

**Long Island Sound Study
Management Committee Meeting Notes
April 19, 2012
Stamford, Connecticut**

Welcome/Introductions/Logistics. Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:09 am and asked attendees to introduce themselves, after which Tedesco introduced Kelly Hines, the new New York habitat restoration coordinator, and Erin Jacobs, P.E., the new LISS coordinator from NEIWPCC. Kelly grew up on Long Island Sound and worked for many years on coastal and marine conservation issues with The Nature Conservancy on Long Island. She received her Master's in Integrated Water Management from the International WaterCentre at the University of Queensland in Australia; most recently she worked in the South Pacific to improve stakeholder engagement in water management projects. Prior to joining NEIWPCC, Erin worked as a water resources engineer for URS Corporation, an engineering consulting firm. Erin has professional experience in hydrology and hydraulics, stormwater management, pollution prevention and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting, watershed studies, green infrastructure and low impact development techniques, hazard mitigation, floodplain management, and public outreach. She holds an M.S. in Environmental Planning and Management from the Whiting School of Engineering, Johns Hopkins University and a B.S. in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Bucknell University.

Dr. Gary Wikfors announced the NOAA LISS liaison position has been filled by Dr. Jason Krumholz of the University of Rhode Island's Graduate School of Oceanography; his main area of interest is nutrient budgets for Narragansett Bay and the impact of mitigation efforts (particularly the recent upgrades to tertiary treatment at many RI treatment facilities) on the Bay. Secondary areas of interest include other restoration topics, particularly the impact of mitigation and habitat enhancement efforts on fisheries and ecosystems. His starting date is under negotiation but should be in a few weeks.

Nancy Ferlow, Connecticut state resource conservationist and senior scientist with NRCS/CT introduced herself as the new Management Committee representative for that agency. Dr. Brett Branco, assistant professor of earth and environmental sciences at Brooklyn College announced that he was sitting proxy for Dr. Larry Swanson, who was unable to attend the meeting. Dr. James O'Donnell introduced himself as the newly elected Connecticut co-chair of the STAC and said that Dr. Carmela Cuomo would be his proxy in the event he is unable to attend meetings.

Tedesco asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda; none were suggested. Lynne Hamjian announced that Nancy Seligson and Curt Johnson had been selected on behalf of the CAC by EPA Region 1 to receive its Environmental Merit Award on April 25 at a ceremony at Faneuil Hall in Boston. Also Chet Arnold and Mike Dietz were to receive this award for their work on the New England Rain Garden Training Team, along with Amy Boyajian, Caitrin Higgins, Jillian Thompson, and Amy Rowe. The Committee offered a round of applause and congratulations to the recipients for their achievements and recognition.

Sound Advice Public Comments. Tedesco recognized Art Glowka and offered him the floor. Glowka said that he has observed the western Sound for a long time and that you can't find a winter flounder or blackfish in the Sound now. Why work on water quality if it isn't to improve it for the fish? There are no

lobsters anymore and the striped bass are eating all the river herring. Tedesco thanked Mr. Glowka for his comments and asked if there were any others. As none were offered, he proceeded with the agenda.

Announcements. Mark Parker reported that CTDEEP was sponsoring a training program for the public to detect invasive species at boat launches in Connecticut. Training is available for people interested in volunteering their time to monitor local boat launches for the presence of invasive plants and animals, such as zebra mussels. The training will educate volunteers on how to identify and detect invasive species and also to instruct boaters on how to do the same. Volunteers will also be talking to boaters about ways they can prevent the spread of invasive species. Volunteers will receive a handbook, supplies and a t-shirt that identifies them as volunteers. The training session will be held Saturday, April 21, 2012 at the Brookfield Library located at 182 Whisconier Road in Brookfield, CT.

