

## **TRIPLE DIVIDE WATERSHED COALITION**

November 13, 2013 Meeting Minutes

### **Attendees:**

Gareth Gockley, Coudersport Borough Authority	Nate Merkel, PA Rural Water Assoc.
Matt Genchur, PA Rural Water Assoc.	Jason Childs, Potter Co. CD
Lou Karija, Coudersport Boro Authority	Douglas Morley, Commissioner
Scott Zubek, Tioga Co. GIS	Paul Heimel, Commissioner
Mark Stephens, PA DEP	John McLaughlin, TDWC
Chris Mitterer, Potter Co. Conservation District	Kirsten Williams, Ulysses Borough
Betty Hilfiger, Ulysses Borough	Susan Paisley, Rep. Causer's office
Fern Burdick, N. Tier Children's Home	Wayne D. Johnson, Driftwood Jim
Clark, Penn State Extension	Laurie Barr
William Krog, Coudersport Boro Authority	

### **Driftwood Borough**

John presented Driftwood Borough, represented by Council Vice-Chairman Wayne Johnson to the group. Driftwood has expressed an interest in formally joining the TDWC and is now considered a welcome addition to the Coalition. Mr. Johnson offered his insights on participation in the DEP sponsored Engineering Services program. His comments were positive and he recommended the other members consider utilizing this free program should the need arise.

### **Recent Publicity**

Commissioner Heimel gave a brief report on the recent County Leaders Shale Energy Retreat held in Santa Fe, NM. Mr. Heimel passed out folders containing written summaries of the most recent Shale Gas Roundup newsletter, notes from the Shale Gas Retreat, the October agenda from the Potter County Water Quality Work Group and the CCAP (County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania) Natural Gas Task Force September and October meetings. Sourcewater protection activities are becoming more and more common amongst all of these groups, as the principles of source water protection are gaining recognition.

### **Comments from the Public**

Ms. Barr asked several questions directed to Mark Stevens regarding DEP's policies towards abandoned and orphaned oil and gas wells. A general discussion on this program followed. Ms. Barr also informed the group that the public comment period on the proposed revisions to the Oil and Gas regulations is now open and she encouraged

everyone to submit comments. Matt from PRWA provided a summary of the proposed changes. This summary is attached to these minutes for anyone wishing to comment.

### **Orphan Well Update**

Mark provided a summary of the activities involved with plugging two abandoned oil wells found within Shinglehouse Borough's recharge area. DEP has advertised for bids for the plugging of the wells and contracts have been awarded. Recognizing that these wells are located within a water supply recharge area has influenced DEP's decision making regarding where the limited funds for plugging abandoned wells are spent.

### **Operator Training**

John gave a summary of the three operator training classes held in the Potter/Tioga area in 2013, and requested that two courses be scheduled in the area in 2014. Matt Genchur stated that PRWA is currently scheduling training for 2014 and felt confident that two or more classes could be held in this area. Matt stated that he would be interested in hearing feed-back from the group on what subjects the operators would prefer. If anyone has suggestions, please forward them to John and he will send them on to PRWA. John Also stated that DEP is planning to hold a new course for operators preparing to take the certification exam. The course is tentatively scheduled for February 2014. The location has not been determined. John promised to forward any information regarding the course to the membership. Nate stated that DEP has piloted an on-line certification test. There are many security related issues involved, but hopefully DEP will be able to resolve them, as this would be a benefit for the operators in this region.

### **CCRs**

John stated that it is no longer required to send written copies of the annual consumer confidence reports to customers. Systems can now provide a web address on the water bills if the address goes directly to the report. Matt said that PRWA can set up an address for posting reports through their website free of charge. John offered to try to do the same thing utilizing the Triple Divide website. If this can be accomplished, John will notify all the member systems of the address.

