NEAEB NEXUS CAFÉ
OUR DESIRED AQUATIC ENVIRONMENTS
3:30 – 6:00 THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2007
SOMERSET CENTRAL/EAST

VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Description and topic tables

At last year's NEAEB, it was the plenary speaker Martha Kirkpatrick's opinion that 'EPA is in serious danger of becoming obsolete' and that future innovations in the management of our aquatic systems were going to have to come from folks at this meeting. She challenged us to try a different format, one that is more casual and that would help foster more of those breakthroughs that often only occur at coffee breaks.

After the 'It's too late to be a pessimist' plenary session, you will be asked to find a seat at the Café. Café table numbers correspond to particular aquatic resource management topics and are listed in alphabetical order according to the table moderator's last name. There will be three rounds of 30 minute casual discussions. Moderator summaries of the discussions will be posted on the web after the meeting. Relax and enjoy!

Table 1) *Amos Baehr, Moderator*
No tragedy in resurrecting the commons!! There are multiple roles for biology in institutions for protecting the commons. We will highlight ecosystem services and management principles reflected in the proposed Vermont Common Assets Trust.

Table 2) *Shane Bradt, Moderator*
What are the real possibilities for the increased use of remote sensing to manage aquatic systems, what can we use it for and how do we get there?

Table 3) *Emily Brunkhurst, Moderator*
How can water and wildlife programs collaborate? State wildlife action plans identify threats to wildlife and habitats in each state, but solving problems requires partnerships between agencies and organizations. Improving water quality improves habitat for aquatic wildlife. both common and rare. Assessing habitat condition, monitoring contaminants, and other research and monitoring is key to protecting habitats, and the information is useful to wildlife agencies as well as environmental biologists.

Table 4) *Kevin Curry, Moderator*
How can stress indicators in aquatic ecosystems be used more effectively for protection and reclaimation in coming decades?

Table 5) *Melissa Evers, Moderator*
Sediment is the primary cause of impairment for many 303d listed waters, yet most New England states rely on narrative criteria to address sediment problems. EPA raised the specter of imposing sediment criteria last fall during a workshop entitled, 'Framework for Developing Suspended and Bedded Sediments Water Quality Criteria'. Are states effectively addressing sediment problems with existing water quality standards, and do we need sediment criteria?

Table 6) *Rosemary Gatter-Evarts, Moderator*
How can we effectively manage intermittent or non-point toxic (as well personal care products, prescription drugs, caffeine, etc) discharges? Overcoming the limitations of detection and coming up with proactive management approaches.

Table 7) *Linda Green, Moderator*
Moving from Data to Action: Enhancing community-based volunteer monitoring. What steps can we take to encourage and support community groups in their efforts to monitor, protect and restore our waters? How can we make scientific & environmental indicators more public-friendly? How do we educate and engage the public without causing alarm or complacency?

(over)

Table 8) *Martha Illick, Moderator*
Successful management strategies at the local level. How can we better engage municipalities and private landowners to manage for water resource quality and protection? Water is a public asset. While state government provides policy and technical assistance, towns remain passive when it comes to protecting water quality/quantity and equilibrium conditions of rivers and streams. What steps can local government and private sectors undertake to strengthen local control and long term stewardship of water as a public asset.

Table 9) *Neil Kamman, Moderator*
Developing lake biocriteria, will lakes be able to have indices as powerful as those developed for streams?

Table 10) *Mike Kline, Moderator*
Is the Clean Water Act all we need to protect and restore the ecological processes of our streams?

Table 11) *Richard Langdon, Moderator*
Towards a more unified nonnative fish species policy in New England States

An internal issue in the Vermont ANR is developing around nonnative fish species and how they are viewed differently by its Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Environmental Conservation. Simply put, the F&WLD emphasizes fishery worth, often regardless of species origin, while DEC emphasizes biological integrity, native species, and natural communities. The moderator will first outline the Vermont problems and then ask other states if they have similar issues and how they have dealt with them. The discussion will be allowed to wander into tangential subjects if we find that it would be more fruitful.

Table 12) *James MacBroom, Moderator*
How do we integrate long-term watershed management with short term, small scale river restoration strategies to balance natural systems with social needs?

Table 13) *David Mears, Moderator*
(1) What changes to the law, if any, do you believe are necessary to advance protection and restoration of aquatic resources?

(2) If you do not believe changes to the law are necessary, would you recommend changes to the enforcement or application of the existing laws in order to advance protection and restoration of aquatic resources?

Table 14) *Alan Quackenbush, Moderator*
How can we best integrate wetland monitoring and assessment into the 'traditional' water quality monitoring programs? Or are wetlands really such a different ecosystem that they need to be considered in a different light?

Table 15) *Angela Shambaugh, Moderator*
Life beyond monitoring: coexisting with cyanobacteria.

Cyanobacteria have been around for millions of years, waning and waxing as environmental conditions allow. Given predictions of a warming climate, we can expect many lakes, ponds and rivers to become the perfect habitat for these potentially toxic organisms. There are insufficient resources to be able to monitor every water body indefinitely. How will we tackle this emerging problem?

Table 16) *Hilary Snook, Moderator*
What aren't we monitoring and should be?

Table 17) *Shana Stewart, Moderator*
We've become very invested in eradicating invasive plants at huge costs, but when is the treatment worse than the plant? Can there be effective treatments on a piece of land without whole town/community/region cooperation? How can we come up with effective policies with so much confusion over terminology: invasive vs non-native vs nuisance vs exotic?

Table 18) *Susan Warren, Moderator*
Lake shoreland development can significantly alter the adjacent littoral habitat through removal of woody debris, increased light, sedimentation, removal of shoreland vegetation, etc. How much is too much? Is this an increasing threat to lakes? Is there a minimum percent of undeveloped shore needed on any given lake to maintain ecological health? Should we spend more effort monitoring littoral habitat in addition to mid-lake water quality?

Table 19) *Chris Yoder, Moderator*
Can the Biocondition Gradient become easily adopted by state biomonitoring programs?