Sharon Marino reported that there will be a ceremony on June 4, 2012 highlighting the work done on Long Beach West in Stratford. More information will be forthcoming but please save the date. The 2011 Coastal America Partnership Award recognized the Long Beach Wetlands Restoration Project, Stratford, CT. This project took two years and was completed on April 15, 2011. A total of 37 cottages, 25 outbuildings, 4 docks, retaining walls, debris, and trash including hazardous materials, which consisted of lead, asbestos, and PCBs were removed on 35-acres. A significant amount of the debris was also recycled. Habitat was improved for federally- and state-listed species and the project also improved public access, aesthetics and safety issues at the site. The Long Island Sound Futures Fund contributed to some of this work.

Jim Ammerman reported that he attended a meeting of NGOs at the Sagamore Yacht Club in Oyster Bay on April 13 with Senator Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY) and Congressman Steve Israel (D-NY). Gillibrand and Israel promoted bills reauthorizing \$325 million over five years for environmental protection of the Sound. The bills would allocate \$40 million annually for restoration such as wetlands protection and \$25 million per year for stewardship projects such as land protection. It will be an uphill battle in Congress to appropriate new funding for LIS.

Brian Thompson reported that the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) is currently serving as the regional forum for organizing, tracking, and advancing Coastal Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) activities in the region, as well as developing a framework for operationalizing CMSP in New England. NROC expects to remain closely engaged as the regional planning body is formed according to the Executive Order 13366, and anticipates much overlapping membership. The Governors of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, through Resolution 29-03 (2005) created NROC as the U.S. component of the broader New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers Oceans Working Committee. Because of the bi-state status of LIS, New York will also be included in this effort.

Larissa Graham announced that there will be a tour of Great Gull Island on July 17 from noon to 4:00pm, the boat will leave from Waterford, CT. Helen Hayes, the manager of the Island since 1969, will provide a tour of the largest Roseate Tern colony in the US. There are over 1000 pairs of Common Terns nesting on the island. Space for the tour is very limited and is first-come, first-served. See this link for information:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?pli=1&formkey=dFZteG96Q25aYUhlAUVndzIzZnk4elE6MQ#gid=0>.

Graham also said that two weekend volunteer trips for New York State Marine Education Association members are being planned. Participants will be marking nests, observing and banding birds, and clearing invasive plants. To sign up the link to the form is:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/viewform?formkey=dHJKc1dsbnoyNzR6QWJmNzI5VkdwZHc6MQ#gid=0>.

Mark Parker reported that the Sentinel Monitoring group received seven letters of intent to produce full proposals from the RFP it released; proposals ranged from marsh bird monitoring to zooplankton monitoring. Researchers have until the end of May to submit full proposals. CTDEEP expects to contract with the successful candidate this summer.

STAC Report. Dr. Jim O'Donnell reported on the February 18, 2012 STAC meeting that was held at Stony Brook University. The main agenda topic was a review of the current LISS-funded research projects, *Interaction Of Biological And Physical Factors Controlling Bottom Dissolved Oxygen*, Kamazima Lwiza and Gordon Taylor; *Impacts Of Climate Change On The Export Of The Spring Bloom In Long Island Sound*, Darcy Lonsdale and Christopher Gobler; *The Distribution, Causes, And Impacts Of Alexandrium Fundyense Blooms In Coves, Near Shore, And Open Water Regions Of Long Island Sound*, Christopher Gobler; *Summer Synoptic Weather Variability As The Control Of The Seasonal Evolution Of Hypoxia In Long Island Sound*, Robert Wilson, Brian Colle, and Daniel Codiga; and *Geochemical Budgeting Of Dissolved Gases For Understanding Long Island Sound Hypoxia*, Mark Altabet. Dr. Altabet was unable to present and will do so at a future meeting. The STAC also had presentations on the status of the synthesis book from Dr. Jim Latimer as well as an update on the 2012 budget by Mark Tedesco and a briefing on the CCMP revision process by Dr. Carmela Cuomo. There will be a joint CAC/STAC meeting on June 14, 2012 at the Maritime Aquarium in Norwalk that will replace each individual groups' meeting formerly scheduled for June 14 and 15. The STAC elected Jim as the new Connecticut co-chair, and they recognized and thanked Dr. Cuomo for serving in that capacity for the last two years. Dr. Cuomo will be Dr. O'Donnell's alternate for STAC representation.

