

2012 Urban Waters National Training Workshop
Washington, DC
October 24-25, 2012

Wednesday, October 24, 2012

8:30 – 9:00am – Opening Remarks:

The workshop opened with a welcome from Surabhi Shah, who thanked the attendees and emphasized that the aim was peer-to-peer exchange. Mike Shapiro thanked Surabhi and her small team for putting together the event. He reminded attendees that a principal focus of the urban waters effort is environmental justice (EJ) concerns for communities that are underserved. Challenges include reconnecting communities to their waters and addressing water quality problems. Shapiro emphasized the need for various agencies to work together and noted that the Urban Waters Federal Partnership was created for this purpose.

Bob Perciasepe offered brief introductory comments including reflections on working as an urban renewal planner in Baltimore and explaining how the building of highways cuts cities off from their waterfronts. He suggested that integrating water into the fabric of our long-term plan for community can turn the challenge into an opportunity. Therefore he stressed agency cooperation and links with other initiatives, such as America's Great Outdoors.

9:00-9:45am – Keynote Speaker:

Peggy Shepard, Executive Director of West Harlem Environmental Action (WE ACT)

Peggy Shepard explained how WE ACT has engaged the Harlem community on the issue of the Harlem waterfront. It is an area of mostly low income and high population density and had shouldered most of the burden of the city's waste. In 2009, residents were able to finalize their own plan for regeneration instead of a proposed hotel development after 10 years of partnership with architects, planners and a grant from the Department of Energy.

Mike Shapiro summarized Peggy's talk and reflected on the key themes. These were the need for "patience, persistence and consensus" in long-term projects, the role of the collaborative process, innovation in finding resources and the overall aim of supporting community health. Representatives from partner organizations, Dianna Toledo of River Network and Ann-Marie Mitroff of Groundwork USA promoted the Learning Network as a forum to share challenges and replicate successes.

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10:15 – 11:15am – Morning Breakout Sessions:

Session B: Clean Water Act 101 and Community Engagement: Stormwater, CSOs and SSOs

Session Attendees (10 federal, state and local government, and 15 nonprofit and academic attendees)

Name	Organization
Elyse Bilardo	EPA Urban Waters (Intern)
Michael Byrd	Prescott Creek Preservation Association
Trey Sharard	Anacostia River Keeper
Maggie Curme	SRA (EPA Support)
Andrew Oetman	DC District Department of the Environment
Mark Cameron	Baltimore City Office of Sustainability
Heather Goss	EPA HQ (WQS program)
Jason Warth	Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
Donna M. Murphy	USF NA S&PF (unknown affiliation)
Mike Gavin	save a Tree
Mary Rickel Pelletier	Park Watershed
Gail Gunst Heffener	Calvin College –Plaster Creek Stewards
Sabrina Terry	United Puerto Rican Organization of Sunset Park
Shelley Alingas	Potomac Riverkeeper
Danelle Haake	River Des Peres Watershed Coalition (St. Louis)
Rachel Hansgen	Groundwork Denver
Dotte Yunger	Chesapeake Covenant Community
Catherine Re	EPA Region 3
Jaime Barbour	USDA Forest Service
Bryan Johns	American University
Stuart Lehman	US EPA NPS Branch
Jared Criscuou	Below the Surface
Michael Leff	Forest Service/Davey Institute
Linda Lancaster	National Park Service
Mary Lou Soscia	EPA RIO

Todd Ambs, River Network

About the Clean Water Act 2012 is the 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act (CWA). The CWA was passed through amendments to the 1972 Federal Pollution Control Act. The CWA set clear goals and solutions for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, pipe standards, state standards, citizen suits, and public engagement. The nation's waters are public waters. Ambs mentioned that there are sections of the CWA that need to be updated, such as the non-point source runoff due to an increase in wet weather events. In 1987, State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans became a point-source solution. A goal of the CWA was to have all of the nation's waters swimmable and fishable by 1985; to date 65% of the nation's waterways have met that goal. There is more to be done, and the CWA has had over 200 attacks under the current Congress.

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Current challenges for the CWA include:

- Monitoring and Enforcement
- The structure of the Act gives power to States and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regions and headquarters
- Citizen leadership and criticism for improvement

Permits and Water Quality Standards Water quality standards (WQS) and NPDES classifications determine whether waters are threatened or impaired and need restoration. There are three types of permits: industrial, construction, and municipal. Point-source municipal permits are classified in Phases 1 and 2, and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits. Large and small cities have different requirements for permits. There are 11 types of industrial permits, and they are heavily regulated.

