Appendix G

New Jersey Impairment Scoring (NJIS) Criteria for Rapid Bioassessments and High Gradient Macroinvertebrate Index (HGMI) Protocols

High Gradient Benthic Index (HGMI)[1]

Study area: northern New Jersey, above the geologic fall-line including the following ecoregions: North Central Appalachians, Central Appalachian Ridges and Valleys, Northeastern Highlands, Northeastern Coastal Zone, and Northern Piedmont. See figure A1.

Index Metrics

1. Total number of genera $_{adj}$ = 26.53 + Metric – [22.776 + 4.173*log10(areasqkm)]
2. Percent of genera that are not insects
3. Percent sensitive EPT (excluding Hydropyschidae, including Diplectrona) $_{adj}$ = 37.49 + Metric – [49.922 – 13.800*log10(areasqkm)]
4. Number of scraper genera $_{adj}$ = 5.44 + Metric – [3.889 + 1.724*log10(areasqkm)]
5. Hilsenhoff Biotic Index $_{adj}$ = 4.23 + Metric – [3.407 + 0.918*log10(areasqkm)]
6. Number of New Jersey TALU attribute 2 genera
7. Number of New Jersey TALU attribute 3 genera

ADJ (Adjusted metric value) = Mean $_{reference}$ + Metric $_{observed}$ – Metric $_{predicted}$, where predictions are based on linear regression analysis of reference metric values on catchment size.

Assessment Rating	Score
Excellent	≥ 63
Good	< 63 - 42
Fair	< 42 - 21
Poor	< 21

Reference

Benjamin Jessup, et al. Report. Development of the New Jersey high gradient macroinvertebrate index (HGMI). TetraTech, Inc. Owings Mills, MD. February, 2007.

Attributes

Excellent: Minimal changes in structure of biological community and minimal changes in ecosystem function. Virtually all native taxa are maintained with some changes to biomass and/or abundance; ecosystem functions are fully maintained within the range of natural variability.

Good: Some evident changes in structure of the biotic community and minimal changes in ecosystem function. Some changes in structure due to loss of some rare native taxa; shifts in relative abundance of taxa but sensitive-ubiquitous taxa are common and abundant; ecosystem functions are fully maintained.

Fair: **Moderate to major changes in structure of biological community and moderate changes in ecosystem function.** Sensitive taxa are markedly diminished; conspicuously unbalanced distribution of major groups from that expected; organism condition shows signs of physiological stress; system function shows reduced complexity.

Poor: Extreme changes in structure of biological community and major loss of ecosystem function. Extreme changes in structure; wholesale changes in taxonomic composition; extreme alterations from normal densities and distributions; organism condition is often poor; ecosystem functions are severely altered.

[1] Based on 100 organism subsample, genus level taxonomy

Table A1: Descriptive and regulatory thresholds for Fresh Water High Gradient (Highlands, Ridge And Valley, Piedmont), Low Gradient (Coastal Plain, Excluding Pinelands Waters) and Pinelands Waters.

High Gradient Macroinvertebrate Index (HGMI) (Highlands, Ridge and Valley, Piedmont):		
Assessment category	**Index Score**	**Regulatory Threshold**
Excellent	63 - 100	Full Attainment
Good	<63-42	Full Attainment
Fair	<42-21	Non-Attainment
Poor	< 21	Non-Attainment
Coastal Plain Macroinvertebrate Index (CPMI)		
Assessment category	**Index Score**	**Regulatory Threshold**
Excellent	22 - 30	Full Attainment
Good	20 - 12	Full Attainment
Fair	10 - 6	Non-Attainment
Poor	< 6	Non-Attainment
Pinelands Macroinvertebrate Index (PMI)		
Assessment category	**Index Score**	**Regulatory Threshold**
Excellent	63 - 100	Full Attainment
Good	<63-56	Full Attainment
Fair	<56-34	Non-Attainment(PL) Full Attainment(FW2)
Poor	< 34	Non-Attainment

New Jersey Impairment Score (NJIS)[1]

Study Area: All of New Jersey. The NJIS was used for assessments in reports prior to 2007. This table can be used when referring to these historical documents.

Index metrics	6	3	0
Taxa Richness (total Families)	>10	10-5	4-0
E+P+T Index (EPT)	>5	5-3	2-0
Percent Dominance (%CDF)	<40	40-60	>60
Percent EPT[2] (%EPT)	>35	35-10	<10
Modified Family Biotic Index[3] (FBI)	<5	5-7	>7

Biological Assessment	Total Score
Non-impaired	24-30
Moderately Impaired	9-21
Severely Impaired	0-6

Reference
Kurtenbach, J. A method for rapid bioassessment of streams in New Jersey using benthic macroinvertebrates. Bull. N. Am. Benth. Soc. 8(1):129. 1991.

Attributes

Non-impaired: Benthic community comparable to other undisturbed streams within the region. A community characterized by a maximum taxa richness, balanced taxa groups and good representation of intolerant individuals.

Moderately Impaired: Macroinvertebrate richness is reduced, in particular EPT taxa. Taxa composition changes result in reduced community balance and intolerant taxa become absent.

Severely Impaired: A dramatic change in the benthic community has occurred. Macroinvertebrates are dominated by a few taxa which are very abundant. Tolerant taxa are the only individuals present.

[1] Based on 100 organism subsample, family level taxonomy. Used in previous assessments, replaced in favor of genus level indices.

[2] Including the hydropsychid family

[3] Also known as the Hilsenhoff Biotic Index