

Minutes

Meeting Attendees: Valeria Askinazi (EPA2), Haley Burns (PDE), Karen Forst (PDE), Kathy Klein (PDE), Danielle Kreeger (PDE), Lynette Lurig (NJDEP), Catherine Magliocchetti (EPA3), Martha Maxwell-Doyle (PDE), Rachael Phillos (DNREC), Chad Pindar (DRBC), Irene Purdy (EPA2), Sue Weaver (PADEP), Will Whalon (PWD)

Welcome

- Kathy Klein welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that the agenda was light so the meeting would likely be shorter than usual.

Summit Recap

- Before providing post-event information about the Summit, Kathy asked the members of the EIC that attended to share their impressions.
 - Cathy Magliocchetti felt that the keynotes were very engaging and said that it seemed everyone enjoyed being back in person. She also supported an idea for the next Summit that Danielle Kreeger mentioned at the recent STAC meeting to update the priorities from the first Summit by reprising the 2005 Needs Assessment.
 - Chad Pindar did not attend but heard a lot of positive feedback from DRBC staff.
 - Megan Mackey thought it was a great event, appreciated the variety of sessions, and especially liked the opening land acknowledgement by Chief Coker. She said at times it seemed like there were not as many concurrent sessions as in the past, and although it was different being in a casino, the conference space itself was a positive change.
 - Rachael Phillos said this was her first PDE Summit and she got a lot out of it, and others from DNREC had positive feedback as well.
 - Lynette attended on the third day; she and colleagues had a good time and she will be sure everyone completes the feedback form.
- Danielle said that the main goal of the Summit of bringing together and facilitating the linkages between people from different sectors, was realized.
 - She also noted that nearly half of the attendees had not been to any prior Summits, and there was a lot of positive feedback to the mentor/mentee lunch – something we may look to expand on in the future.
 - Danielle said that the higher-level panels tended to be one of the lower-rated sessions, and that some attendees said they wanted more opportunity to engage with and ask questions of the agency heads on the climate panel.
 - Cathy agreed that more engagement with these panelists could be beneficial, but noted that they would need to be better prepared for that in the future, as this time they received three questions for advance preparation and did not know that they would be asked questions from the audience.

Revising Aquatic Life Use Water Quality Standards

- Greg Voigt, Chief of Standards and TMDLs Section at EPA Region 3, joined the call to discuss and answer any questions pertaining to EPA's process for revising the aquatic life use water quality standards for the Delaware Estuary.
 - In December 2022 EPA Region 3 issued an Administrator's determination, exercising authority under the Clean Water Act, to promulgate revised water quality standards for the protection of aquatic life in the Delaware Estuary, specifically in the urbanized zones from Philadelphia/Camden down to Wilmington. The standards are intended to protect native species, particularly the critically endangered Atlantic Sturgeon.
 - This determination committed EPA to put out a proposal for rulemaking by December 2023. They are working closely with partners (DRBC, EPA Region 2, PADEP, NJDEP, and DNREC) to determine what the standards should look like.
- Danielle asked what the next steps are after the rule making, and if there are any data gaps or other unaddressed questions that PDE can help with.
 - Greg said that one great thing about working with the states and DRBC is that they are very implementation focused and engaging with stakeholders is part of the plan to roll things out. While much is still unknown, he suspects there will be implications to regulated discharges to the estuary. Greg said that if they find there are gaps that certain stakeholders are equipped to help EPA address that they will not hesitate to reach out.

Action Items

- Prior to next week's meeting, Haley will send out the draft Equity Strategy as well as the list of projects submitted for consideration for year 3 BIL funding.

Upcoming/Important Dates:

- EIC BIL/NEP Work Plan Call: Thursday, February 16, 10am-12pm
- PDE Board of Directors Meeting (in person): Thursday, February 23, 9am-12pm
- March EIC Monthly Meeting: Thursday, March 2, 10am-12pm