Construction permits are issued by states for construction occurring on land larger than one acre. Coordination plans are used, and there are a variety of methods for inspecting sites. When dealing with governing bodies for permit issuance, there is a common goal of protecting a resource. Innovative ideas need to be used to deal with stormwater and overflows; a plan to deal with these issues should be taken to the governing body when requesting a permit.

Ann-Marie Mitroff, Groundwork Hudson Valley

Groundwork Managing Stormwater Local residents only wanted CWA enforcement after a series of damaging stormwater events. The Groundwork Trust worked to protect trees which capture stormwater, eliminate invasive vines, and remove debris from stormwater trash. For communities of over 10,000, MS4 permits were used through Phase 2 implementation to address stormwater. Groundwork received a permit to do stormwater education, garbage collection, and zoning code alteration. A roundtable was held with local stakeholders to implement stormwater controls and discuss potential updates to zoning codes. The roundtable attendees agreed to one set of rules and determined its applicability to the local watershed. The Groundwork Trust continues to conduct demonstrations on rain gardens, job training, and waterway source education. For public relations, it was recommended that an organization write its own op-ed, or news article for public newspapers because news sources can misinterpret information.

Questions and comments

- Rivernetwork.org is a resource for those doing urban waters work; the group updates the site with new information and hosts webinars.
- The 2013 Annual River Rally will be held in St. Louis with learning laboratories and presentations on partner projects.
- A successful model for recycling water was not identified by session attendees, e.g., greywater and drinking water. There is a Santa Monica study which discusses reuse of used waters.
- When connecting with a community and trying to implement new stormwater controls, the community's needs should first be identified and met. Typically a community is not interested in restoration or conservation, rather the direct community benefits need to be communicated.
- Organizations should partner with other local on-the-ground nonprofit organizations and/or business, ethnic, and cultural groups.

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- In low-income communities, working with churches has proven successful. Community colleges, church leaders, and youth should be targeted groups.

Session C: Engaging Communities in Water Quality Issues

EK Khalsa, Mystic River Watershed Association

Introduced the speakers for the session, Bob Zimmerman, Dottie Yunger, and John McFadden. He explained the work of the Mystic Rivers Watershed Association, describing its advocacy for cleaner water. Community engagement has been crucial. Through data gathering and monitoring, Mystic Rivers Watershed Association has been able to conduct evidence-based advocacy. The Association has engaged people at different levels, aiming to match the hierarchy of the organization it is engaging. Khalsa shared his belief that it is better to “go big” and be noticed rather than pursue incremental gains.

Bob Zimmerman, Charles River Watershed Association

Provided four principles of effective advocacy: (1) “Sit at the top table, invited or not”; (2) be aware that the press see environmental organizations as “just say no”; (3) if it appears you are faced with an “either/or” question, then you haven’t got enough data; and (4) conduct science at a court-admissible level admissible and have people available to interpret that data. He then advised an audience member on a problem by suggesting she coordinate cooperation between federal agencies herself as well as respecting their internal politics.

Dottie Yunger, Chesapeake Covenant Community

Spoke about engaging people of faith by reframing the issues as faith-based. She appeals to them for pious reasons and practical ones. She used examples of how the teachings of the church and the river’s importance as a resource for the church have both successfully appealed to faith-based communities.

Josh McFadden, Tennessee Environmental Council

Explained that he agreed that sustainability, conservation and water quality are moral issues. He engages communities based on this and the fact that “natural resources are the backbone of our economy”. He delivered practical advice for engaging people, including avoiding technical language, getting young people involved and linking environmental aims with economic benefits.

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1:15-2:15pm – Afternoon Breakout Session 1:

Session B: Clean Water Act 101 and Community Engagement: Water Quality Standards and TMDLS

Todd Ambts, River Network This session will attempt to provide a brief snapshot of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the importance of community engagement. The Watershed movement consists of more than 1,500 water groups registered across the country.

Historical Background of CWA

In 1969, the Cuyahoga River caught fire and was captured in an iconic photo that led to a bipartisan push for action. President Nixon vetoed the Act, but Congress overturned Nixon's Veto.

In 1972, improvements were made to the CWA, including a clear national goal to achieve Clean, Drinkable water by 1985. The CWA belongs to all of us. It works through community involvement (citizen suits).

Presently, the CWA is under attack. Funding is a challenge. The administration is overseen by 57 agencies (and Tribal Governments) and not structured like many other Federal Laws. When designed, it did not consider stormwater. Lofty goals in language are a challenge (e.g., NPDES "Elimination"). *Success of the CWA* needs citizen involvement, especially at the State-level.

