Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 24, 2024 1:00 PM
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

1:00 Welcome, NepRWA

NepRWA

Ian Cook – Executive Director
Kerry Snyder – Managing Director for Community Resilience
Nancy Fyler – Outreach and Communications Director
Sean McCanty – River Restoration Director
Suzanna Sullivan – Water Stewardship Manager
Anna Yie – Green Infrastructure Specialist
Benni Marques – Environmental Science Fellow

Partner Attendees

Adriana Cillo, BWSC
Amy Schofield, Boston
Bob Kennedy, Medfield
Carly Rocklen, Norwood
Christopher Gallagher, Foxborough
Courtney Botelho, Randolph
Heather Lis, Quincy
Hillary Waite, Braintree
Jason Mammone, Dedham
John Sullivan, Quincy
Joseph Dunn, Randolph
Joseph Flanagan, Dedham
Karon Catrone, Westwood
Kristine Meaney, Canton
Lance DelPriore, Foxborough
Laurence Langlois, Stoughton
Maria De La Fuente, Medfield
Meredith LaBelle, Dedham
Nora Loughnane, Westwood
Patrick Hogan, Dedham
Paul Costello, Quincy
Phil Paradis, Westwood
Regen Milani, Canton
Richard Wells, Milton
Ryan Norton, Foxborough
TJ Torres, Canton

Presentation: *Road Salt in the Neponset River,*
Benni Marques, Environmental Fellow, Neponset River Watershed Association

Benni Marques, Environmental Fellow for the Neponset River Watershed Association presented on Road Salt in the Neponset River. In summary, salt contributes to harmful algae blooms which negatively impacts water quality and fish health. Climate change will only increase precipitation events and therefore it's a concern that more salt will be flushed into water bodies. NepRWA samples at four locations, and last winter's data showed a spike in conductivity during winter rain events and a dip due to dilutions during summer rain events. Potential solutions include implementing low salt zones, installing green infrastructure, and using salt alternatives on roads.

For more information, please reach out to Benni Marques at marques@neponset.org or Sean McCanty, River Restoration Director, at mccanty@neponset.org.

A recording of this presentation can be found here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZYaVHnADN0&feature=youtu.be

1:50 Polling

With wetter but less snowy winters, do you feel like you are buying or using more or less salt than you used to?

- 14 responded: *I'm not sure*
- 3 responded: *My Town seems to be buying/using less.*
- 1 responded: *My Town seems to be buying/using about the same amount.*

Are you undertaking any new initiatives to reduce salt use (e.g., brining, salt alternatives)?

- 11 responded: *I'm not sure.*
- 3 responded: *Yes, we plan to/have started using brine.*
- 2 responded: No*, we think our current procedure works.*
- 2 responded: *Yes, we plan to/have started using salt alternatives.*

How often do you see other property managers (e.g., school departments, shopping plazas, apartment complexes) applying excessive salt?

- 7 responded: *Haven't noticed.*
- 7 responded: So*metimes.*
- 3 responded: *Often*.
- 1 responded: *Never.*

Do you think your community would benefit from more targeted public education around de-icing practices?

- 14 responded: *Yes.*
- 4 responded: *Not Sure*

Is salt in drinking water sources a challenge in your community?

- 11 responded: *Not sure.*
- 4 responded: *Yes.*
- 3 responded: *No.*

If you answered "yes" to the previous question, what do you think are the key sources?

- *"I'd assume private salt use and road salt use."*
- *"Winter salting of roads and parking lots."*
- *"Road salt de-icing materials."*
- *"Road salt."*

What salt data do you have and in what form? (e.g., routes, tons used per year)

- 5 responded: *Unsure or don't know.*
- 2 responded: *None.*
- *3* responded: *They wouldn't know but to check with the local DPW's.*
- *"Routes"*
- *"We test our outfalls regularly."*
- *"Tons."*
- *"Road salt – salt brine – deicing chemicals – other deicing materials."*
- *"Tons used per year, some route estimations."*
- *"Tons used per year. Salt dispersion is mechanically calibrated on the trucks."*

- *"Purchase orders/tonnage."*

What topics would be helpful to learn about during the upcoming (administratively continued) permit year?

- *"The current weather system is becoming a challenge for us do to high ground water and local flooding."*
- *"Potential grant sources for stormwater management improvements."*
- *"All."*
- *"Stormwater Management and GIS."*
- *"I really enjoyed Benni's presentation and content like that would be great to keep having in future meetings."*
- *"Inundation and flood modeling."*
- *"How to calculate the results of an infiltration basin."*
- *"Effects of salt in drinking water. De-icing efforts by Town's and private complexes."*
- *"Operation and maintenance."*
- *"IDDE."*
- *"Stormwater review basics for non-engineers (planners)."*

Is there specific technical assistance or other activities you would like to see in the next NSP Scope?

