCHD
Ryan Chapman, NDEQ	Marty Link, NDEQ	Patrick Hartman, NDEQ
Craig Romary, NDA	Howard Isaacs, NDHHS	Clancy Dempsey, LLCHD
Dave Rus, USGS	Karen O'Connor, OA	Erica Colbert, UNMC
Dick Ehrman, LPSNRD		

2. NDEQ Annual Ground Water Monitoring Report to the Legislature—Marty Link , NDEQ
Link provided an overview of NDEQ's 2011 Ground Water Quality Monitoring Report, noting the importance of data gathered from the Ag Chemical Clearinghouse. She also overviewed NDEQ's 2011 Water Monitoring Programs Report, which includes an overview of both ground and surface water monitoring performed by NDEQ. She handed out hard copies of both reports; both can also be downloaded from NDEQ's website. She also handed out copies of the Community Lakes Enhancement and Restoration (CLEAR) report, which details efforts of NDEQ and cooperating entities to restore and protect lakes within a number of communities across Nebraska. She also updated the group on NDEQ's activities regarding the Keystone Pipeline issue, including a series of upcoming public meetings in northern and central Nebraska along the revised proposed pipeline route. HDR is working on the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed route, and NDEQ is dealing with many public inquiries. In the future, the agency will be concentrating on such issues as geology, stream crossings, etc.; NDEQ's recommendations to the Governor are due probably by the end of 2012. She noted that this could be a good subject for a presentation at an upcoming meeting, along with NDEQ's actions responding to a pipeline spill near Nebraska City in late 2011, which affected both ground and surface water. Finally, Link shared a summary of a poster presentation by Will Myers at the National Monitoring Conference in Portland, Oregon, dealing with algal toxins in surface and ground water.

- a. Statewide Ground Water Monitoring Network Update—Pat O'Brien, NARD
O'Brien updated the group on the SGWMN; currently he is concentrating on updating the well list and replacing wells which are not being sampled. The goal is to wind up with about 1500 wells statewide that are regularly and consistently

monitored for at least nitrate. O'Brien estimates that currently, there are about 1300 wells that are being monitored.

3. Ag Chemical Clearinghouse Update—Colleen Steele, UNL
Steele provided a handout detailing the current status of the Ag Chemical Clearinghouse. As of 5/2/2012:

Number of wells in clearinghouse	201,610
Number of analyses	440,281
Number of analytes	241
Number of nitrates	97,059
Number of wells w/ nitrate analyses	23,610

Number of NRDs that have submitted data for 2011	18
Number of NRDs that have not yet submitted (Papio-MR NRD not included as USGS does theirs)	4

4. Immunoassay Pesticide/Bacteria Monitoring Projects Update—Craig Romary, NDA/Pat O'Brien, NARD

Romary is working on a data summary for the ELISA pesticide data that is currently being collected by 13 or 14 NRDs across the state. He is also continuing to explore ways of making this data part of the Clearinghouse effort, either as a separate but similar database or as a specific code within the Clearinghouse. He is cooperating with O'Brien to arrange some additional training for the NRDs as there has been some staff turnover within the system and it's good even for experienced operators to get a refresher on the methodology. There was discussion within the group as to how the ELISA methodology can be used, both for quantitation and as a screen for further analysis.

O'Brien briefly noted that the bacteria project is continuing and he's working with NRDs to provide them with the necessary supplies.

5. NSWMC Update—Dave Rus, USGS

Rus overviewed the recent NSWMC spring meeting. He informed the group that John Lund from NDEQ will be retiring later in the summer; John's experience, knowledge, and unique perspectives will be greatly missed. He also described some of the discussion and activities that are going on regarding invasive aquatic species, especially zebra mussels, and such actions as draining or lowering water levels in lakes, and decontamination of boats and watercraft in an effort to manage this problem. He also overviewed the presentation by Mike Archer regarding fish migration on the Missouri River during the 2011 flooding at the NSWMC meeting.

6. *Comparison of Water Quality Assessments and Survey-Based Health Assessments between Flood Impacted and Non-flood Impacted Domestic Wells*—Erica Colbert, University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Public Health

Colbert gave an interesting and enlightening presentation on her master's project dealing with

effects of the 2011 flooding on domestic wells near the Missouri River. The objective of her project is to evaluate the effect of this flooding on domestic well water and the corresponding impact on public health, using total coliform, nitrate, and atrazine (she used an ELISA method as a presence/absence test) as indicators. Her sampling activities were concentrated in/around the PMRNRD, but ranged from northeast Nebraska (L&C NRD) as far south as the southeastern portion of the Missouri Valley in NNRD. She noted some of the difficulties in getting permission to sample wells as well as problems with having residents complete the health surveys necessary to interpret the results. Her analysis was unable to document a statistically significant difference between the flood affected and control groups; this may have been a result of several complicating factors such as small sample size as much as an indicator of minimal flood impact. Overall, however, the group was impressed with Colbert's project and provided her with feedback and ideas on possible future activities.

7. Election of New Chair—be prepared to nominate or volunteer!!!!
Ehrman gave a brief overview of the requirements and duties associated with the coveted position of NGWMAC Chair. Link nominated Clancy Dempsey as the new chair; Dempsey was unanimously elected as chair and will assume his duties for the upcoming fall joint meeting with NSWMC. Congratulations, Clancy!
8. Other items/roundtable discussion
Ehrman reminded the group that UNL's 2011 water level monitoring report is now available for purchase and online; Link told the group that Jesse Korus from UNL will be presenting an overview of the report and UNL's activities at a brown bag session on May 10 at noon in NDEQ's 2nd floor conference room. Ryan Chapman updated the group on the newly-approved WHP plans for several communities across the state; a complete list of approved plans is available on NDEQ's website. He also noted that new "Drinking Water Protection Area" signs have been distributed to communities across the state and will be posted soon. This term has been adopted to provide a more descriptive and easier-to-understand concept to replace "Wellhead Protection Area," at least as far as the signs go. Russ Callan updated to group on LLNRD's recent action to not allow any new irrigation development or transfers within WHPAs; they feel such an action will help further wellhead protection in LLNRD.
9. Next meeting—Tentatively Wednesday, Oct. 10, 2012; joint meeting w/ NSWMC.
Clancy and Dave will work on an agenda and location. Don't hesitate to suggest topics/speakers/agenda items. See you in October!