

Stream Team Meeting Minutes Thursday, January 08, 2009

Attendees: Dick Barrett, Laura Costello, Roger Edwards, Sally Rubin,
Frank Stillinger

Kelley sent her regrets that she was sick and unable to attend the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on December 4, 2008, were distributed by email as well as at the meeting, and were approved subject to the following corrections:

The date of the previous meeting should be December 4.

In the last paragraph, the day of the January 8 meeting should be the second Thursday.

Roger summarized the results of the first year of monitoring Great Brook under the Adopt-a-Stream program. The main points were:

- Quarterly sampling was carried out at 6 Great Brook sites during 2008.
- Laboratory results showed NJ Surface Water Quality Standards for TDS, Cl, NO₃ and TSS were consistently met at all sites. Total-P levels met the NJ standards in most cases but there were some exceptions.
- TDS, Cl and Total-P tended to have higher values at GB4 and GB5 more frequently than at any of the other sites. These two sites are located in the northern segment of the stream which flows through a more-developed part of Morris Township and these samples may be more vulnerable to road-salt, fertilizer and other urban contamination.
- Experience with the Horiba multimeter has been mixed. TDS values derived from the meter conductivity readings are in fair agreement with lab results, making the meter helpful for low-cost screening purposes. Using the meter for determining other parameters such as pH and turbidity may be insufficient. For example, several pH measurements, particularly at the Silver Brook (CMA) site, fell below the range required to meet the NJ standards. While these results may be correct, we should try to confirm future pH readings using lab measurements of our samples, if appropriate, or using a second calibrated meter.
- In its 2008 Draft Integrated Report, NJDEP classifies GB as Sublist 3 (Insufficient data) for the Designated Uses of Recreation, Drinking Water, Agricultural Water and Industrial Water. For Aquatic Life, which is based on biological data, GB is placed in Sublist 5 (Impaired). One aim of our monitoring is to develop sufficient data to help DEP identify appropriate sublists for those uses currently assigned to Sublist 3.

In a short discussion about financing the GB analysis, Sally indicated that funds are designated to cover the immediate future, but budget limitations may impose some constraints later. To the extent that reduced funding could necessitate monitoring fewer sites, Sally felt it was important to continue monitoring Silver Brook because of possible impacts of development activities upstream from the CMA.

A copy of the Stream Team's "Great Swamp Water Quality Sampling Report (1999-2007)", published in the current issue of Across the Watershed, was passed out and discussed. It was agreed that it is a good summary of a large body of data and worthwhile to present this type of summary to the readership periodically.

Item 4 of the agenda, TTC WQ Monitoring Program update, was deferred until the next meeting because of Kelley's absence.

Frank passed round some photos his wife Dot had taken of discharges into some local streams, which are causing erosion and probably undesirable contamination. An article about such problems is under consideration for inclusion in the Spring newsletter. Specific problems pictured include discharges into Penn's Brook behind the Kings shopping center in Bernardsville, an exposed salt pile which could contaminate Penn's Brook during rain storms, and a substantial discharge flowing into the Passaic River from the Millington Quarry.

Frank reminded attendees that BioBlitz 2009, May15-16, might profitably involve the Stream Team. Because this activity will occur within the GSNWR, with its hub at the new visitors' center on Pleasant Plains Road, it would provide an opportunity to monitor Great Brook intensively over the 24 hour BioBlitz period. This would allow direct observation of diurnal variations in various measured properties. Sampling should be easy to perform at the bridge where Pleasant Plains Road crosses Great Brook.

The meeting closed at 10:30 AM.

The next Stream Team meeting will be held on Thursday, February 5, 2009.

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