

Stream Team Meeting
December 4, 2002

Present: Bill Allen, Neil Borman, Paul Benzing, Gene Fox, Amy Leib, Sarah Low, Michael Hartwig, Bill Marshall, Mike McCormack, Karen Patterson, Lee Pollock, Robin Timmons

- 1) Amy Leib introduced the new FX Browne project manager for the Stream Monitoring program – Sarah Low. Sarah has been with FXB for about 1 year (?). She can be contacted at sclow@fxbrowne.com or 215.362.3878 x 18. Amy also reported that she and Sarah had installed new staff gauges at Loantaka Brook and Passaic River. The old ones are still in place and Amy requested that volunteers write down the level from the old and new gauges for the next few months so we can ensure that they are accurate.
- 2) Bill Allen shared a control chart that showed how variable Primrose Brook's ISCO level readings have become. Amy Leib reported that she and Sarah had tested the existing pressure transducer at Primrose Brook that day, as well as a newer pressure transducer. The newer one worked so it appears that the existing one has failed and needs to be replaced. However, given that the PB station may be moved upstream sometime soon, it might make sense to wait to replace it, as the process is rather involved and the cold weather makes working in the stream difficult. If the relocation of the station is not going to happen soon, the equipment should be replaced in its current location. Karen Patterson will follow up with the Ten Towns Committee regarding status of the proposed move.
- 3) Bill Allen has been conducting additional statistical analysis with the (2002 or more?) MIV data that Lee Pollock has collected. The further analysis of MIV data is preliminary but promising. Bill and Lee will work to better define how best to apply this analysis and will report back at a later date.
- 4) The January meeting will be held Wednesday, January 15th, due to the January 1st holiday. Same time, same place.
- 5) A general discussion of what constitutes good water quality followed. Lee Pollock summarized his earlier conclusion that nutrient levels aren't necessarily a useful indicator of good or bad water quality, from a MIV viewpoint anyway. Other parameters, such as temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, TDS, and stream gradient seem to be more closely correlated to MIV health. Thus, it might be helpful to expand our sampling program beyond nutrients and sediment. Amy reported that she has requested funding (approximately \$6,000) to purchase a portable in stream probe/data recorder that could be used to gather some of these additional parameters and could be moved from stream to stream as needed.

Gene Fox requested that the Stream Team try to find one or more indicator parameters that he could use to quickly and effectively convey to GSWA members and others the health of the streams as both base flow and storm flow monitoring is conducted. In other words, the importance of nutrient levels is a difficult concept to convey to the general public, but data on levels of a particular

fertilizer or pesticide might make more of an impression on homeowners actually using those products.

Amy Leib mentioned that the USGS (Geological Survey) has been conducting a large-scale water quality-testing program and are monitoring the levels of a number of common things such as perfumes, antibiotics, household cleaning products, etc. She suggested we check their report for common pollutants that might serve as indicators of more serious problems.

Roger Edwards suggested using the trout production/maintenance characteristics as an easily grasped concept of water quality for many. Robin then suggested devising some sort of easily understood "grade" system for describing water quality. Lee Pollock added that we might be able to develop a B-IBI-like scoring. He offered to review currently used indicators in the EPA (and other literature), though he did not promise to do so by the next meeting. Gene Fox liked these ideas and felt they would be very helpful in communicating with the public about the health of our streams. Gene Fox also offered to contact the NJ American Water Company to obtain their definition(s) of water quality.

Karen thanked everyone for their input and acknowledged that there is still much more to be discussed on this topic. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Patterson