



QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS

July 1992

A Note from Bob Wayland

EPA Regions are OWOW's primary link to the state, local, and private organizations and individuals who are the principal implementers of "our" programs — programs we guide, foster, seek resources for, and advocate at the national level. The knowledge, skill, enthusiasm, and technical capability of the 585 or so Regional staff and managers with whom we work are essential elements in the success of these programs. Keeping our Regional colleagues informed of significant developments — in the Agency, on the Hill, and with key constituency groups operating at the National level, is an important service we provide. Identifying needs for support, and working cooperatively to identify areas of improvement in program performance is our responsibility, as well.

The past quarter, and, indeed, this calendar year, have been marked by a more thorough and systematic effort by OWOW to provide these services and meet these responsibilities. We've pursued these objectives through the OWOW National Meeting in April, Customer-Supplier Conferences (known traditionally as Regional Evaluations or "mid-years") in Regions I, VI, IX and V so far this year with six more scheduled through March, National Branch-Chief and coordinator meetings, regular Division conference calls, and Quarterly Water Division Director Meetings. This Highlights is, of course, one of these efforts, too.

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OWOW Holds National Meeting

More than 40 people from the Regions and 100 people from several Headquarters offices attended OWOW's second annual National Program Meeting, May 5-7, in Washington, DC. LaJauna Wilcher gave the keynote address to launch the meeting off to a good start. Mike Cook, Ramona Trovato and Tudor Davies, representing the three other water offices, gave presentations on how various OW programs are working together to implement the watershed protection approach. Bill Richards, Chief of Soil Conservation Service, enlightened the audience with his candid views on a variety of agricultural and water issues.

In addition, the meeting featured panel discussions led by six external experts from environmental and land conservation groups on two major themes: 1) strengthening the connection between watershed and ecosystem protection; and 2) voluntary approaches to agricultural nonpoint source control. Each of the OWOW Divisions held productive breakout sessions with their Regional counterparts to discuss specific program issues. A summary from the meeting is available. Contact John Pai, 260-8076.

Ocean Dumping of Sewage Sludge Ends

Ocean dumping of sewage sludge ended in June 1992. The 106-Mile Sewage Sludge Disposal Site off the New York Bight received the last barge of sludge to be dumped in the ocean. The barge departed from New York City, and a press event was held in Battery Park on June 30 to mark the successful end to ocean dumping of sludge. Administrator Bill Reilly, Assistant Administrator LaJauna Wilcher, and Mayor Ed Dinkins participated in the press event.

As ocean dumping ends, the monitoring activities that OCPD and NOAA have carried out at the 106-Mile Site are being evaluated. On April 16, OCPD and NOAA staff met to discuss both the status of monitoring activities at the 106-Mile Site and close out of the use of the site and the monitoring effort. On May 12, OCPD staff, along with NOAA staff, briefed LaJauna

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National Meeting Held to Advance Point/Nonpoint Source Trading Initiative

More than 125 key people representing Federal, state, and local governments, industry, agriculture, municipalities, and environmental groups met in Durham, North Carolina, April 27-28, to discuss the feasibility of point/nonpoint source trading as one tool for better, more cost-effective water quality control. The intent of the trading initiative is to spread the cost burden among all pollutant sources but to require greater reductions from those who can more easily and cost-effectively decrease their pollutant loads. The meeting successfully broadened the general understanding of point/nonpoint source pollution trading and promoted its acceptance as an integral component of water quality programs.

The meeting began with examples of trading activities currently underway. Presentations followed that dealt with barriers and opportunities for trading activities. Attendees divided into six workgroups and discussed, selected and addressed what their members considered to be the most difficult issues facing the concept of trading. The overall conclusion was that point/nonpoint trading is a good idea that should be pursued despite the serious scientific and programmatic barriers that exist. EPA has committed to developing an Agency policy statement on point/nonpoint source trading which should be available this summer. Contact Don Brady, 260-5368.

Wetlands Action Strategy - A Year of Accomplishments

At the first annual OWOW National Meeting, representatives from Headquarters and the Regions developed the Wetlands Action Strategy which was distributed in July 1991. The purpose of the Action Strategy is to build broad support for proceeding with technically and programmatic sound changes to the Section 404 program and to avoid changes to the Clean Water Act that would weaken wetlands protection.

