



## BASWG February Meeting

Thursday, February 12, 2026, 9:00 – 11:00 am  
Katahdin Hall (Room 309), Eastern Maine Community College  
354 Hogan Road, Bangor, ME

### MINUTES

**In-Person Attendees:** Megan Hess (Chair - Town of Orono), Abe Chase (Vice Chair - Eastern Maine Community College), Brenda Zollisch (Facilitator), Rich May (Bangor), Brian Bernosky (Treasurer - UMaine), Cara Belanger (Stillwater Environmental Engineering, Veazie, MEANG, Old Town), Victor Smith (Hampden), Holliday Keen (MDEP), Karoline Bass (Stillwater Environmental Engineering), Melissa Genoter (Haley Ward, Milford)

**Online Attendees:** Skip Huskey (UMAB), Justin Young (UMAB), Alexis Racioppi (MDOT), Christine Rinehart (Wright-Pierce), Jasmine Cabenaw (Pulse), Ali Clift (CCSWCD, ISWG)

**Absent:** Rob Howard (Secretary - Brewer)

**9:00 am Welcome, Agenda Review** (Megan)

**9:05 am DEP Updates** (Holliday)

- **Audit Questions:**
  - Field Audits for PY4: Brewer: June 29th, 2026 , Orono: July 27th, 2026
    - 2026 audit permittees (Orono and Brewer) will be contacted for desktop review by 2/13/2026. MDEP will ask which outfalls will be visited. Audit permittees can discuss the audit with MDEP over Zoom to prepare.
    - MDEP will likely use the previous permit's audit template (2016 version) to conduct audits. Holliday recommends skipping any questions that do not apply to the current permit cycle.
- **General Updates:**
  - MELS: rollout late 2027 for stormwater (potentially with the next stormwater permit)
  - Action Item: BASWG will write a letter with MELS recommendations for MDEP.
    - MDEP would like to know if having a PDF form or a fillable form is best.
    - Megan needs time to explore MELS
  - MDEP expects the new permit will be out on time without extending the current permit cycle.
  - Holliday is hiring two new staff members.

**9:15 am Organizational Business**

- **Approval of December Minutes** (Cara) - Abe made a motion to approve the minutes as amended with minor edits. Victor from Hampden seconded. Minutes were approved by consensus, with a quorum present.
- **PY4 Budget Update** (Brian)
  - Main takeaway: BASWG has remained flat-funded over the past few years. Assuming costs stay the same, two years remain in reserve.
  - Reminder: Brian sent an online invoice to all BASWG members before today's (2/12/2026) meeting. Please check whether you received an invoice.

- **PY5 Budget Approval** (Megan)
  - Main Takeaway: Costs for PY5 are expected to remain relatively the same. A few additional costs for PY5 include the PY5 survey (\$5,000) and adding a section to the annual report to discuss the survey results. Megan suggested that reserve funds would be used to cover the additional costs.
- **Budget Approval** - Abe made a motion to approve the PY5 Budget. Victor from Hampden seconded. The budget was approved by consensus, with a quorum present.
  - To Consider: In PY4, Pulse had a special deal with Google to increase Google Ads for BASWG at no additional cost. Given the success (see Year and Review Section below), BASWG should consider increasing its Google Ads budget to maintain reach to a broader audience. Special Ads from Pulse will continue to have management fees waived as long as the ads remain in compliance with the grant guidelines.
- **Executive Committee Ballot** (Vote) Zoom poll/voting capability
  - All seven in-person and one online attendees voted unanimously for the following:
 

Chair:	Megan Hess	(1-year)
Vice Chair:	Abe Chase	(2-year)
Secretary:	Rob Howard	(1-year)
Treasurer:	Brian Bernosky	(2-year)

**9:30 am Year in Review Highlights Presentation** (Brenda & Megan)

- Chloride Reduction Compliance:
  - Target Audience - General Public: Two surveys in the permit cycle. One was conducted in PY1, and another should go out in November of PY5.
  - Target Audience - Winter Maintenance Managers: Since PY1, winter maintenance managers have reported reduced salt use.
- Education and Outreach Initiatives:
  - Sage Foundation: Outfall signs have been installed around the BASWG area
  - Davis Foundation: Educational Videos
  - Pulse Report Summary: 98% increase in BASWG website traffic, a majority of which is accessed by phone. Weather-based ads boosted social media engagement.
  - To Consider: BASWGs' Instagram account needs to be reconnected, or a new account created.
- See the [2025 Analytics Report and Insights](#) in the BASWG Google Drive for details.