CWA Tools include the following:

- Water Quality Standards (40 CFR 131.2)
- Designated Uses: Primary and Secondary Usage
 - *Cannot weaken designated use if the water source has an existing use established.*
- WQ Criteria: Specific Guidance (categorized by chemical, biological, and other types of pollutions)
- Anti-Degradation Policy: Not allowed to degrade usage designation
 - States/Tribes set WQS
 - EPA sets Policy, recommends criteria, and retains oversight
- Triennial Review (CWA Requires states to hold regular public hearings (CFR 131.20))
- Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs): Requires cleanup plan for polluted waters (must be something started within 10 years)

Derrick Evans, Turkey Creek Community Initiatives

Turkey Creek is located in the Gulf Coast of Mississippi and was Swamp Act Land until three years before the Civil War. Evans reviewed some of the area's successes. An area in Gulfport was used for illegal dumping and new development was planned; the community initiative successfully shutdown the expansion due to the lost wetlands compensation, which made the development too expensive. Another success occurred at the Creosote Plant at the mouth of Turkey Creek. By the 2000s, Turkey Creek had TMDLs failing septic systems but not for creosote or military base pollutants. The Community gathered letters and pictures for the Triennial Review and achieved designation as primary use even though the water quality had not yet reached that level of cleanliness. In the state of Mississippi, there are only two places with a Primary Classification, so this was a big success.

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Presenter Suggestions

- Establish relationships with regulators (assume they are trying to help, until proven otherwise)
- Consider signing up for local government permit notification
- TMDLs can be daunting for states (think about partnerships to assist)
- Messaging: think about the audience
- Be clear in what you are seeking to get
- CWA is your law, the citizen's law. Valuable: Citizen Enforcement Provision

2:30-3:30pm – Afternoon Breakout Session 2:

Session B: Creative Fundraising: Executive Director and Funder Perspectives Breakout Session

Session Attendees (3 federal government, and 8 nonprofit, community group attendees)

Name	Organization
Selina Brown	S.T.A.N.D. Mentoring Program
Michael Byrd	Prescott Creeks
Stacia Stanek	Wildlife Conservation Society
Sara Marinello	Wildlife Conservation Society
Rich Weisman	EPA Office of Water
Patricia Keane	EPA Office of Water
Claire Robinson	La Amigos de los Rios Emerald Necklace Group
Stella Tarnay	Dumbarton Oaks Park Conservancy
Kellie Bolinder	Earth Conservation Corps
Terri Johnson	EPA
Maggie Curme	SRA (EPA Support)

Rick Magder, Groundwork USA

Groundwork USA is a national initiative started by the EPA Brownfields Program and the National Park Service. Initial funding for Groundwork Trusts is supplied by federal agencies for the first three years. A new request for proposal (RFP) is out to support to new Groundwork Trusts; the funding is \$200,000 – \$300,000 per year. Groundwork is doing field work and will be issuing a report on its urban waters and technical assistance work. Creative funding comes from thinking abstractly about funding resources. Without funding, there is no staff. Magder's Groundwork chapter completes five to ten grant applications per month.

Creative funding ideas:

- Research and contact nearby neighborhoods
- Develop a grant-processing system
- Know the direction of funding and what its currently supporting
- Branch out into other funding topic areas, such as housing, USDA, green infrastructure

Questions to consider when reviewing grant RFPs: Who is the funder? Is the organization eligible? Can the work be done? Responding to an RFP is a sales pitch for an organization; applicants should be

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courageous and convey emotion about the project. An applicant should tell the organization's story and it should be easy-to-read.

Amanda Baso, Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)

The NFWF funds urban waters projects, and distributes private and federal funds to organizations. NFWF receives funding from the National Park Service (NPS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the EPA, the Department of Defense (DoD) and many Fortune 500 companies and then distributes it to nonprofits and other organizations. In FY 2011, \$93.3 million was awarded to organizations that applied, and three quarters of the awarded money was federal dollars. The funding sources include federal money awarded from Congress, private foundations, corporations, and IRS criminal action penalties. NFWF has been a five-star program since 1999, and has one of the most diverse groups of funders.

Baso discussed the Wells Fargo Environmental Solutions for Communities which is a funding opportunity in approximately fifteen cities across the U.S. to support environmental projects. The targeted partnership program supports work in Long Island, Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, and Tampa Bay; \$8.6 million was awarded in FY 2012, and \$10 million will be for 2013.