### **Galeton Borough Update**

At the last TDWC meeting we incorrectly reported that the new infiltration galleries recently placed on-line in Galeton Borough were at least in part funded by Chesapeake. The infiltration galleries were put into place because the existing dams were in need of repair/replacement and this was the most cost effective option for the Borough. The project was funded by PENNVEST loan, CDBG grant and monies received through the

Fish and Boat Commission. The Infiltration Gallery Project was not precipitated by the Chesapeake erosion problem; however they did compensate the Borough to have the stream cleaned out, the filter beds re-sanded and erosion control put into place as the result of damages resulting from the construction of an access road near their surface water intake.

### **Incorporation and Registration of Logo**

The Lycoming County SWP group has been investigating the possibility of incorporating into an LLC, applying for tax exempt status as a non-profit organization and trademarking their logo. John has been in contact with the Chairman of this group, who has inquired if the TDWC was interested in these items. After some discussion it was agreed that we did not have the capability of supporting everything involved with a non-profit corporation, but would like to pursue trademarking our logo. John agreed to pass this information on to the other coalitions. There was some discussion of utilizing WREN as a source of funding for this project. Chris Mitterer and Jason Childs from the Potter County Conservation District said they would be willing to continue to act as sponsor and administrator for any future grant applications on our behalf, pending approval to do so from their board of directors.

### **Role of the Planning Commission:**

John and Mark gave a summary of the activities surrounding a recent proposal to install a medical facility within the recharge area of Shinglehouse Borough. The operator contacted Mark who in turn contacted the County Planner. The Planner immediately contacted the consultants for the project and advised them to meet with the Borough to resolve the concerns. The Borough since has approved the project. This situation is a good example of an operator who is aware of his recharge area and is vigilant regarding activities within that area. John stated that the Planning Commission is in the process of re-writing portions of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). One of the changes includes language that would require developers to obtain written "positive comments" on the proposed development from the water supplier if the development is within or adjacent to a delineated sourcewater recharge area. John strongly recommended that suppliers contact the planning office as soon as they hear of any proposed developments within the recharge areas, so all potential issues can be resolved early in the design process.

### **Activities of Other Coalitions:**

Mark relayed to the group that Marcus Kohl, DEP Regional Director in Williamsport, has asked for an opportunity to address all of the SWP coalitions in the region. This

meeting has been tentatively scheduled for the DEP regional office at 10:00 January 9, 2014. John emphasized the importance of a strong showing from all of the coalitions at this meeting. Lou Karija suggested utilizing teleconferencing to increase participation. Scott Zubek suggested carpooling with the members of the Tioga County group. Anyone interested in attending the meeting can contact John and he will coordinate transportation. This is a golden opportunity to gain a high level SWP advocate within DEP and we need to take full advantage.

### **Infrastructure Mapping Project:**

Scott Zubek from the Tioga County GIS Department provided an update on the digital mapping project, which is a joint undertaking between the Tioga and Potter County SWP groups. Scott has submitted a grant proposal to RCAP to fund the purchase of a GPS unit accurate enough for this purpose and to cover at least some of the costs involved with completing the field work to collect the data points. Nate explained the capabilities of the PRWA staff for collecting and labeling the data points. It may be possible to cover the costs for PRWA to do some if not all of the field work, if the grant application is successful. Each system will need to provide operator time to accompany whoever will be collecting the data points. This project can be used to create digital maps for both water and sewer system infrastructure. John agreed to provide Scott e-mail contact addresses for all of the systems in the TDWC.

### **Monitoring Equipment Project:**

John and Mark will meet with Bob Veilleux from the Potter County Education Council to write a project description as a first step towards finding a funding source for installing continuous monitoring equipment on the drinking water sources in Potter and Tioga Counties using a successful grant proposal done in Elk County last year. Due to the potential high cost for this undertaking, it may be necessary to prioritize the water systems based on vulnerability and/or other criteria. If this becomes necessary, all of the member systems will have input on how priorities are established. This likely will be a long term project; however the county resources have been committed to pursuing all possible sources of funding.

### **Schedule next meeting:**

After some discussion it was agreed to schedule the next meeting for February 12, 2014 at 9:00 AM at the Gunzburger Bldg. in Coudersport.

### **Adjournment:**

After a brief general discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:15.