

**The Potomac Aquifer Recharge Oversight Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 30, 2026**

In attendance: Whitney Katchmark (Committee Chair), Mark Bennett (remote), Jay Bernas (remote), Charles Bott, Taylor Bruce (remote), Brian Campbell, Weedon Cloe, Curtis Consolvo (remote), Jason Early (remote), Bob Edelman (remote), Lauren Hines-Acosta (remote), Dan Holloway, Preston Kirby, Zach Little (remote), William Mann (remote), Jamie Mitchell, Aaron Montgomery (remote), Bryant Mountjoy (remote), Ivy Ozmon, Charles Paullin (remote), Harold Post (remote), Doug Powell, Jennifer Reitz, Leila Rice (remote), Germano Salazar-Benites, Gary Schafran, Sydney Turner (remote), Mark Widdowson, Calvin Yahn (remote).

Ms. Katchmark (HRPDC) called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. and led introductions.

The committee approved the December 12, 2025 meeting summary without changes.

The committee discussed and voted to adopt an Electronic Meetings Policy, allowing up to two virtual meetings per year, provided they are not held consecutively. Members expressed that in-person meetings remain valuable, particularly as James River SWIFT (JR SWIFT) begins operations, but welcomed the policy's flexibility.

Updates were provided on SWIFT public communications planning. A February coordination meeting between HRSD and PARML led to the establishment of a shared HRPDC SharePoint site to track public inquiries and coordinate responses. Work is ongoing to formalize communication protocols to ensure consistent, coordinated responses to public and stakeholder questions as SWIFT operations advance. The committee emphasized the importance of preparedness ahead of recharge startup.

**Follow-up action:** PARML and HRSD will continue working toward a documented communications response protocol.

HRSD presented a detailed review of SWIFT Critical Control Points (CCPs). Germano Salazar-Benites, HRSD SWIFT Treatment Process Engineer, described how CCPs protect water quality by triggering alarms, diversions, or operational changes when thresholds are exceeded. Since 2018, CCPs have been refined based on operational experience at the SWIFT Research Center, including additional controls for nitrite, ozone demand, disinfection contact time, turbidity, and conductivity. Adjustments were made to maintain biofilter stability and strengthen protection against bromate formation and other risks. HRSD noted that CCPs are required under the UIC permit and will continue to evolve, with changes documented in quarterly reports.

Aaron Montgomery, AECOM's SWIFT Construction Service Leader, provided a detailed construction update on the JR SWIFT facility, emphasizing that the project has transitioned from heavy construction into system commissioning and startup activities. Major components are nearing completion and are undergoing electrical termination, functional testing, and vendor checkouts. He reported significant progress on Process Buildings 1 and 2, including installation and startup planning for ozone generation, biofilters, UV systems, chemical feed systems, and supporting infrastructure. Flow has begun moving through portions of the SWIFT treatment train

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to support testing, with Building 1 expected to be operational for functional testing by late April and Building 2 by late May or early June. Construction of recharge well buildings and associated piping is also advancing, with permanent power connections scheduled for several wells by early summer. Substantial JR SWIFT completion is estimated by October 2026, with injection planned to begin in fall 2026 and final project closeout extending into spring 2027. Aaron emphasized that although startup challenges are expected, the project remains on track.

PARML co-directors Dr. Mark Widdowson and Dr. Gary Schafran provided updates on groundwater modeling, monitoring, and laboratory activities. Virginia Tech has enhanced a rapid groundwater travel-time modeling tool to estimate how recharged water may move through the Potomac Aquifer during startup and ramp-up scenarios. Results showed that breakthrough times to nearby monitoring wells could vary significantly depending on well operation and screen flow distribution, underscoring the importance of careful ramp-up and monitoring. PARML also reported on ongoing sampling at the SWIFT Research Center, push-pull tests, PFAS sorption studies, enhancements to laboratory staffing, and the completion of a comprehensive Quality Assurance Manual.

Preparations for James River SWIFT monitoring are underway, including isotope characterization of plant effluent, development of site-specific sampling plans, and coordination with HRSD on startup sequencing. PARML reiterated plans to rely on commercial laboratories for some analyses and to form an ad hoc technical workgroup under PAROC to refine non-regulatory monitoring priorities.

**Follow-up action:** Form a technical workgroup comprised of PAROC members or their representatives to inform the selection of non-regulatory monitoring parameters and strategies.

During the roundtable discussion, the HRPDC highlighted progress in expanding outreach for subsidized private well testing through regional partners such as askHRGreen, with a focus on Chesapeake, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Isle of Wight. Members also identified potential future meeting topics, including push-pull test results, microplastics research, and additional groundwater modeling updates.

**Follow-up action:** Develop and distribute outreach materials for expanded private well testing.

No public comments were received. The meeting adjourned at 1:06 PM with the next PAROC meeting scheduled for June 8, 2026.

Approved:

Date:

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Committee Chair

Committee Members:

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- Mike Rolband, Director of Virginia DEQ
- Dr. Cameron Webb, Virginia State Health Commissioner
- Dr. William Mann, Governor Appointee
- Doug Powell, Governor Appointee
- Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC
- Dr. Stanley Grant, Director of Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory
- Dr. Mark Widdowson, Co-Director of the Potomac Aquifer Recharge Monitoring Lab
- Dr. Gary Schafran, Co-Director of the Potomac Aquifer Recharge Monitoring Lab

Non-voting members:

- Mark Bennett, Director of the Virginia and West Virginia Water Science Center, USGS
- Greg Voigt, Deputy Director, Water Division, US EPA Region 3

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