

**Agency of Natural Resources
Department of Environmental Conservation**

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MEMORANDUM

To: Groundwater Coordinating Committee

From: Rodney Pingree, Chair

Date: July 11, 2014

Subject: Minutes from the July 17, 2014 Meeting

Attendees

Dennis Nealon, ANR DEC Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division; Rodney Pingree, ANR DEC Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection; Scott Stewart, ANR DEC Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection; Shawn Fielder, Vermont Rural Water Association; Paul Sestito, Vermont Rural Water Association; Joanna Bisceglia, Sampson and Weston; Liz Royer, Vermont Rural Water Association; Larry Becker, ANR DEC Division of Geology and Mineral Resources; Jim Siriano, ANR DEC Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection; Gail Center, Vermont Department of Health; Jeff Comstock, Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets; Craig Heindel, Waite and Heindel, Environmental Management; Kira Jacob, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Region I, Kim Greenwood, Vermont Natural Resource Council.

Promoting Class II Groundwater Reclassification

Kira mentioned that after securing the Class II groundwater area designation for Brandon Fire District #1, Water Operator Ray Counter is pursuing a Sole Source Aquifer for the Fire District. Ray believes that there are no other water sources available to the town and that finding a new public community source could bankrupt the town.

Liz and Kira wanted to identify the benefits of a Class II groundwater area designation. Kira stated a surprising benefit is the apparent pride a number of Brandon businesses have regarding their water source. Some businesses thought the water was great and could be used to market their products. With that in mind, Jeff thought Class II's could be promoted as a growth and development tool. Other benefits included contamination prevention, identifying future water sources and avoiding future costs, and having a backup source. Larry said his group can provide technical assistance along with mapping of groundwater to towns using the State Revolving Funds.

Coordinating with VT DEC Watershed Management Division

There are a number of revisions to the VT Water Quality Standards including changing the e coli standard from the current 77 colonies to 200 colonies. This change will be consistent with EPA's standard. To better protect aquatic biota the chloride standard will go from 860 mg/l to 230 mg/l and there will be new phosphorus criteria.

The Vermont Water Monitoring Council met last March and addressed only surface water issues. Larry suggested to the Council that they get involved with groundwater issues. He also encouraged groundwater minded folk join the Council and push for groundwater interests.

Kim helped form the Watershed United Vermont. They obtain funding for a position to coordinate with watershed groups throughout the state in an effort to meet, pursue grants, arrange plantings and voice their regulatory concerns. Currently, there is a fall meeting planned which is an opportunity to bring groundwater awareness to these 30 some groups.

Zone 1 the 200 Foot Isolation Radius

Public community water systems may not own or control a 200 foot isolation distance (Zone 1) around their water source especially if they were a grandfathered system. Liz has addressed this concern among water systems and suggested they work on obtaining an easement. Rodney stated that they could use the State Revolving Fund to finance an easement. Craig suggested having Regional Planning Commissions (RPC) and Town Planning Commissions make an effort to address Zone 1s whenever town plans are being revised. RPCs could have a checklist and flag the isolation zone as an item which town plans should include. It was also thought that the new flood resiliency assessments could target Zone 1. Rodney plans to ask the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission what they might have for solutions. Jeff mentioned that the Natural Resource Conservation Service has money from the Conservation Reserves Enhancement Program for buffers along streams in the Connecticut River Valley. He suggested that these funds be used for isolation zones around water sources.

Document Update

The guidance document, Protecting Public Water Sources in Vermont, was last updated in 1997. In addition, the Ounce of Prevention was last updated in 2005. It was thought that a more current version of both was warranted but not urgent.

The Groundwater Protection Rule & Strategy is being reviewed by some of the Department's legal team. A deadline for completion has not been set.