In the past year, Headquarters and the Regions have worked to identify and address hot spot areas (geographic areas where backlash against the program seemed to be particularly strong); increase cooperation with states; develop and improve outreach and public information materials; and focus on specific proposals. During FY92, Headquarters is providing funding for activities

that address "Hot Spots" in Regions II and VI. In Region II, this funding is going toward a wetland delineation training course specific to the wetland types in western New York. In Region VI, the funding will facilitate wetlands education and public outreach in the Tensas Basin. Activities to increase cooperation with the states include assistance with state assumption of the Section 404 Program, development of joint guidance on State Program General Permits, grants to support State Wetland Conservation Plans, and assistance with State Wetland Conservation Planning. The Action Strategy has targeted the regulated community, including the agricultural community and private landowners for outreach. Specific proposals being targeted by the Action Strategy include categorization, mitigation banking, and the Federal Manual.

The Wetlands Division is currently drafting a report that provides more details on the accomplishments of headquarters and the regions over the last year. This report will be available August 3. Contact Judy Johnson, 260-9907.

CCMP for Buzzards Bay Signed

Administrator Bill Reilly presented the signed Buzzards Bay Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) approval letters to the Buzzards Bay staff at a meeting in Boston on April 20. In addition to the Buzzards Bay Project staff, the meeting was attended by Julie Belaga, Region I Administrator, and Jeff Benoit, Director of Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Program. Buzzards Bay, located between Cape Cod and the southern coast of mainland Massachusetts, is the second National Estuary Program (NEP) to complete its CCMP. Puget Sound, located off the coast of Washington, was the first to complete its CCMP which was signed in the Fall of 1991.

The CCMP identifies three priority problems for Buzzards Bay. These are pathogens associated with the improper treatment or disposal of human wastes and the subsequent health risks and closures of shellfish beds; excessive nutrient inputs to the bay and their potential for degrading water quality and causing loss of habitat; and contamination of fish, shellfish, and lobsters by toxic substances. Development of this CCMP has resulted in some major accomplishments including creation and adoption of the country's first zoning overlay protection district specifically intended to limit nitrogen entering marine waters; creation of

the Buzzards Bay Action Committee to exchange innovative approaches and strategies among 13 municipalities and develop regional solutions (this is the first regional organization of its type in Buzzards Bay); and incorporation of enforceable CCMP elements into the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Program, thus ensuring long-term commitment to implementation from state agencies. Contact: Margherita Pryor, 260-9176.

Numerous Nominations to the NEP Received

The NEP's growing popularity is evident by the large response to the solicitation for nominations of new estuaries to the program. With only three openings in the program, ten complete nomination packages were received by the April 20th deadline. Complete nomination packages arrived from Morro Bay, CA; Mobile Bay, AL; Tillamook Bay, OR; Corpus Christi Bay, TX; Maryland Coastal Bays; Gulf of Maine; Barnegat Bay, NJ; Savannah River, SC and GA; Lower St. John's River, FL; and San Juan Harbor, PR. OCPD staff are busy conducting the preliminary review of all nominations which is scheduled to be completed by July 31. The Administrator is scheduled to announce in September which nominations will be accepted to fill the three NEP openings. Contact Mark Curran, 260-8483.

Agenda 21 Signed at UNCED - Marine and Freshwater Protection Addressed

The signing of Agenda 21 was one of the major highlights at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June. Agenda 21 was prepared in advance of UNCED and can best be described as a worldwide strategic plan for environmental protection. Chapters on both freshwater and marine resources are included in Agenda 21. OWOW contributed significantly to both these chapters. Agenda 21 calls for "dynamic, interactive, iterative, and multisectoral approaches" to water resource management and in many sections promotes a watershed approach. The document also acknowledges that "the marine environment...forms an integrated whole that is an essential component of the global life support system, and a positive asset." Further, Agenda 21 states that "the protection and sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment and its resources...requires new approaches to

marine and coastal area management and development...approaches that are integrated in content, and precautionary and anticipatory in ambit." The attention that Agenda 21 gives to freshwater and marine resources provides an opportunity for increased international cooperation in protecting these resources. Contact Anne Robertson, 260-9112.

