New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Science Advisory Board Meeting
June 4, 2013
401 E. State St., Trenton, NJ

Minutes

The Science Advisory Board (SAB) Chairperson, Judith Weis called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m.

SAB Members in attendance:
Judith Weis, Chairperson
John Gannon
Nancy Rothman
Robert Lippencott
John Dyksen
Michael Weinstein
David Vaccari
Peter Lederman
Raymond Ferrara

Office of Science Staff:
Gary A. Buchanan, OS Liaison
Robert Mueller, OS Liaison
Judy Louis, OS Liaison
Alex Polissar, OS Liaison
Tom Belton, OS Liaison
Joseph Bilinski
Mihaela Enache

Department Staff:
Vic Poretti
Kevin Berry

Judith Weis called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Judith Weis gave an update to the Board about the June 3, 2013 with Commissioner Martin where the Critical Habitat Report and Contaminants of Emerging Concern Reports were presented. She noted the Commissioner acknowledged that his office has not communicated well with the SAB. He cited the tremendous workload placed on the Department after Super Storm Sandy. He reiterated the value of the SAB and committed his support.

Gary Buchanan gave a summary of the status of SAB issues to date: 6 are completed, 6 are active, 2 were withdrawn and 2 are pending. The Board asked for feedback on their prior
recommendations (e.g., one year after SAB report submittal). Gary will follow up with senior management and inform the Board.

Michael Weinstein discussed a draft report circulated to the SAB. The report, *Bayesian Geostatistical Modeling: Application to Environmental Management and Decision Making*, is in response to the issue: “Should the NJDEP evaluate and/or test new statistical analysis methods with the potential to substantially decrease monitoring costs in the near future. If so, what alternative methods should be evaluated?” The Office of Science has posted 150 papers on this topic on the website for the Standing Committees use. A short discussion followed. Dr. Weinstein also spoke briefly about the Commission’s meeting and the positive responses that the different NJDEP programs provided. The Commissioner is interested in Ecosystem-Based Management and asked for assistance from Michael.

Judith Weis gave an update on the work of the Climate and Atmospheric Sciences Committee based on information from Tony Broccoli. At the request of NJDEP staff, several committee members will be meeting with NJDEP staff to discuss the Diesel Emissions modeling and data. The Commissioner had previously asked for the Committee’s help with follow-up on this issue. The Climate Change issue report is expected to be completed and ready for the next SAB meeting.

John Dyksen asked if this Committee was looking at issues related to rainfall and water supply (e.g., extreme events and drought). Judy Weis suggested that water issues could be examined by the Water Quality and Quantity Standing Committee. Bob Mueller will check with the appropriate DEP program to see if this is an issue for consideration.

David Vaccari gave an update for the Water Quality and Quantity Standing Committee. The committee is continuing to work on the continuous dissolved oxygen data issue. Josh Kohut is writing a report for USEPA that the Committee would like to incorporate; they are waiting for EPA review. A draft final report on several of the issue questions should be available by the end of the summer. A fourth question on appropriate sentinel species is being worked on for fresh and marine waters.

Robert Mueller read a short report provided by Alan Stern for the Public Health Committee. The Perimeter Air Monitoring working group has completed a draft report and will present it to the full committee on June 24th. The committee completed work on the issue, Emerging Air Toxics of Concern. A draft report was accepted, with a minor revision. Once this revision is made, the Committee will give final approval and send it to the SAB.

Raymond Ferrara made a presentation on the SAB’s Nutrient Criteria issue for questions 1 and 2. Dr. Ferrara presented each charge question and sub-issue. There was some discussion on some of the findings. The NJDEP will submit comments to the working group along with any SAB comments. It is hoped that the report will be approved at or before the fall meeting. Next steps are for DEP to provide guidance on addressing questions 3 and 4; question 5 was withdrawn.
Gary Buchanan gave an update on the Sandy recovery efforts. There is a great deal of federal funds available to the State for recovery and Gary explained how some of the money was being allocated. At least a portion of a large ‘Sandy’ fund ($311M) from the Department of Interior may be released for competitive grants later this year.

Judith Weis started a discussion with the SAB members on the role of the SAB with the NJDEP. To date, the SAB has been a reactive board (as per the Commissioner’s Administrative Order), working on issues presented to them by the Department. There is interest among the SAB members to present ideas to the Department for consideration. Dr. Weis volunteered to write a letter to the Commissioner asking for his input on this concept. Gary reminded the SAB that we are currently soliciting new issues from the Senior Staff of the Department.

The next meeting will be in mid- to late September. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:45 p.m.