



# The Potomac River Basin Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership

Quarterly Meeting Summary held via webinar on May 4, 2022

## Attendees

### Water Suppliers

*Berkeley County PSWD:*  
Steve DeRidder

*DC Water:*  
Maureen Schmelling  
Saul Kinter  
Matt Ries

*Fairfax Water:*  
Nicki Bellezza  
Doug Grimes  
John Kingsbury  
Gregory Prelewicz  
Niffy Saji  
Susan Miller  
John Kingsbury

*Frederick County:*  
Mark Schweitzer  
Josh Smith

*Loudoun Water:*  
Thomas Barrack  
Gerardo Castaneda  
Jessica Edwards-Brandt  
Pam Kenel  
Mark Peterson  
Cathy Cogswell  
Bradley Schmitz

*Town of Leesburg:*  
Russell Chambers  
Brian Stone

*Washington Aqueduct:*  
Anne Spiesman

*WSSC Water:*  
Robin Forte  
Jin Shin  
Priscilla To  
Nicole Horvath  
Robert Hsu

### State and Local Agencies

*DC DOEE:*  
Joshua Rodriguez

*MDE:*  
Jonathan Leiman  
Robert Peoples  
Michael Roberts  
Rebecca Warns

*PA DEP:*  
Adrian Bouknight  
David Mittner

*VDEQ:*  
Mark Miller  
Sarah Sivers

*VDH:*  
Raven Jarvis

*WV DHHR:*  
Monica Whyte

### Federal and Regional Agencies

*EPA Region 3:*  
Virginia Vassalotti  
Calvin Yahn  
Laura Casillas  
Beth Garcia

*ICPRB:*  
Renee Bourassa  
Curtis Dalpra  
Christina Davis  
Rikke Jepsen  
Janina Jones  
Heidi Moltz  
Michael Nardolilli  
Stephanie Nummer  
Carlington Wallace

*MWCOG:*  
Steve Bieber  
Christine Howard  
Lisa Ragain

## Business Meeting

Due to social distancing requirements resulting from the coronavirus pandemic, the May 4, 2022, Quarterly Meeting was held via webinar. There were 59 attendees, including the moderator and presenters.

## Presentations

### **Review of Historical DWSPP Source Water Protection Activities**

*Greg Prelewicz, Fairfax Water; Anne Spiesman, Washington Aqueduct; and Priscilla To, WSSC Water*

In the early years of DWSPP, 2002-2004, the focus was largely on priority issues, including priority contaminants, emerging contaminants, and spills. Priority contaminants at this time included pathogens, algae/DBP precursors and phosphorus, sediments, and ammonia/de-icing agents. Additionally, the emerging contaminants being considered were EDC/PCPPs. These activities and issues of focus led to the first formal partnership meeting of DWSPP on August 25, 2004.

During the early years of DWSPP, the technical priorities were largely driven by the completed Source Water Assessment Plans and represented a comparison and compilation of issues among various water suppliers. Funding largely came from the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plans with the goal of gaining a greater voice for source water priorities. Additionally, founding members worked to include other local and regional entities within the overall partnership framework.

In 2010/2011, there were updates to the DWSP Partnership. These included objectives, on-going activities, short-term activities, long-term activities, and metrics of success.

A 10-year review of the Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership occurred in November of 2013. This review, *Protecting the Potomac: Looking Forward*, was presented by Vicky Binetti from the US EPA Region 3. The plans to meet future needs included the promotion of Clean Water Act tools that can be used to protect drinking water use; seeking out new partners from utilities, local governments, environmental advocacy organizations, academia, federal and state agencies, and professional groups; expanding the capacity of work by leveraging resources and complementing the actions of various groups; accounting for population growth by identifying critical resources and impacts; understanding the impacts of climate change on source water quality and quantity; and understanding and addressing both old and new emerging contaminants. This 10-year review was included in the 2013 DWSPP Annual Meeting.

In the following years, including 2015 and 2018, priority watersheds were identified. The focus in 2015 was the protection of source water in the Monocacy watershed. Later, in 2018, the Monocacy/Catoctin watershed was then identified as an area of concern by the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI).

Further updates in 2018 included refreshing the Work Group leadership and scope of issues/project priorities. This was to include a 2-year outlook plan for each Work Group leading to a strategic plan for each Work Group.