OWOW's "Big Splash" Efforts

OWOW is developing activities that focus on Xeriscape-type landscaping as part of OW's "Big Splash" effort to foster more efficient water use. Xeriscape-type landscaping promotes quality landscaping using native plants in a way that protects the environment and conserves water. Because 40-80% of a water utility's peak summer use is used to maintain urban landscapes, incorporating Xeriscape concepts into landscaping has the potential to result in significant water savings. OWOW has chosen to focus on Xeriscaping because of its potential to not only result in reduced water consumption but also to reduce wet weather runoff.

On June 2, OWOW Senior Managers and staff met with experts on Xeriscape-type landscaping to discuss how EPA can best become involved in promoting Xeriscaping. The perspective of water utilities, horticultural research, landscape architecture as well as the National Xeriscape Council were represented. Initial activities being considered include developing an information kit, developing speech and slide materials, and promoting the Xeriscape concept in our existing programs and activities such as the watershed protection approach, nonpoint source and wetlands programs. Contact Joan Warren, 260-7796.

Development of Agency's Habitat Protection Approach

In May, the Agency's Habitat Cluster, including Martha Prothro of OW, Dan Esty and Tim Barry of OPPE, Bruce Newton of OWOW, and representatives of Regions III, V, and X, got Agency acceptance for a strategic approach on habitat preservation and for implementing short-term habitat preservation projects. The cluster plans to develop a draft habitat preservation strategy this summer and to hold an interagency workshop before preparing the final strategy recommendations in the fall. Contact Amy Sosin, 260-7058.

Wilcher on the results and status of monitoring activities at the 106-Mile Site. OCPD staff then departed for the Spring Meeting of the American Geophysical Union in Montreal, Canada, where, on May 15, they presented seven technical papers that describe the preliminary results of EPA monitoring efforts at the 106-Mile Site. NOAA also presented several papers describing their preliminary results. To conclude monitoring efforts at the 106-Mile Site, a closeout workshop and blue ribbon panel meeting will be scheduled next spring to review all the monitoring results. Contact David Redford, 260-9179.

Agricultural Pollution Prevention

AWPD continues to represent OWOW on the interagency task force charged to develop, by October 1, 1992, a detailed agricultural pollution prevention strategy. A Memorandum of Agreement was signed this spring by Linda Fisher, AA for the Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances, for EPA and James Moseley, USDA's Assistant Secretary of Natural Resources and the Environment, committing the two agencies to implement increased pollution prevention in the agricultural sector. The task force has formed interagency work groups to address four principal areas for initial emphasis: nutrients, pesticides, animal waste, and critical area protection. Present plans call for continued cooperation with USDA to develop clearer strategies in each of these four areas, as well as to seek pollution prevention initiatives from the private sector. Contact Anne Weinberg, 260-7107.

Upcoming Event

WATERSHED '93 - National Conference on Watershed Protection

WATERSHED '93 is coming to Washington, D.C. next March. WATERSHED '93 will explore past, current, and proposed approaches to watershed planning and management. This major conference will provide attendees with the opportunity to share experiences, exchange information on proven and emerging techniques for watershed protection, and build new alliances. OWOW expects to bring together people who represent many of the partners typically involved in watershed protection approaches - government agencies at all levels, academia, the environmental, recreational, industrial, agricultural, and business communities. Contact Janet Pawlukiewicz, 260-9194.

* As a result of the settlement agreement in North Carolina Wildlife Federation v. Tulloch, EPA and the Corps of Engineers jointly published a proposed rule in the Federal Register that would change several Section 404 regulatory definitions. The proposed rule would 1) clarify that "discharge of dredged material" includes discharges associated with excavation activities that would destroy or degrade wetlands; 2) incorporate existing Corps guidance that clarifies when the placement of pilings constitutes a "discharge of fill material"; and 3) codify the Corps' regulatory guidance letter on prior converted cropland, which provides that these areas are not regulated under the Clean Water Act. Contact Hazel Groman, 260-8798.

* The projects to be funded by the Fiscal Year 1992 National 319(h) Grant Set-Aside have been selected. The projects are in three areas of state nonpoint source program implementation: control of nonpoint sources of sediment pollution; control of nonpoint sources of Gulf of Mexico coastal pollution; and support for the watershed protection approach in pilot projects around the country, with particular emphasis on point source-nonpoint source nutrient trading. Contact Dov Weitman, 260-7085 and Betsy Southerland, 260-3966.

* The design of a computerized system to track and report on the use of section 319 grant funds to implement state nonpoint source control programs has been completed. Contact Don Kunkoski, 260-7103.