**9:40 am Wet Weather Sampling Presentation** (Christine Rinehart)

- Quick Reference: Wet Weather assessment is discussed on page 30 of Maine's MS4 permit.
- Main Takeaways: New Hampshire wet-weather assessments require communities to evaluate [System Vulnerability Factors](#) (SVFs) and catchment areas for each outfall. Once each community identifies which outfalls to sample, it must justify its decision. Investigation procedures for the New Hampshire communities of Rye and Exeter are as follows:
  - Frequency: At least one wet weather sample at the outfall
  - Parameters and sampling procedures: same as dry weather sampling

- Timing: March through June.
  - Avoid sampling during the first flush.
  - Sample during regular working hours
  - Sample when a storm event triggers suspected sanitary sewer interconnections.
- To see examples of identifying Wet Weather assessments from Exeter and Rye, New Hampshire, see [Christine's presentation](#) in the BASWG Google Drive folder.
- **10:15 am Town of Orono Wet Weather Criteria Case Study (Megan)**
- **Main Takeaway:** Not all MS4 communities have the same level of GIS data; it is important to use what you have access to. Although Maine DEP does not require MS4 communities to identify catchment areas, doing so helps determine which outfalls they discharge to. [Stream Stats](#) can help delineate catchment areas. To see what Megan has done in Orono, see [Megan's presentation](#) in the BASWG Google Drive folder.
- **Wet Weather Discussion:**
- Abe: Lou Silver in Veazie has been doing sewer installations for years; they might have a good idea of how systems in the area have been built and what to look out for.

### 10:30 am Education and Outreach Update

- Street and Stream Clean Up Supplies (Cara)
  - Order using the reserve/ask Casella to donate nitrile gloves.
- Clean-ups Scheduled:
  - Hampden: May 2nd
  - Orono: May 16th
  - UMaine: last week of April
- Maine Science Festival: March 28th, 9 AM - 4 PM - [Sign Up Link](#). The second shift needs more volunteers.
- Winter Maintenance Managers Roundtable: April 9th, 9-10 AM (typically 30 people)
  - Alexis: Cindy will talk about how data collection and plow driver training are going with the new AI Pilot.
- NEEFC New England Stormwater Utility Online Manual (Brenda)
  - **Goal:** Create a story map to act as a library of stormwater utility fee information. The story map can serve as a resource for communities interested in establishing a stormwater utility.
  - **Timeline:** Story map draft done in June, completion estimated in August 2026.
  - **Request:** If anyone knows people who have created or are interested in creating a stormwater utility fee, put them in contact with Brenda.
- 2026 Conferences - Mark your calendars!
  - Maine Sustainability & Water Conference: March 26
    - Business of Buffers Project Presentation (Fact Sheet)- next year
  - Maine Stormwater Conference (9/3-9/4): Abstract deadline pushed to mid-March
    - **To Consider:** Should BASWG become a sponsor to provide a discount for BASWG members to attend,/ Should BASWG provide a mini-grant so more BASWG members can attend?
    - **Presentation Ideas:** Winter Maintenance Managers Training Topic? (Megan / Brenda), and Outfall SignSearch and Stewardship Trail Presentation
    - Ali: MS4 permittees session to round-table talk.



Additional Takeaways:

- Brenda would like feedback on the Outfall Sign Search handout.
- **Next meeting:** April 9, 2026, @ Eastern Maine Community College - Rangeley Hall (Room 136)
  - 9AM - 10AM Winter Maintenance Managers Round Table
  - 10AM - 11AM Meeting