

## Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP) Delaware River Location Partner Planning Call

Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 2:00pm

**Call Participants:** Megan Mackey, EPA Region 3; Krista Heinlen, USDA Forest Service/Davey Institute; Elizabeth Brown, Audubon PA; Kathy Klein, PDE; Emily Baumbach, PDE; Irene Purdy, EPA Region 2; Reggie Harris, EPA Region 3; Simeon Hahn from NOAA, Cathy Magliochetti, EPA Region 3

### Future Urban Waters Workplan Activities

- Emily Baumbach reviewed the list of previously committed group activities that will be ongoing (assisting with youth and waterways programs and events, expanding Urban Waters workgroup, Brownfields Community of Practice, Estuary News updates, Urban Waters session at Science Summit)
  - Expanding this monthly workgroup participation will be a priority early in the new year
    - PDE will work on reaching out to some city contacts since we want to have at least one city or community member representing each of the urban areas at the table when we have these monthly discussions
- Reggie Harris: How does this location make sure diverse feedback is incorporated?
- Simeon Hahn: Since this group reconvened, we've been making an effort to reinvigorate and refocus
  - With brownfields projects, those are project-specific and place-based and collect community input for those projects
- E. Baumbach: Since this group reconvened this year, we've had discussions with this group of leads and also collected feedback from a broader group of 250+ partners that have been involved in Urban Waters at this location in the past
  - Sent out a feedback survey to see how this Urban Waters location can add value to the region
  - Some of that feedback has been incorporated into this draft workplan document we are reviewing
- K. Klein: We don't have any funding for on-the-ground project for Urban Waters right now
  - We'd love to be able to identify some project areas and raise money to make some projects actually happen
  - This location is unique compared to others since our region is so large and diverse
  - We're trying to find ways that we can add value and not duplicate work already being done
  - We are willing to go out and raise money, and some of the other agencies participating can help us too
- Krista Heinlen: We could consider adding a new communities of practice into this workplan
  - One idea was an environmental justice communities of practice since this is an emerging concern and area of interest
  - This is a great group to think about engagement with diverse communities
- Megan Mackey: Something that has always been a goal for the communities of practice is to continue to rotate meetings to create physical accessibility (one meeting in Wilmington, then Chester, then Camden, etc.)
  - Adding inclusion to our listserv is something we want to build here
- Irene Purdy: Our Urban Waters location partners work with other groups in the communities that are having the on the ground meetings

- The ambassador or the other federal partners may attend those meetings
- Cities have community groups and community meetings that members will also attend
- It's hard for us to reach out to groups on our own, so you need to network with the community leads
- Elizabeth Brown: As we are thinking about the ways to connect community groups to this work, what about offering a workshop that reviews how to put a community-led grant project together?
  - When we think about the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund, there are some barriers that some of us on this call might consider mundane issues, but could help other communities
  - A workshop like this could be a fairly low level of capacity with a large benefit to communities, particularly with the watershed grant program
  - This strikes me as a discrete item that this group might be interested in offering
- R. Harris: Often with the communities that haven't been involved, it's not that they don't want to be involved, it's because they haven't had the opportunity
- K. Klein: The intent of the recent Urban Waters webinar series we held was to share success stories and have some tech-transfer ideas around youth and access
- K. Klein: Some communities might not know how to go about getting the funding and to implement projects
  - One of the tools we have is a webpage for the Urban Waters location and we could be populating that page with funding opportunities for communities
- R. Harris: Have to keep in mind that there is a digital divide for some of the disadvantaged communities though
- K. Klein: Do the EPA EJ offices keep lists of community contacts?
- R. Harris: I have some lists, but we usually work with networks with key people who pass the word along through their listservs to get the word out
  - Covering the entire region would be very labor-intensive to keep an updated list together
  - I've found it more effective to generally look at the geographic area and see who we know and ask them to link us to their listservs and larger contact base
- E. Butler: We've been focusing on creating a lot of old school flyers to get the word out to different local communities
- S. Hahn: We've been talking a little bit about the communities of practices and that we are still in a phase of reorganization right now
  - Brownfields should be part of the overall workplan with a description of the projects that we are working on
    - These are already community-prioritized projects that are in development
      - Some of those people come to the meetings and were also given access to resources, and we were able to link them to some funding sources
    - These groups were able to learn from each other with lots of focus on living shorelines and other types of recreational enhancements
      - Covered how to incorporate those enhancements into design and get them built and keep the community involved
  - One of the support items we provided at a previous meeting was a technical review of different design and assessment restoration planning for different types of environmental assessments
  - A lot of people don't know about the federal government and who their representatives might be and what the different agency responsibilities are