* "Mini-grants" have been awarded to 13 states to advance the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and support watershed protection. These grants will assist the States in targeting nonpoint pollution sources and in implementing their nonpoint source plans. Contact Don Brady, 260-5368.

* OCPD and the Fish and Wildlife Service have entered into a cooperative agreement to restore mangroves in Puerto Rico as part of the Caribbean Initiative. Contact Nicole Veilleux, 260-1981.

Special Event

Congressional Reception Held to Celebrate American Wetlands Month

On May 27, Congressman Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD) hosted a reception to celebrate American Wetlands Month. Approximately 200 representatives from federal, state, and local governments as well as private and nonprofit interest groups convened in the Rayburn Gold Room to recognize the importance of protecting our nation's wetlands. LaJuana Wilcher presented National Wetlands Awards to eight individuals who have demonstrated leadership and made outstanding contributions towards wetlands protection. The awards were co-sponsored by the Environmental Law Institute and EPA, and recognize innovation in wetlands protection at the state and local levels and in the nonprofit and business sectors.

During the reception, Audubon's America, a cooperative landscape conservation project co-sponsored by EPA and the National Audubon Society, made its debut with an introduction by Liz Raisbeck of the National Audubon Society and Glen Eugster of WD. The goal of Audubon's America is to establish a "Natural Heritage Corridor" which traces the routes that John James Audubon traveled as he painted and wrote about nature. This corridor will be created by seeking voluntary agreements connecting publicly and privately owned natural areas within a 34-state region. Audubon's America is intended to be a joint effort between the public and private sectors to protect, conserve, restore, enhance, and interpret these natural areas. Contact Judy Johnson, 260-9907.

Kudos Korner

We recently dedicated part of the bulletin board between Bob Wayland and Louise Wise's offices to showcasing the many letters and memos from people praising the work of OWOW staff members. When you are on the eighth floor of Fairchild, take a moment to look at the latest bouquets (we change them every few weeks). And, be sure to share any fan mail you receive! Kudos Korner can also help to remind us to say thanks to those who help us get our work done.

Conferences

Wetlands Workshop Held at World Congress on Tourism and the Environment

Cory Giacobbe of WD conducted a two-day workshop on local participation in wetland planning at the First World Congress on Tourism and the Environment held in Belize, Central America, April 27-May 2. The workshop took place in Corozal Town in the north of Belize. Workshop participants represented conservation and planning professionals from Belize, Costa Rica, Mexico, Jamaica and the U.S. including Hawaii and Puerto Rico. The workshop resulted in an evaluation of a local planning model and the formation of a Corozal Committee for Conservation and Development. Contact Cory Giacobbe, 260-5907.

Third National Citizens' Volunteer Water Monitoring Conference a Success

The Third National Citizens' Volunteer Water Monitoring Conference was held March 29-April 2, in Annapolis, MD. Funded and co-sponsored by AWPD and OCPD, the Conference was a rousing success: over 300 volunteer organizers, volunteers, and representatives from most States, a number of Federal and local agencies, environmental groups, and businesses attended. Governor Shaeffer of Maryland gave the welcoming remarks, and LaJuana Wilcher delivered the keynote address. Topics covered at the Conference ranged from nonpoint source monitoring to community outreach strategies. Attendees took the first step toward establishing a national organization for volunteer monitors, and learned hands-on methods in technical sessions and field trips. OWOW used the meeting to kickoff its new Volunteer Monitoring Program. Contact Alice Mayo, 260-7018.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Steve Glomb of OCPD and his wife on the birth of their daughter Alyssa on February 8 and to Sherri Fields of WD and her husband on the birth of their son, Eduard William on March 29!

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All of these efforts have been guided by a clear recognition that we need to be good listeners as well as able to describe "national policy" and review program results. So far these efforts are garnering favorable reviews from Regions. A major remaining challenge will be to assure that we are thorough and timely in following through on the many ideas, suggestions and requests that are emerging in this dialogue. We seem to have an unlimited capacity to identify worthy projects but limited people and dollars with which to carry them out. Fortunately, many of them are suggestions on ways we can work smarter.

The Headquarters teams who have participated in our Regional Customer-Supplier Meetings have been especially enthusiastic about the chance to spend a few days with many of their Regional counterparts talking in some depth about issues, accomplishments, and opportunities. We hope to share some of the good ideas we hear with other Regions and to use what we're hearing as a reality check as we look to developing or influencing policy and guidance.

