

Stream Team Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2003

Present: Bill Allen, Neil Borman, Roger Edwards, Gene Fox, Todd Hayes, Sarah Low, Karen Patterson, Lee Pollock, Robin Timmons

1. Ten Towns Committee Feedback - Karen Patterson reviewed the feedback from the Ten Towns Committee regarding the Stream Team's Goals and Objectives. The Stream Team asked Karen to learn more about the Ten Town's Committee's Goals and Objectives for stream monitoring.
2. Water Quality Sampling Program - Sarah Low reported that the Primrose Brook relocation efforts have been on hold because the owner of the property that we wish to move the Primrose Station to has been away. He is expected back in mid-February so it is hoped that more information will be forthcoming after that time. Sarah also reported that on behalf of the Ten Towns Committee, FX Browne would be adding Fecal coliform to the list of parameters is tests for at each of the five stations.
3. Flow Monitoring - Bill Allen reviewed the status of the flow monitoring equipment and other materials needed for flow monitoring. It was determined that each team (Gene Fox and Bill Marshall for Great, Loantaka and Black and Todd Hayes and Michael Hartwig for Primrose) has the necessary equipment and thus should be ready to take measurements during the next relevant precipitation event. Karen agreed to order "Rite-in-the-rain" copier paper so that the data sheets can be copied onto the paper and distributed to the two teams.
4. Adopt-Loantaka-Brook project - Karen reported that she has been taking weekly TDS readings at the Loantaka Brook site just below Woodland Ave. The readings have been getting higher since early January so she plans to take an actual sample soon for laboratory analysis.
5. Black Brook – Karen reported that Abbie Fair of the Chatham Township Planning Board and the Ten Towns Committee would like to see some water quality monitoring on Black Brook this spring, just downstream of where the Oak Knoll School will be converting 3 residential units and a large wooded area into athletic playing fields. She is concerned about the impacts of the construction on Black Brook as well as the longer-term use of the fields and associated maintenance activities (particularly fertilizers and pesticides). Gene Fox mentioned that he has already been in contact with some science teachers at Oak Knoll about doing a demonstration project (wetlands protection, native plants, walking trail) once the construction of the field is complete. He offered to be involved in the monitoring. Lee Pollock added that this seemed to be the ideal activity for the Watershed Association and Stream Team to be involved with, particularly if GSWA could convince the School to implement best management practices in conjunction with the construction of the fields. Karen said she would follow up with the Ten Towns Committee to see whether they have any funding to pay for the analysis of samples.

6. River Assessment Teams (RATs) – Elyssa Serilli, the 2002/2003 Watershed Management Area 6 Ambassador made a short presentation to the Stream Team about the RATs program. Volunteer RATs are needed to conduct periodic (2-4 times/year) visual assessments of various stream reaches throughout the state. Elyssa is interested in establishing several RATs groups in the Great Swamp watershed. She envisions these as becoming self-sustaining, with data sheets to be sent directly to the NJ DEP for records. She will be holding a training session Saturday May 3rd from 9 AM to 1:00 PM at the Great Swamp Outdoor Education Center for any interested volunteers. Karen offered to send a notice to all GSWA members for whom she has email addresses.

6. Additional announcements - Gene Fox reported that the shed doors at Passaic and Great Brook are in need of repairs. Karen agreed to send out a request for a volunteer to tackle this task to the whole Stream Team email list.

Lee Pollock reported that he had done some additional research around the question of “what is good water quality?” and discovered something called the Water Quality Index that the National Sanitation Foundation had developed to allow for a rating (grading) system for the health of water bodies. The Index is based on 9 parameters: DO, pH, BOD, Phosphorous, Nitrates, temperature, turbidity, suspended solids and fecal coliform. Test results from each of the nine parameters can be converted to a weighted number and then tallied to come up with an overall score for the test site. The scoring system is as follows:

90-100 = Excellent
70-90 = Good
50-70 = Medium
25-50 = Bad
0-25 = Very bad

Lee had also research the type and cost of equipment that would be needed to carry out this type of monitoring, which is in the range of \$1500-2000. The purchase of this equipment would allow for mobile testing, thus allowing us to expand beyond the confines of the current 5 stations. For example, having this type of equipment would allow us to more easily and quickly respond to requests such as the one we just received for Black Brook, and allow much more frequent testing because there would be no lab costs and pre sample costs for materials would be very low.

There was a great deal of interest in pursuing this. But because it was late, the group agreed to discuss the matter further at the March meeting.

Meeting adjourned 9:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Patterson