In taking actions toward source water protection, DWSPP has worked on and catalyzed several activities within the region. These include sharing source water assessments and priority issues; internal and external education; expanding awareness of DWSPP and membership; several spill response actions; and other activities. Internal and external education involving DWSPP has covered:

- Seminars on intersex fish
- Road salts
- Cryptosporidium
- UCMR3 Contaminants
- Algal toxins
- Microplastics
- PFAS
- SDWA-CWA integration
- WRF project summaries
- And more

Projects involving DWSPP have also included EDCs/drug take backs, cryptosporidium source tracking, and NPDES permits. The NPDES permits work to incorporate monitoring/limits into upstream facility discharge permits. Spill response actions involving DWSPP include collaborations with emergency responders, models, and exercises.

DWSPP actions have also worked on Land Prioritization mapping project and implementation and the WRF forest project with ICPRB and the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities. The outreach DWSPP has worked on with NRCS has led to the Little Pipe Creek and Cacapon & Lost Rivers watersheds being selected for NWQI projects. Work has also been done to understand the Farm Bill, recognize the PFAS monitoring plan goals/implementation for each State, and support the MWCOG WaterSuite GIS contaminant tracking tool and PFAS source identification.

### **Current & Future Opportunities for Source Water Protection**

*Christina Davis, ICPRB*

Key opportunities for current and future work in protecting source water have been identified by DWSPP. These seven opportunities include:

1. Work with the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
  - a. The State Technical Committee (STC) with the NRCS has the opportunity to identify priority source waters for protection
  - b. The National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) provides the opportunity to protect source waters through two different phases – 1) the planning phase and 2)

- implementation phase. NWQI projects are currently in the works in Maryland and West Virginia.
- c. NRCS opportunities in VA?
  2. Opportunities with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)
    - a. In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation in support of planting and maintaining 5 million native trees in the State by 2031. A key focus of this effort is supporting tree equity through targeted native tree planting in underserved urban communities. DWSPP provided the land prioritization geodatabase to DNR.
  3. Chesapeake Bay Program opportunities
    - a. Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Watcher
    - b. Plastic Pollution Action Team (PPAT)
  4. Opportunities to work with States on source water protection advocacy
    - a. NPDES permit application review
    - b. TMDL planning and implementation
  5. Outreach opportunities available include
    - a. AWWA Source Water Protection Week
    - b. SWP newsletter
  6. Regional collaborations also provide opportunities through
    - a. Source Water Collaborative/Watershed Protection/Forestry
    - b. Salinization: DEQ, MDE, ICPRB, MWCOG, NSF ECOS – VT Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory
    - c. WaterSuite – Tier II data, PFAS sources
    - d. PFAS monitoring
  7. There are also various projects that provide opportunities for current and future work
    - a. Spill response planning, communication, and exercises
    - b. The Land Prioritization project has opportunities to be updated with a focus on environmental justice and there is the opportunity to expand its coverage across basin jurisdictions.
    - c. There is the opportunity for microplastic sampling.
    - d. Source water quality has opportunities for research on disinfection byproduct precursors, algae, PFAS, and salinization.

### **Partnership Member Presentations**

*Each water supplier, state/local agency, and federal/regional agency presented an update of current programs, source water protection actions, and thoughts on the various programs available through DWSPP. The summary from each group can be found in the [DWSPP May 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting Questionnaire Responses Excel document](#).*

## Workgroup Updates

### **Agricultural Issues**

*Pam Kenel, Loudoun Water*

Recently, the Agricultural Issues Workgroup has focused on:

- NRCS National Water Quality Initiative
  - Funding has been obtained for:
    - MD – Little Pipe Creek - Carroll and Frederick Counties
      - Technical assessments are now complete and a draft of the Background, Watershed Characterization, Hydrologic and Water Quality Characterization, and the Resource Analysis/Source Assessment has been submitted.
      - In the next quarter, ICPRB is developing the Summary and Recommendations and the Outreach Plan and finalizing the report.
      - We are hopeful that MD NRCS will pursue Implementation Phase funding for the watershed in FY23.
    - WV – Cacapon River – Several Counties
      - Proposal for 29 or more HUC12 watersheds in WV have been submitted
        - 5-6 HUC12 watersheds prioritized for the watershed assessment in the headwaters
      - They have been accepted for the Readiness Phase
        - Goal is to identify practices for agricultural producer implementation and NWQI funding
      - EPA is leading the plan to engage stakeholders
        - They are keeping DWSPP informed as the project proceeds
- Several opportunities in Virginia
  - Currently there is ongoing dialogue with Goose Creek Association (Fauquier and Loudoun Counties) regarding NRCS funding and other opportunities
  - Local and state connections with Loudoun County, Clarke County, and VA-NRCS
- Ongoing outreach, such as:
  - Discussion with land trusts, NGOs to advance use of Land Prioritization Tool

