

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

April 29, 2009

1. **City-State Groundwater Working Group** – The Group met on April 16. Attendance and participation by all of the constituent groups remains excellent. Specific details are included under the agencies below.
2. **MBTA** – The MBTA has been working on finalizing the design parameters for the system they will be installing to raise groundwater levels in the South End near Back Bay Station. They have decided to use a gravity fed recharge system with multiple tanks located adjacent to the Follen Street pumping station. Still to be resolved are potential freezing and maintenance issues. Because of cost, they are no longer planning to include design of a potential underground wall along Berkeley and Chandler Streets that would serve to slow groundwater flow out of the project area.
3. **DCR** – Work on the connection that will bring the water pumped out of the west pumping station from the Storrow Drive tunnel into the existing BWSC recharge system under Back Street begins this week. The connection is scheduled to be complete before the end of May.
4. **BWSC** – BWSC has begun a sewer relining project on multiple streets in the South End, Back Bay, and Beacon Hill that is designed to repair leaks discovered during television inspection of the sewers. The work should be complete by August. They will also be installing some new pipes in Back Bay and Beacon Hill alleys where the sewers need more extensive work than can be accomplished by lining; they plan to install small recharge systems (limited by available space) as part of these alley systems. The current leak at Dartmouth and Beacon Streets requires a diver to repair the liner; this has been held up by availability of the contractor, but is expected to be repaired in 4-6 weeks. An inspection of the sewer at Commercial Street showed that what looked like a leak in the television inspection was in fact an unknown connection; the cause of low groundwater in that area is still undetermined. BWSC will attempt to line the broken sewer pipe on Blagdon; if this is unsuccessful, the repair will be a major project. BWSC discovered a previously unknown underdrain in the area of Chestnut and Charles Street; after it was plugged, local groundwater levels increased.
5. **MTA** – The repairs to the MTA drain line near Clarendon Street and Columbus Avenue are expected to be complete within about a month. They have approval for funding and have hired a consultant to design the redirection of drain lines from the Big Dig; the project will investigate the potential for recharge at several locations identified by the Trust.
6. **MWRA** – Construction has begun on their project to replace their sewer system in East Boston. As part of this work, they will deactivate and fill the sewer along Porter Street that is in the area of consistently very low readings; the pipe should be filled before the end of 2009.
7. **GCOD** – Compliance with GCOD remains excellent. At the request of City Council President Ross, I'm working with Jim Hunt to see whether there might be ways to streamline the GCOD process without reducing its effectiveness.
8. **Legislation** – There have been two bills filed with the Legislature that address aspects of the groundwater issue. They have been assigned to committee, and hearings are likely in the Spring.

- 9. Public Meeting** – NABB held a membership meeting at the Boston Public Library at which groundwater was the prime focus. I made a presentation with Christian's assistance and with the participation of Tim Mitchell. At the same meeting, BWSC made a presentation on their sewer lining project in Back bay.
- 10. Website** – Traffic on the website dropped back somewhat in April.
- 11. Research Project** – Several Tufts University undergraduates did a project to see if they could see a statistically significant effect from GCOD mandated recharge. Christian and I attended their presentation today. They developed a model that shows a measurable but small impact. We may have the opportunity to work with a graduate student and the professor who advised the undergraduates to refine the model so that it can better predict the effect.