- We could begin to educate the home owners who are pumping there basement into the sewer system.
- GIS Support
- Flooding assistance
- Mapping techniques
- Assistance to rewrite stormwater bylaws/regs

What are your biggest hopes, fears or questions about the next MS4 permit or RDA?

- For the RDA, how it will affect the requirements we're responsible for.
- BMP inventory
- Budget? Redundency.
- How an RDA would compete with SW Fee/Enterprise
- Hope for more P reduction from non-structural controls.
- That the requirements be significantly increased.

Are you submitting comments on the proposed updates to the SW Handbook? If so, what is your main feedback to MassDEP?

- Yes – Better guidance on pollutant removal amounts for Manufactured Treatment Devices, such as reciprocity – Issues with accounting for runoff from previous areas in example SCM volume calculations.
- Yes. Most comments revolve around being consistent with the MS4 permit.

What do you see as the biggest challenges to effective stormwater management in your community over the next 5+ years?

- 9 Maintenance of public infrastructure
- 6 Maintenance of private infrastructure
- 6 Better compliance from local SW permittees

- 9 Funding
- 1 other

If you answered "other" to the previous questions, please describe what you see as your biggest challenge.

- Increased impervious and loss of trees.
- State and federal opportunities for large flood mitigation projects along the coast

Partner Updates

Setting aside the permit and just thinking about water body health and wetlands issues in your community, what kinds of actions over the next 5 years do you think could make the biggest difference in terms of improving water quality or wetland health in your community?

- Trying to get muni leadership on board with the permit where there is split ownership (infrastructure vs. road)
- Stormwater fee and dealing with resident complaints/questions; cemeteries have an issue due to high roadways, nonprofits/institutional property (parking lots and roofs). Don't think can meet P reduction targets with GI alone; illicit connections review, (incrementally finding fewer and fewer illicit connections), eDNA testing for source tracking, trying e coli field kits rather than incubation (hoping to increase use).
- Bio-retention projects and bacteria pollution/source outreach.
- Creating an enterprise fund, potentially with an abatement of stormwater fee to incentivize companies to do O&M
- Maintenance of private and public BMPs.
- BMP retrofits project in association with their phosphorous TMDL in the Charles (quote for 40 infiltration trenches – $650,000 plus consultant fees for 13 lbs), aided by the Stormwater Utility Fee.
- Conversion of Town owned property into a rain garden near a major waterway.
- Looking into Brine solution.
- Concern with PFAS in water treatment ($14m for PFAS removal in water treatment)
- Clean up detention ponds (maintenance of ponds dating back to the 1980s).
- Dealing with a lot of water (rainfall) and could do sump pump outreach (WWTP overload) - infiltration and in-line BMPs, yards, etc., 604b work, map work for existing BMPs in the Town
- Lining sewers; outreach and education; inland waterbodies/ponds with high nutrient issues; stormwater upgrade with constructed gravel wetland; planning upgrades for another pond, have stormwater advisory committee, advises and keeps in the loop.
- Issue with flooding coming downstream meeting high tides coming in from the coast; working on flood storage/flood control plan for major roadway with ecological restoration.

- May be hiring a company to maintain stormscepters; grant helping identify other ways to clean out overgrown infiltration basins, reduce road sizes and depave (planning)

- Funding is an issue, looking into a sw utility to assist; worked on a set of BMPs to remove 4lbs P for $196,000 in the Charles basin, afraid the next permit is going to have similar goals for Neponset as the Charles (overstretched and underfunded), connecting with those who have private BMPs but lack staff capacity for follow up.

Would you be willing to meet in person for at least one NSP partner meeting per year?

- All respondents open to at least one in-person meeting per year.

2:15 NSP Updates

- New Handbook/WPA Regs - Out for comment until April 30, 2024
  - Some partners are planning to submit comments.
- 319 Grant Update and Interest
  - Match waived, contact Anna if interested.
- School Program Update
  - Ahead of the game in scheduling, will finish visiting schools by early June
  - Piloting a couple of new classroom activities
- Outreach
    - Please share Developer Construction Outreach social media posts: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and X. Staff will be dropping off updated Construction Brochures shortly. If towns/cities are capable it would be beneficial to have links to the construction brochure and training videos on the permit portion of the website.
    - The Fertilizer Paid Social Media Campaign is running for the month of April. Additionally, several social media posts have been made by NepRWA and respective City/Towns have been tagged for ease of sharing.
    - An Industrial Mailer is due to go out by the end of the the fiscal year.
    - Reminder that all city/towns should be making their MS4 Annual Report public on their website.

Questions:

Have we heard anything more on RDA?

- CBI has reached out about an update.

Where are the parcels that are involved?

- Ian thinks they have a map or even interactive map, will follow up
- Issues with capacity (and EPA mandating that municipalities oversee this)

2:30 Adjourn