



## NBWW MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

### 1. Call Meeting to Order

Rob Flood, North Branch Chicago River Watershed Workgroup (NBWW) Monitoring & Water Quality Impairment Abatement Committee Chair, called the NBWW Monitoring & Water Quality Impairment Abatement Committee meeting to order at 12:31pm.

### 2. Roll Call

Monitoring Committee members present were **Rob Flood**, North Shore Water Reclamation District (NSWRD); **Alana Bartolai**, Lake County Health Department; **Chris Johnson**, Illinois Sierra Club; **Janice Aull**, Skokie Consolidated Drainage District (SCDD); **Leonard Dane**, Hey & Associates; and **Michael Warner**, Gewalt Hamilton. A roll call was performed. A full list of attendees is at the bottom of the meeting minutes.

### 3. Public Comment – None

### 4. New Business

#### a. NBWW 2025 Annual Newsletter Review

Ashley Strelcheck, NBWW Coordinator, presented the NBWW 2025 Annual Newsletter for review. Aull motioned to recommend the 2025 NBWW Annual Newsletter for approval to the Executive Board with the discussed edits (add Leonard Dane's alternate on page 1 and change 'fecal coliform' to 'E. coli' on page 2), seconded by Warner. Motion passed via consensus vote.

#### b. NBWW 2025 Workplan Scorecard Review & Approval to Executive Board

Strelcheck presented the NBWW 2025 Workplan Scorecard for review. Dane motioned to recommend the 2025 NBWW Workplan Scorecard for approval to the Executive Board with the discussed edits (add hybrid attendance for MS4 workshop on page 8 and add 'Calendar Year 2025 and MS4 Permit Year 23' to the top of the Scorecard), seconded by Johnson. Motion passed via consensus vote.

### QUESTIONS

Is the scorecard according to the MS4 permit year or calendar year? Currently, the scorecard only denotes the calendar year. The MS4 permit year can be added for clarity.

### 5. Old Business

#### a. NBWW Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan (NARP) Update

Strelcheck shared an update that the NBWW NARP was officially submitted to the Illinois EPA on December 22, 2025. NBWW received comments from Albert Ettinger on 11/19/25 via email and was cc'd on comments addressed to the Illinois EPA on 12/15/25 via email. The Committee asked for a copy of Ettinger's comments/attachments for internal review. They also asked to create an agenda item for the March 11, 2026 meeting to discuss next steps. Finally, the Committee requested Rishab Mahajan, Geosyntec Consultants, attend the March meeting. The Monitoring Committee and the NBWW President both requested a combined NBWW Executive Board and Monitoring Committee meeting so this item could be discussed by both meeting groups.



## NBWW Monitoring and Water Quality Impairment Abatement Committee Meeting

Wednesday, January 14, 2026 @ 12:30pm – 1:30pm  
Village of Deerfield, Village Hall, 850 Waukegan Rd, Deerfield, IL 60015

### b. 2025 Microbial Source Tracking

Flood presented the 2025 Microbial Source Tracking (MST) results from Grand Valley State University (GVSU). At the GVSU laboratory, high E. coli samples contained at least 300 CFU/100mL. One NBWW monitoring site had a high E. coli level with a canine marker. All other sites with high E. coli levels had human markers, which could be due to leaking infrastructure. Flood suggested adding wet weather sampling to the study. Additionally, Committee members were interested in testing for human, deer, and geese markers in 2026. Bartolai thought it would be beneficial for all communities upstream of high E. coli monitoring sites to receive a notification letter or factsheet with resources about the 2025 results and educational information. Bartolai, Flood and Strelcheck will reach out to GVSU with the proposed 2026 scope of work to obtain a cost estimate for the March 11, 2026 NBWW meeting. Flood will average the 2023-2025 E.coli monitoring results to determine the highest 5 sites in the watershed for monitoring in 2026.

### c. 2025 Dissolved Oxygen Sampling Summary

Flood presented 2025 Dissolved Oxygen (DO) sampling charts for Committee review. Flood also presented the DO sampling plan for Fall 2026 following the implementation of the Skokie Consolidated Drainage District project near Danny Cunniff Park in Highland Park. Datasondes will be deployed again in September 2026. Bartolai suggested having one sonde upstream of the entire project, one sonde downstream of the entire project, and one data sonde to move among the pool/riffle structures. Johnson brought up the potential use of academic papers on natural reaeration structures, but Valleskey said there are knowledge gaps at this time.

## 6. Member Remarks

- a. Flood shared the Year 23 NBWW Annual Report will be submitted to the Illinois EPA in March 2026. Strelcheck will draft the cover letter for this report.
- b. Strelcheck asked if there were objections to posting the NARP on the NBWW website; there were none. The NARP will also be shared in the upcoming NBWW February 11, 2026 meeting invite.
- c. Strelcheck provided an Integrated Prioritization System (IPS) Model update from the Midwest Biodiversity Institute (MBI) and the DuPage River Salt Creek Watershed Workgroup (DRSCW). A representative from DRSCW will present training options and costs at the March 11, 2026 NBWW combined meeting.
  - i. NBWW President Brandon Janes requested to have a Joint NBWW meeting with the Monitoring Committee and Executive Board on March 11, 2026, from 1-3pm; there were no objections.
- d. Strelcheck shared the NBWW was asked to present their NBWW NARP to the Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance on May 27, 2026.
- e. Warner shared Kate Evasic, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, is interested in meeting with watershed workgroups across Northeastern Illinois in a centralized meeting.
- f. Flood shared 2026 sampling will begin in February 2026.

## 7. Next Meetings:



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- a. NBWW General Membership Meeting, February 11, 2026, Chicago Botanic Garden, Plant Science Center, Glencoe; 1:00pm – 3:00pm
  - b. NBWW **Joint** Executive Board and Monitoring Committee meeting: March 11, 2026, Deerfield, Village Hall, 850 Waukegan Rd, Deerfield, IL 60015 (**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Council Chambers Board Room**); 1:00pm-3:00pm.
- 8. Adjournment – 1:57pm**  
Aull motioned to adjourn, seconded by Dane. The motion passed unanimously.

### NBWW Monitoring Committee Meeting Attendees

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Alana Bartolai	Lake County Health Department
Ashley Strelcheck	Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, NBWW Coordinator
Brandon Janes	Village of Deerfield
Brian Valleskey	Baxter and Woodman
Chris Johnson	Illinois Sierra Club
Chuck Bodden	North Shore Water Reclamation District
Janice Aull	Skokie Consolidated Drainage District
Josephine Meincke	North Shore Water Reclamation District
Leonard Dane	Hey & Associates
Michael Warner	Gewalt Hamilton
Rob Flood	North Shore Water Reclamation District,
Sarah Skolozynski	Lake County Stormwater Management Commission