- M. Mackey: Another great idea would be to review what a grant program is and how to contact them
  - Provide resources available as well as technical support and assistance
  - Can provide who the contacts are for each grant available
- K. Klein: It's hard for a lot of organizations to apply for grants because of the match requirement
- E. Brown: Could help the community with ideas and provide that technical support and explain how to get from the idea to the funded project
- R. Harris: What about a training to help build capacity and to teach the community the 'how to's'?
  - To apply for and manage grants, teach various skills, and help the organizations to be more self-sustaining
- M. Mackey: I think that's a great idea
  - The Communities of Practice meetings have had some of the most lively discussions within the brownfields group from assessment to installation through sharing how the work is done successfully
- E. Baumbach: This would be a great webinar topic/virtual training or even a series of webinars on grant applications and projects
- K. Heinlen (in chat): For a time we worked with the New Jersey Institute of Technology to provide access to some of those tech support workshops
  - i.e. we could begin by reaching out to groups that are already doing this work and see what they think/offer
- K. Klein: Grant management is so complicated and it is a huge barrier for a lot of communities to even consider going after money
  - Maybe we could create a small grant program with a training for organizations tied into it
- M. Mackey: The overarching topic with Urban Waters and the Delaware Estuary Program (DELEP) is that there are so many efforts out there right now and so many different focus groups
  - Would be interesting to see how work from the two groups interest meet and have them broken down based on the organization and also see how they focus in different priorities
- S. Hahn: Capacity varies for community support, but for some groups, especially in Philadelphia, they will let applicants come in and present on their topics
  - Issue in Wilmington is that they have capacity, but they need priorities
  - For the Northeast Wilmington grant, we partnered with the community and they agreed to administer the grant
  - We worked with the community and helped write the technical component and signed on as partners with a letter of support and in-kind services
- I. Purdy (in chat): If this idea of the tech support/workshop does develop, might be worthwhile checking in with EPA HQ UW folks for possible tech support options (if any)
- E. Butler: What's the goal of inviting the other cities? Will they provide input on the workplan?
- E. Baumbach: We were thinking of inviting them to be part of these monthly calls moving forward so they are at the table for these discussions
  - It would be great to get their input on the workplan in addition to the some other broader groups of partners that have been involved in this effort in the past
  - Maybe there's the opportunity for feedback by sending out the draft workplan to the full Urban Waters Delaware River location listserv and at the Science Summit since we are having a Urban Waters session
- K. Klein: The idea is to have the folks from the cities involved in these conversations since they know the communities best
- E. Brown: We have the pollinator habitat project in Philadelphia working with John Heinz

- Spoke with Kathy about this previously
- Love the idea of bringing people together and do some projects on the ground
- It sounds like previous and current brownfields projects were very successful