### **Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CEC)**

*Brad Schmitz, Loudoun Water*

The Contaminants of Emerging Concern Workgroup has:

- Recently had a change in chairs as Martin Chandler from WSSC retired and Brad Schmitz has assumed the role of chair
- Focused on microplastics and PFAS in the past year
  - Had a webinar with four national and international speakers who have been working on the microplastics issue for several years
  - Considering whether to do internal sampling along the Potomac River

### **Early Warning & Emergency Response (EWER)**

*Doug Grimes, Fairfax Water*

The Utility Spill Response Plan has been transferred to the Early Warning and Emergency Response Workgroup.

Recently, the Early Warning & Emergency Response Workgroup (is/has):

- Currently undergoing a change in chair with Joel Thompson retiring and Doug Grimes assuming the role of chair
- Considering the idea of putting a second sonde at on the Monocacy River at Route 28
- The COG monitoring team has a meeting coming up this month
- The workgroup is accepting volunteers/members

## **Reaching Out**

*Lisa Ragain, MWCOG*

Recently, the Reaching Out Workgroup is/has:

- Put out the annual report
- Looking for volunteers/members to bring fresh faces to the work group
- Sending out Monthly News Drops
- Working on Source Water Protection Week which is September 25<sup>th</sup> – October 1st

## **Urban and Industrial Issues**

*Greg Prelewicz, Fairfax Water*

Recently, the Urban and Industrial Issues Workgroup:

- Met on March 31, 2022
  - Worked on tracking updates for:
    - VERSO/Luke Voluntary Remediation Project (VRP)
    - Allegany Ballistics
      - PFAS monitoring has begun at this site
  - Continued work on a review of Water Quality Standards program
    - West Virginia – April is the start for the 2022-2024 triennial updates
    - Maryland – Participated in March 30, 2022 webinar, finalizing updates initiated in 2019
  - Briefly updated members on the WaterSuite GIS program
  - Updated members on PFAS monitoring by MDE and the first discharge permit requiring a PFAS study

## **Water Quality (WQ)**

*Niffy Saji, Fairfax Water*

Recent Water Quality Workgroup activities:

- Helping DC Water organize a laboratory workshop to occur on June 2, 2022
  - funded by EPA Region 3
  - Participants will come from DC Water, NCR Utilities, and Regional/State Laboratories.
  - The goal of this workshop is to discuss in-house and contract laboratory capabilities available during incidents affecting the water sector.
- Worked on collecting monitoring data (information on what data and monitoring points are available with the best point of contact)
  - This activity includes creating a map of monitoring locations for salt (sodium, chloride, or surrogates) in the Potomac watershed

- Updating the existing map on HAB monitoring locations in the Potomac watershed
- PFAS monitoring in the Potomac watershed
- Plans to consider SAV monitoring in the Potomac River

### **Ad Hoc Land Prioritization Implementation**

*Michael Nardolilli, ICPRB*

Recently, the Ad Hoc Land Prioritization Implementation Workgroup has:

- Decided to no longer continue with regular meetings, but rather meet when needed
- Submitted proposals to present “Land Prioritization: Mapping to Protect Drinking Water in the Non-Tidal Potomac”
  - Virginia Land Conference – also known as VAULT - Virginia’s United Land Trust
    - Resulted in no presentation
  - Forever Maryland Land Conservation Meeting
    - Presentation on June 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Requested that the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation change its scoring manual to add points for protects that also protect lands that are important for drinking water sources and set up a sub-committee. However, the sub-committee has not met yet.

### **Administrative Updates**

*Christy Davis, ICPRB*

The administrative updates began with a reminder to post on the Jamboard to share activity ideas for the short term and medium term. Additionally, a poll was conducted to gather input on the preferred location of the August meeting (in-person or virtual). The focus of the next meeting will be salinization. The administrative updates were then concluded with a reminder to pay the 2022 dues.