Tips from private funders:

- Review the guidance RFP closely
- Call the funder
- Be creative with your response
- Seek non-traditional funding resources
- Include more than a letter of support
- Include your vision and implementation plan

Rosemary DeLuca, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

The WCS is one of the first conservation society organizations that uses local government funding to maintain state and city properties. WCS, based in NY, maintains the Bronx Zoo and aquarium, and five parks and zoos in the other boroughs. The organization's membership is 90,000, and \$420 million is spent every year to maintain the zoos and parks. The attractions have up to four million visitors per year that spend up to \$13 million annually.

The WCS has worked diligently with city officials to maintain funding sources and cultivate trusted relationships. Community partners have also supported the WCS, and have assisted with educational summits. DeLuca suggested partnering with business development districts for funding resources.

Questions and comments

- The WCS gained control of the parks and zoos by being a recognized and trusted organization. The city knew that WCS had experts who could manage the city's properties.
- When responding to an RFP, it is important to tell your organization's story, despite the length of the application. It is important that the five Ws are conveyed on the application (who, what, where, when, why), and confirm that all the questions have been answered properly.

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- Regarding settlement funds, EPA cannot work with a violator to reduce the penalty, but the violator can propose projects that benefit the environment. Urban waters groups should partner with those violators on new projects.
- Once a funding award has been granted, develop the relationship with the funder. This includes knowing the funding opportunity deadlines, per taking in-site visitations, meeting with the funder in person, and sending event invitations and videos of the projects.

Session C: On-the-Ground Partnerships for Urban River Transformation Breakout Session

Session Attendees (15 Federal, 5 state and local government, and 10 community, academic, and nonprofit attendees)

Name	Organization
Harrison Jackson	Maryland Coastal Bays Program
Fajr Chesnut	Groundwork Anacostia
Simeon Hahn	NOAA
John Kemmerer	EPA-Region 9
Adele Cardenas Malott	EPA-Region 6
Holly Elwell	EPA-OWOW HQ
Anthony Satterthwaite	Earth Conservation Corps
Danielle Haake	The River des Peres Watershed Coalition
Andrew Oetman	DDOE
Trey Sherard	Anacostia Riverkeeper
Ellen Macnow	NYC Parks and Recreation
Franklin Baker	EPA R4
Joe Starinchak	FWS HQ
Linda Lancaster	National Park Service-INDU
Nancy Steele	Council of Watershed Health
Melissa Friedland	EPA
Bryan Johns	American University
Janice Rollwagen	EPA-Region 2
Ron Hoffer	EPA Office of Water
Kristopher Larson	Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority
Chris Muller	Grand Rapids Whitewater
Abu Moulta	EPA Office of Water
Anthony Q Jones	DC District Department of Transportation
Ian Leahy	DC Urban Forestry
Kaitlyn Sephton	Wildlife Conservation Society
Tammy Stidham	National Park Service
Robin Corathers	Groundwork Cincinnati / Mill Creek
Beth Leamond	EPA/OST/SHPP
Katherin Snyder	EPA Region 4
Mary Jo Bragon	EPA Region 4

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Gail Heffner, Plaster Creek Stewards, Calvin Creek College

Calvin Creek College is a faith-based college devoted to service learning, and it is part of a consortium that comprise a learning association. Plaster Creek Stewards perform educational outreach, summer workshops, and field activities. Research activities are also important to the Stewards. The Stewards educate about the history and source direction of the local waterways, and how green infrastructure can be used to restore natural areas.

Robin Carothers, Millcreek Fellow, Groundwork Cincinnati

The Mill Creek River was one of the most endangered rivers in the U.S. It was plagued with combined sewer overflows (CSOs), illegal dumping, toxic areas, and fish kills. A restoration approach for the River had to be comprehensive and holistic due to limited resources. A master restoration plan was created and the involved stakeholders identified different objectives. Groundwork worked with 25 partners on erosion restoration and building hiking and bike trails.

Groundwork worked on capacity building and outreach to children and seniors. They identified gaps in environmental education in grades 4-12, and educated 4,000 students in a yearlong program. The program involved classroom activities, surveys, onsite job training, stipends, and a summer youth employment team.

Ann-Marie Mitroff, Groundwork Hudson Valley NY

The Sawmill River was once covered and capped in the 20th century by the railroad industry. EPA established a NY Groundwork trust in Yonkers and the group's top goal was to daylight the River. The Trust spent time interviewing the local community to get approval, made community partners, and received grants for the project. The work was successful and a large portion of the River was daylighted in the downtown section of Yonkers. Public art and education were integrated into the restoration project. Water studies, brown bag lunches, habitat plans, and downtown business profiles occurred during the project. Now the restored area is heavily used by the local community; next steps include identifying individuals who can maintain the green space.