### **Delaware Estuary Science & Environmental Summit - Urban Waters Session Planning**

- E. Baumbach: As a reminder, there will be a Urban Waters session at the Science Summit
  - It's now scheduled from 11:00 – 11:45am on Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>
- K. Klein: Registration is open and we are still collecting abstracts and looking for sponsors
- E. Baumbach: We were thinking since we have 45 minutes blocked off right now on the draft Summit agenda for Urban Waters, it would be great to have a four different talks about initiatives from some of the cities involved at this location (Wilmington, Camden, Chester, and/or Philadelphia)
- K. Klein: Aneca Atkinson of PADEP on our last DELEP Steering Committee meeting mentioned that the department has organized an effort to look at environmental justice and has been participating on committees in Philadelphia on this as well
- I. Purdy (in chat): In New Jersey, our Community Driven Solutions Team is focusing on the same 12 focus communities/cities that have been identified by NJDEP's Community Collaborative Initiative, which includes Camden.
  - Therefore, in partnership with NJDEP, we are addressing environmental justice concerns and developing an environmental public health road map in collaboration with community and state partners to facilitate the improvement of health, economic, social, and environmental outcomes in Camden and the other 11 focus communities/cities
- K. Klein: Reggie, who do you work with in Chester?
  - We might need to reach out to more government contacts, and we could reach out to Peter Rykard with the City of Chester Planning Department
- R. Harris: I can see if I can get you another contact for Chester and send your way

### **Brownfields Community of Practice (Virtual) Meeting Planning**

- K. Heinlen: For planning the Brownfields community of practice, Frank and Simeon usually reach out to a small subset of people for speakers, presentations, updates, etc.
  - They'll work to pick a date that works for them
  - The list of folks who expressed interest in being part of that community of practice can receive the invitations
- S. Hahn: There's a pretty consistent group of partners that have been involved in the brownfield group
  - Frank brings the organizations that he works with from Philadelphia
  - We have master plan for public comment
  - Jim Fries with Riverfront North Partnership does lots of living shoreline work and Lardner's Point Park has lots of brownfields areas
  - DE Waterfront Corporation and Penn's Landing are very involved as well
  - We usually work with other EPA brownfield project managers
  - Could include some Bartram's Gardens updates
  - From Wilmington, we will try to get the city and the group that's working on the Northeast Wilmington Brownfield project that's in the assessment phase now
  - Since this was held in Wilmington last time, we had Brandywine Shad 2020 update
  - Lisa Gaffney provided some Chester updates during the last meeting too

- For Wilmington, I would want to invite some folks from the DCBCA to talk about the Port of Wilmington project and what they are doing there
  - We could easily fill up about two hours for a virtual meeting
- K. Heinlen: I've generally let Frank and Simeon run this project, and this group can help provide feedback on topics and suggestions
  - Between Frank and Simeon, they are in touch with the best representations on this work
  - We can see if Frank and Simeon want to start brainstorming ideas and contacts
  - We've also had topics on climate and living shorelines in the past
  - Frank wanted EJ to be a focus of the next meeting
- S. Hahn: One of the past presentations was Mike Slattery coming to talk about the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund and then we had a talk on Brandywine Shad
  - If this theme is EJ, we can also focus on a little bit on training and the identification of resources
  - Maybe Reggie and others could help us plan this out
- S. Hahn: Chris Orvin is now the main EPA contact
  - We did was try to give some location updates on what was happening at the federal level
- S. Hahn: Overall, this program has been highly successful
  - It has weathered the storm for the past few years, but is great for reinvigoration
- E. Baumbach: PDE can definitely help with the Brownfields Community of Practice meeting logistics (set up Zoom meeting, create Eventbrite for registration, send out email blasts to UW contacts as well as PDE listserv to increase participation)
  - We could even share the invitation with the other Urban Waters locations since this event will be virtual to see if other locations want to participate
- S. Hahn: The monthly Urban Waters location emails that go out highlight some great projects going on in our region
  - Krista used to provide some updates at the beginning of the meeting from the Urban Waters perspective from feedback from the other Urban Waters locations and EPA
- E. Baumbach: We will get the notes out, calendar invites for monthly calls for 2021, an updated workplan document with today's feedback prior to the next call, and also add Urban Waters updates from the monthly ambassador calls to the beginning of our future leads calls
- I. Purdy: Having a final workplan is very beneficial for the locations to have and it shows a commitment for the location and it's partners
- S. Hahn: At the community level, there's lots of interest in equity, green jobs, and addressing climate change, and there's lots of opportunities as well as the need for these