

**Long Island Sound Study
Citizens Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
Thursday, June 11, 2009
UConn, Stamford, CT**

Welcome/Introductions

Connecticut CAC co-chair Curt Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and asked for introductions and roll call of members, 19 CAC members were present by the beginning of business, which is a quorum.

Reports

Co-Chair Updates: The Sound Vision project, submitted by Save the Sound on behalf of the CAC, was approved by the LISS Management Committee and will be funded entirely with Long Island Sound Study (LISS) FY09 base funding. Therefore, the funding request to NFWF for the Futures Fund was withdrawn by Save the Sound. Curt Johnson thanked the six members that provided comments on the proposal. The Accountability and Tracking CAC Subcommittee will be working to hire a consultant to start the Sound Vision project. If you would like to help with this process, email Curt at cjohnson@cfenv.org.

Nancy Seligson reported that she was in DC on May 12-13 with the National Wildlife Federation to support the Climate Change Bill. Specifically, she encouraged that 5% of the cap and trade fund be set aside for protecting natural resources from the effects of climate change. Peter Grannis, Commissioner of the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and Jim Tierney, the Assistant Commissioner for Water Resources for NYSDEC accompanied Nancy to talk about the importance of supporting clean water infrastructure. The co-chairs also welcomed Judy Preston, who has started a position with CT Sea Grant as the LISS CT Public Outreach Coordinator.

Work Group Updates:

STAC- Mickey Weiss stated that the next STAC meeting is June 19th and the agenda includes a presentation on the System-Wide Eutrophication Model (SWEM). Members thought this might be an interesting topic for a future CAC meeting.

Stewardship and Habitat Restoration Initiatives- Louise Harrison gave an update that an RFP has been released to develop criteria to elect stewardship sites. The Stewardship Initiative Work Group may also be interested in recommending funding in future years for CT Sea Grant to develop a habitat planning management tool.

Communications- This work group is recruiting groups to participate in World Water Monitoring Day. If you would like to participate in this program, email Robert Burg at rburg@longislandsoundstudy.net. Also, the pharmaceutical take-back program held in Suffolk

County on April 18, 2009 was a great success! Almost 500 pounds of unwanted pharmaceuticals were collected from 140 participants. For more information, visit NY Sea Grant's web site at www.nyseagrant.org or email Larissa at ljj85@cornell.edu.

Management Committee- The budget was passed, including funding for the CAC's Sound Vision project. During this meeting, the group received a presentation from the Nature Conservancy about their Long Island Sound Initiative and reviewed the status of the draft 2009 Agreement action language. LISS has also received funding for two Climate Ready Estuaries projects. We will receive technical assistance for the Sentinel Monitoring Work Group and also funding to create a Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan, including the roles of federal, state, and local government, and for improving sustainability of the Town of Groton.

Presentation: LIS Plankton Food Webs

Dr. Gary Wikfors from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center at the Milford Laboratory presented his research on planktonic food webs in Long Island Sound. Dr. Wikfors stressed the importance of looking at multiple nutrients (e.g., nitrogen, phosphorus, and silica) and the food web of Long Island Sound to project the system response to nutrient-management strategies. He also made a case that the current methods to remove nitrogen from Long Island Sound are not enough and suggested that various methods, such as harvesting mussels or seaweed, can be considered, in addition to sewage treatment plant upgrades. To obtain a copy of his presentation, please contact the Long Island Sound Office.

Sound Vision Project

Leah Schmalz from Save the Sound gave an overview of the scope of work for the Sound Vision project. The Accountability and Tracking Subcommittee will develop a RFP to hire a consultant (summer 2009). Once the consultant is hired, he or she will work with the CAC to track funding and environmental benefits (for example, success for the dollars invested) over the past 15 years. Once this work is complete (fall 2009), the consultant will provide this information to the CAC and ask the CAC to provide new ideas and identify gaps (winter 2009). Various stakeholders, recruited by the CAC, will be asked to participate in this process (winter 2009). Leah also encouraged CAC feedback and stated that if any members have concerns or questions, she said that they can contact her at lschmalz@savethesound.org.

CAC Process for Advocating LIS Priorities

The CAC Bylaws state that the CAC position is to promote the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) and to advocate for funds to promote the CCMP. Currently, no position outside of support for policies or funding to promote the CCMP can be taken without sending the request out to the group 30 days prior to a meeting. Nancy and Curt proposed that the co-chairs be allowed to advocate on behalf of the CAC for policies or funding that promote CCMP goals. They suggested that without that flexibility the CAC might lose opportunities for funding. This interpretation would allow the CAC co-chairs to write and send a letter on behalf of the CAC in support of funding for funding to promote the CCMP, for example, but would not allow them to write a letter in support of projects that are not related to the CCMP (e.g., Echo Bay).

CAC members agreed that presenting an item 30 days before a meeting related to CCMP policy or funding and then discussing at the meeting before acting on an item was not necessary, but with current technology (i.e., email) they would prefer to see any letter, whether or not it pertained to the CCMP, before it was distributed. The group agreed that a 24 to 48 hour turn-around time would allow all members to comment on the letter without holding up the process. This process would also notify all members about funding opportunities, which could result in groups involved in the CAC to send addition letters to support a motion. Members thought that an email discussion on these topics would be positive and allow for the discussion to be open and transparent. Members also suggested that a protocol for email discussions should be created.

Dredging Discussion

Brian Thompson from the CT Department of Environmental Protection and Ann Rodney from the EPA gave background on the dredge management process. An environmental impact statement was published for the Western LIS, and two sites were designated. An estimated \$12-16 million dollars is needed to create a LIS Dredged Material Management plan for LIS by 2013 as required by EPA's site designation rule for the western LIS sites. In FY 08, this project was awarded \$3 million, and in FY09 it was awarded \$1 million. Much more funding is needed, and CTDEP has requested federal funding of \$4 million for FY10. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is needed before EPA can proceed with the site designation for the two eastern LIS sites. Without designation, the New London Disposal Site will not be available for federal projects and some non-federal projects starting in 2011. CTDEP has requested federal funding of \$5 million in FY10 to conduct an EIS.

The CAC decided to reinstitute the Dredging Subcommittee in order to push for a completed dredged material management plan. This subcommittee will not develop a dredged material management plan, but will work to: 1) maintain the process of developing this plan as a priority, 2) support funding of the management plan, 3) advocate for beneficial uses of dredged materials. Allen Berrien, Cesare Manfredi, Sandy McDonald, Dan Natchez, Grant Westerson, and Joel Ziev volunteered to serve on this subcommittee. As an update, Margie Purnell from Fisher's Island Conservancy has not reversed her position to resign from the CAC, but the group will reach out to Margie to see if she or a representative from the Fisher's Island Conservancy would like to serve on the reformed subcommittee.

Other Business/June Agenda Items

The next CAC meeting will be in NYC on September 10, 2009. Two potential topics for discussion include an update on the lobster research funded by CT and an update on the SWEM model. Other suggestions for topics may be sent to the Long Island Sound Office and CAC co-chairs.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00PM.