Questions and comments

- There are future plans to daylight other parts of the River. Through Groundwork Hudson Valley, there is a proposal to make an underground river tunnel.
- Maintenance work on the new green space is being performed by volunteers. At the next business partners meeting, future long-term maintenance will be brought up.
- The success of the project is being discussed at churches, and K-8 schools through an education grant.
- Not involving the community in the planning process delays the project if their needs are not met.
- While the government always plays an interested role, local and private foundations are also interested in projects and should be contacted. Businesses are typically supportive of projects; it is best to identify businesses' needs in order for them to benefit from a project.

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- Consent decrees, which are generated by a court, are useful tools to require green infrastructure projects.

3:45- 4:30pm - “One EPA” Plenary:

John Frece, Office of Sustainable Communities, EPA

The Office of Sustainability (aka: Smart Growth) was established in 1996 with the mission to host an annual conference of 1,500-1,800 people through grants and publications; to help communities, states and the Federal government change the rules to support sustainable changes; and to help the willing by providing options to protect the environment. The Office works at the nexus between the built environment and the natural environment to find sustainable solutions.

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities - which is a partnership between EPA, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – also works to address sustainability issues. Its main goal is to align housing, transportation, and environmental issues to support sustainable transitions. At the local level, it offers technical assistance and smart growth implementation assistance to communities.

Greening America’s Capitals is a project under the Partnership for Sustainable Communities that helps state capitals incorporate green building and green infrastructure strategies. It focuses on three to five locations a year, such as Jefferson City, Missouri, where it restored Wears Creek, provided trail connections to the Missouri River, created new parks and open spaces, and reused old warehouses.

Gail Cooper, Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization, EPA

Brownfields can be defined as abandoned sites that are contaminated, or are perceived to be contaminated. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) estimates that there are approximately 450,000 brownfield sites across the country. There are a number of projects underway to revitalize brownfields. The office is working with Harvard University to turn brownfields into community gardens to help fight obesity. Interestingly, the revitalized neighborhoods are demonstrating a reduction in gang violence. The Brownfields Job Training Program works to train predominantly low-income and minority people living in areas affected by hazardous waste. The Program maintains a 71% job placement rate.

Brownfields and Urban Waters

- Lawrence, MA Brownfield
- Textile Milling 1800s-1900s
- 1900s Assessment Grant

Additional Grant Opportunities

- Brownfields Area-wide Planning Grants
- Brownfield Assessment Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) or Cleanup Grant

The National Brownfields Training Conference will be held May 15-17, 2013 in Atlanta, GA

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Charles Lee, Office of Environmental Justice, EPA

The Small Grants program (almost 20 years old) has provided about \$20 million to 1,000 communities over time to young organizations. To help EPA integrate EJ into its policies, programs, and activities, a strategy called Plan EJ 2014 has been drafted and gone through public comment. The Plan has reinvigorated the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG), initiated community listening sessions, and helped develop tools such as the Legal Tools Compendium (including information on existing statutory authorities).

A highly successful EJ project that EPA funded is the ReGenesis Project in Spartanburg, SC. This Private-Public-Community Partnership project with more than 120 partners began in 1998 with a \$20,000 grant from EPA and has since leveraged more than \$200 million to address EJ issues in the community. Some of the successes are many site cleanups (including training for environmental cleanup jobs), cleaner air, and better access to health care, housing and transportation infrastructure.

Some other highlights include:

- Importance of Rules: the strength of the environmental rules plays a big part in what EPA does
- Increasing public participation
- Community lifecycle of the regulatory process
- Developing technical assistance

Paula Crawford, Yonkers Municipal Housing Authority

The Yonkers Municipal Housing Authority works to provide affordable and safe housing for community members as well promoting economic independence. The Authority promotes the Saw Mill River by educating through experience (publicizing information about the history of the river), developing a picnic area so residents can enjoy the sight and sound of the river, adding river trails and labyrinth designed for and by children, and increasing the pride of the residents about the area and its clean up. Additionally, the Authority has been beautifying African American neighborhoods and creating jobs by hiring residents. Due to their efforts, the area has become more livable and residents want similar projects to be put into place.

Final Words

- Partnerships and inter/intra-agency collaboration help to implement programs
 - EPA's Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program
 - Urban Waters Federal Partnership