The decentralized nature of environmental programs creates a "consistency-flexibility" tension which is particularly acute in regulatory programs. Regions need adequate flexibility to recognize and respond to genuine differences in environmental problems or institutional, cultural, and many other factors with which the size and diversity of the country challenges us. At the same time, industry and environmentalists both have decried pollution havens, just as Regions have looked to Headquarters policy and guidance to assure some consistency in treatment of problems or sources so they aren't driven to a lowest common denominator approach.

We support a mix of programs in OWOW, some of which must be relatively uniform in their application (the Section 404 and Ocean Dumping programs, for example) while others have been specifically developed to recognize and respond to the need to be flexible in how we address problems that remain even after applying the baseline of pollution control EPA has established nationally—such as the National Estuary Program or watershed protection approach. Striking the proper balance, within and among programs, is a challenge we and the Regions both face every day. We view the Customer-Supplier Conferences as one of our primary

opportunities to review how well we are all doing in this endeavor.

One further approach to strengthening communications and sharing perspectives that we were able to employ this Spring was made possible by Region IX and Tom Yokum. Tom spent several weeks working here in Washington with the Wetlands Division on EPA's positions/proposals for modifying an agreement with the Corps of Engineers for elevating disagreements over §404 permits (the "q" MOA). Not only was Tom's work extremely helpful, he gave us new perspectives on people and institutions in Headquarters and Regions. Several years ago I had a two-month rotation to Region III's Superfund Branch. It was one of the most enlightening and rewarding experiences I've had at EPA. I hope we will be able to make rotations to and from Regions a more regular part of our mix of methods for strengthening communications and relationships.

I'm sure there are other ways to strengthen our partnership that we in Headquarters haven't thought of — please let us hear from you.

TQM Update

The first draft of OWOW's TQM Action Plan is currently being circulated to all OWOW staff for comment. The four objectives of this plan are to better satisfy customer requirements (both internal and external); increase the satisfaction and skills of OWOW members; increase the efficiency and effectiveness of OWOW's work processes; and promote integration and teamwork. The seven elements of the plan are leadership and commitment; infrastructure, education; focus and rollout of improvement efforts; information and communication; measurement; and systems alignment. The OWOW management team is committed to using TQM principles in every aspect of OWOW's work. Office-wide Quality Action Teams (QATs) have already been established to address training, rewards, distribution of funds to the Regions, correspondence management, and space. Contact Chris Powers, 260-1770.

New Personnel

Since the beginning of the new year, OWOW's ranks have swelled with many new faces. A warm welcome is extended to the following new employees (where these new arrivals most recently hail from is indicated in parentheses):

Immediate Office

Lashawn Davis (Prince George's County
Community College, Stay-in-School)

Budget and Program Management Staff

Chris Powers (OWEC)
Britt Martin (Virginia Tech, summer hire)
Maisha Reed (Howard University, Stay-in-
School)
Paulette Williams (AWPD)
John Ettinger (Peace Corps - Paraguay)

Oceans and Coastal Protection Division

Macara Lousberg, (OARM)
Stan Austin, (OGWDW)
Nicole Veilleux (Environmental Law Insti-
tute)
Ruth Chemerys, (OPPE)
Eric Slaughter, (NOAA)
Donna Nickerson, (OAR)
Steve Taylor, (OWEC)

Wetlands Division

Charles Ray, (Association of State Wetlands
Managers)
Benjy Ficks, (OPPTS)

Policy and Communication Staff

Anne Robertson (ORD Cincinnati)

Assessment and Watershed Protection Division

Paul Kraman, (OMEP)
Louis Hoelman, (OIRM)
Douglas Norton, (ORD)
Theresa Tuano, (Peace Corps - Phillipines)
Tim Icke, (OWEC)
John Kosco, (Penn State)
Raymond Herndon (Washington College,
summer intern)
Richard Quick (Johns Hopkins, summer intern)
Cynthia Richmond (Amherst College, sum-
mer intern)

"Quarterly Highlights" is prepared by the Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds (OWOW). Its purpose is to share information with our Headquarters and Regional counterparts on major events that occurred during the past quarter, to provide an update on specific topics, and to advise you of key personnel changes and upcoming activities. Any questions or suggestions concerning "Quarterly Highlights" should be directed to Anne Robertson of OWOW at 202-260-9112.

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