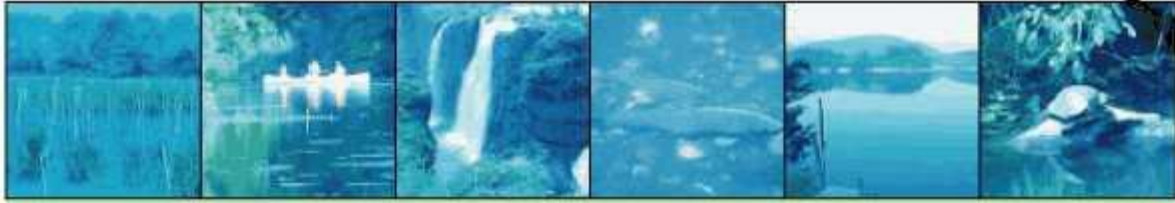


The Clean Water Council of New Jersey



James F. Cosgrove, Jr., P.E., Chair

Jessica Rittler Sanchez, Ph.D., First Vice-Chair
Gina A. Berg, Second Vice-Chair

February 8, 2016

Bob Martin, Commissioner
NJ Department of Environmental Protection
PO Box 402
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402

**RE: Clean Water Council 2015 Annual Public Hearing
Moving Beyond the Barnegat Bay Watershed: Using Partnerships to Improve Water Quality**

Dear Commissioner Martin:

On behalf of the New Jersey Clean Water Council, I would like to thank you for the support you expressed to the Council at our public hearing held on December 11, 2015, "Moving Beyond the Barnegat Bay Watershed: Using Partnerships to Improve Water Quality." Your continued interest in and support for the work of our Council is very much appreciated, and we look forward to assisting you and the Department in 2016. Your keynote speech provided a substantive foundation for the remainder of the hearing and gave the audience a more thorough understanding of the recent efforts of the Department on the partnerships that helped make the Barnegat Bay project successful.

You should also be proud of the energetic and informative presentation given by Patricia Ingelido of the Division of Water Monitoring and Standards, which described the Barnegat Bay project and highlighted the efforts that could simply not have been accomplished without key partnerships among a variety of organizations. Ms. Ingelido described fruitful intra-agency cooperation at DEP that allowed different bureaus to assist the Bureau of Environmental Analysis, Restoration, and Standards. We also received a thought-provoking presentation from Jennifer Adkins of the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary that documented the dedication to partnerships in efforts to improve water quality in that estuary. Ms. Adkins' points included the importance of aligning priorities among partners, creating a common message, and building resources and capacity over time.

Oral and written public testimony has been received, from six entities: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, New Jersey Sierra Club, Save Barnegat Bay, Camden County Municipal Utility Authority, and John M. Rogalo of Stanhope, NJ. The written comments received are attached, along with a transcript of the proceedings.

Below is a brief summary of the comments:

- All commenters supported the use of partnerships to assist NJDEP in maintaining and improving water quality.

NJCWC to Commissioner Martin
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- One commenter (SBMWA) noted a need for better communication between NJDEP and volunteer monitoring groups. The CWC certainly supports having strong coordination to facilitate volunteer monitoring efforts.
- One commenter (USDA) suggested identifying a target watershed where partners are already involved and saturating it to maximize the benefits.
- Both the speakers and commenters noted the importance of flexibility when working with partnerships.

We look forward to seeing how partnerships can assist NJDEP in protecting and enhancing water quality in the future. The public certainly seems highly supportive of NJDEP's use of partnerships. We also are pleased to shift our focus in 2016 to Municipal Stormwater NJPDES Permits and believe there will be significant stakeholder interest in this topic. We look forward to meeting with you later this year to discuss both issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "James Cosgrove", with a stylized flourish at the end.

James F. Cosgrove, Jr., P.E.
Chair

c: Dan Kennedy, Assistant Commissioner for Water Resources Management
Michele Putnam, Director, Division of Water Quality