

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March 21, 2013

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Working Group met in January. Information from reporting groups is below.
2. **MBTA** – The Technical Advisory Committee to the City-State Groundwater Working Group met with the T and its consultants to review the most recent update to their plans for increasing groundwater levels in the area of the South End near Back Bay Station. There was a good interchange with consensus developing around most points. The group is to meet again in early April to review the T's response before its late April presentation to the Working Group.
3. **BWSC** – BWSC has just completed repairs to the manholes on Dartmouth Street. Levels seem to have consistently increased between Commonwealth Ave and Marlborough Street but remain significantly depressed between Marlborough and Beacon Streets. We will continue to monitor this closely; some members of our Technical Advisory Committee feel that it could take some time before some of BWSC's repairs can have an impact. Work on Blagden Street will take place in the Spring. BWSC continues to look for the cause of low groundwater levels near the intersection of Richmond and Commercial Streets in the North End.
4. **MassDOT** – MassDOT has identified several additional leaks in the Turnpike drain line and hopes to make repairs by April 1.
5. **DCR** – Our data loggers showed an unexpected drop in some of the levels along Back Street. After receipt of that data, DCR discovered that one of the pumps that direct water from the Storrow Drive Tunnel to recharge galleys under Back Street was not functioning properly. They have ordered a new pump and related components and expect to install them soon.
6. **GCOD** – Compliance with GCOD continues to be excellent, thanks to the efforts of ISD, BWSC, the BRA, and the Board of Appeals. There have now been 182 recharge systems installed and inspected to meet GCOD standards. We continue to work with project proponents to help them develop the most cost effective ways to meet GCOD requirements.
7. **GCOD Process** - We have discovered a potential problem in the GCOD process that we are working with ISD to fix. One of the criteria that a project must demonstrate is that it won't have a negative impact on groundwater levels. In one case, there was a relatively minor change in project design after zoning approval that could have a significant impact on groundwater levels and changes the basis on which the zoning was approved. The change did not get picked up in any review process and was discovered in correspondence between BGwT and one of the project's consultants after we discovered that nearby groundwater levels had dropped unexpectedly. We hope to get a procedure in place that will assure that any changes that would modify the basis of GCOD approval get reviewed before they are implemented.
8. **Green Alley** – We are close to completing the details on a Memorandum of Agreement among the Trust, the City, and Charles River Watershed Association for the construction of a Green Alley project in the South End. This is a demonstration project, partially funded by the U S EPA through the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection, aimed at documenting the impact of porous pavement on both increases in groundwater level and improvements in water quality. Our

involvement is strictly with changes in water levels. Depending on how smoothly the project advances, it will be installed either this Fall or next Spring.

- 9. Recharge from Sidewalks** – We are participating in planning sessions led by the Public Works Department for an initiative to recharge stormwater from sidewalks city-wide. In addition to providing recharge to preserve wood piling foundations, this initiative will reduce pollution.
- 10. Website** – Traffic to our website remains solid, and I continue to get compliments on the information on the site.
- 11. Technical Advisory Committee** – Christian and I met with our Technical Advisory Committee last week. As always, they offered helpful insights into potential causes and solutions for some of our significant groundwater issues.