

# **Nutrient Monitoring Council (NMC) 12th Meeting**

**March 19, 2019**

Illinois EPA, Mississippi River Conference Room

1021 North Grand Avenue East, Springfield

## **Summary**

*In attendance:* Gregg Good, Illinois EPA; Trevor Sample, Illinois EPA; Rick Cobb, Illinois EPA; Paul Davidson, University of Illinois; Ann Holtrop, Illinois Department of Natural Resources; Laura Keefer, Illinois State Water Survey; Jong Lee, University of Illinois NCSA; Momcilo Markus, Illinois State Water Survey; Greg Mclsaac, University of Illinois; Brian Metzke, Illinois Department of Natural Resources; Cindy Skrukud, Sierra Club; Kelly Warner, USGS; Eliana Brown, Illinois Extension; Kate Gardiner, Illinois Extension; and Justin Vick, MWRD (via phone)

### ***Welcome/Housekeeping – Gregg Good and Eliana Brown***

*Hold the Date for NLRS Policy Working Group Meeting on May 22, 2019 and the NLRS Partnership Conference on December 3-4, 2019.*

### ***NMC August 29, 2019, Meeting Review and Minutes – Gregg Good***

The meeting minutes were accepted without changes.

### ***NLRS Science Assessment Update – Greg Mclsaac***

Dr. Greg Mclsaac described his progress on his NLRS Science Assessment update.

### ***NLRS Data Portal Update – Jong Lee***

Jong Lee gave an update on the Great Lakes to Gulf NLRS Data Portal. Data recently added to the site include EPA Pollutant Loading, the most recent data for the Fox River Watershed, the Fox River Study Group, and the Illinois State Water Survey. Layers added include the SPARROW 2002 Nutrient Model Results, Hypoxia Contours from 2005 to 2017, and others in progress. As of right now, there are 27 million data points in the portal and they are working on visualization data as well. Watch for the latest version of the NLRS Data Portal coming out soon.

### ***Assessment of NPS Nutrient Load Reduction Goals under Changing Climate – Momcilo Markus, ISWS***

Momcilo Markus of the Illinois State Water Survey presented his assessment of nonpoint source nutrients. Momcilo brought up that nutrient loads are related to climate, climate is changing, and as a result, nutrient loads will also be changing. He notes that what is designed today may not be sufficient in the future. This begs the following questions: is there any way to add climate variability/change to the NLRS? Can there be climate-normalized goals? How do we validate that our strategies worked if the climate is changing? He says it would be difficult to design a test that would properly and accurately measure progress due to the changing climate.

### ***USGS Super Gage Stations Update – Kelly Warner***

*Any impact from government shutdown?*

During that time, we couldn't go out and check the monitoring. Luckily, none of the Super Gages went down.

*Future funding (current USGS operation goes through Sept. 2020) – Gregg Good*

Funding for Super Gage nutrient tracking goes through Sept. 2020 with a report after that. A funding source needs to be sought for after 2020.

### ***NLRS 2019 Biennial Report Update – Trevor Sample***

Groups have been sending their data spreadsheets and written updates to Eliana and Kate. We have also been collecting cost-share data from federal agencies. We hope to have a rough draft to Policy Working Group members sometime in May, likely without the NASS information. The NASS Survey went out late due to the government shutdown, hopefully the results will be available sometime in June. The updated Science Assessment will be a part of the Biennial Report as well. Tentative release date is during the Farm Progress Show.

### ***NSAC Report Update – Gregg Good***

The Nutrient Science Advisory Committee report is complete. It is now available on the Illinois EPA website and it's open to public comments. The comments are due by the end of April.

### ***Proposed Upper Mississippi River Water Quality Improvement Act – Gregg Good***

Gregg Good distributed a copy of the Proposed Upper Mississippi River Water Quality Improvement Act. Gregg is on a water quality executive committee and a task force as well for states in the Upper Mississippi River Watershed. The 5 states meet to do consistent and collaborative monitoring. Every state has different levels of monitoring and different water quality standards, etc., but with enough resources, they think they could monitor the Upper Mississippi River and do a Clean Water Act assessment from Cairo, IL and upstream. While they would like to do a pilot project to establish a state-federal collaborative for the reduction, monitoring, and assessment of sediment, nutrients, and other contaminants, they don't have a funding source. Sponsor of the bill will be Representative Kind from Wisconsin, with co-sponsor likely to be Representative Davis from Illinois.

### ***NMC Member Updates – Exciting or Boring News to Share?***

Gregg Good brought up that Gov. Pritzker joined the Climate Alliance. Gregg says that to best show our resiliency, we need data. He noted that the Illinois EPA has 30-40 years' worth of ambient monitoring data and can put together some trends reports. Laura Keefer says the ISWS just delivered a trends analysis and it's available online. She says there's no relationship to causes yet, the analysis just shows the trends. And Momcilo is hosting some workshops. Brian Metzke doesn't have any updates to share. Ann Holtrop explained the difficulty they have with filling positions when multiple people retire at once and the employees who would've been the best for the promotion have already moved around within the agency. She says CREP positions have been posted and interviews might be opening up soon for one of them. Jong Lee noted that the Center for Digital Agriculture has launched and that NCSA will act as a liaison to bring agriculture and computer science together, along with an industry partner. Greg McIsaac and a few colleagues wrote a critique of a paper that stated if you stopped all the agriculture runoff, it would take

60 years to clean up the Gulf of Mexico. Their critique has gone through the first round of reviews so far. Cindy Skrukud says that the Fox River database has been updated and they are seeing steady or downward trends in the urbanized areas of the main stem of the Fox River. Rick Cobb has been busy reviewing legislative proposals on microplastics, androgen and estrogen disruptor testing, energy efficiency, the Mahomet Aquifer, coal ash pollution prevention, etc. He's also been working with ISTC on emerging contaminants and talking with his water colleagues to set a water quality standard for PFOS/PFAS. Paul Davidson is in the process of getting a new department head and he's planning an engineering study abroad trip to South Africa for four weeks. Eliana Brown and Kate Gardiner have a Biennial Report coming out in August and a conference Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Next Meetings – We need to select some dates!**

Attend the Policy Working Group meeting May 22, 2019. The next Nutrient Monitoring Council meeting is slated for the week of September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019. (September 10, 2019 was ultimately selected).

***Adjourn***