CAC Report. Curt Johnson reported on the March 8, 2012 CAC meeting that was held in New York City. The CAC had a presentation on the LIS synthesis book from Mark Tedesco. Members of the CAC are planning a trip to DC on May30 to discuss support for Long Island Sound. Nancy Seligson highlighted that redistricting has removed the Long Island Sound communities of Rep. Nita Lowey to Rep Elliott Engel. Rep. Lowey has been a strong supporter of Long Island Sound and efforts will be needed to reach out to Rep. Engel.

FY2012 Budget Process. Mark Tedesco reviewed the FY2012 budget planning and execution process, reminding the Committee members that the process started last summer with the submission of FY2012-13 work plans and environmental priorities by the LISS work groups and teams. The Management Committee met on October 20, 2011 and reviewed the proposed priorities, selecting a number of areas for development of Base + budget proposals; areas included nonpoint source and watersheds; sentinels/climate change; communications; habitat; stewardship; TMDL and other priority areas. The LISO issued its budget call memo on November 1, 2011 based on that meeting, including the list of priority areas, with proposals due by December 23, 2011. That memo provided an overall LISS Planning Target for base program grantees. The budget request was to be based on ongoing LISS

priorities as reflected in the CCMP and LIS Action Agenda, and considering priorities identified at the October 2011 Management Committee meeting. The Base program budget assumes ongoing support for core LISS-funded staff and work plan activities, [communications; WQ monitoring; habitat restoration] including costs for fringe benefits, travel, training, equipment, supplies and agency indirect costs where applicable. Normal increases for inflation, negotiated indirect rates, and personnel, (e.g., quality step/longevity increases) costs are assumed in the Base budget. In addition, LISS Base program funding is allocated for separate competitive funding announcements for the Scientific Research Grants program, the LIS Futures Fund program, CCMP Enhancements projects, and LIS Stewardship Initiative projects, subject to availability of overall EPA appropriations.

The Committee met on January 26, 2012 and basically agreed with the proposals and made a number of suggestions for modifications or requested clarification of some of the proposals. Several members had raised the idea of conducting an economic study similar to the Delaware estuary, and this was endorsed by the Committee as a new proposal. Several members volunteered to meet to develop a cost proposal. The Committee supported the proposal not to fund any LISS stewardship acquisitions in 2012, but to complete acquisitions currently underway with prior year funding. This will allow the states to obligate and draw down remaining significant balances encumbered for stewardship acquisitions and reassess future areas for possible funding. In addition it will allow the LISS to show some significant impact of the 23 percent reduction from the 2011 enacted budget level. The Committee also supported the proposal to reduce the Futures Fund and Research Grants proposed budget by 23 percent from 2011 for similar reasons. However, should Base+ funding be available, it would be used to pay back into these programs to the extent feasible. The Implementation Team followed up with individual project leads to obtain required information. The LISO worked with Base program grantees to ensure that their 2012 requests were as tight as possible and consistent with their projected unliquidated obligation balances. The Implementation Team met on March 14 and reviewed the proposals and developed a balanced budget recommendation to the Management Committee that is now the subject of this meeting. In addition, the Executive Steering Committee met on March 19 to review the I Team's recommendations and it developed recommendations based on their input, also the subject of this meeting. The LISO summarized the I Team recommendations in the meeting package it distributed via email on April 9 and 12, 2012. Overall, the Executive Committee supported the I-Team's analysis, but recommended applying the \$253,000 of unallocated funds by adding \$75,000 e for NYSDEC's project to map vulnerable habitats on the north shore as a demonstration, and adding the remainder into the Futures Fund award. Tedesco then opened the floor for discussion of the proposals and recommendations.

Sylvain DeGuise proposed that the Committee fund the STAC proposal for an additional monitoring buoy and use the difference to pay back the LIS Futures Fund. Dawn McReynolds questioned whether the buoy should be funded in the absence of any overall evaluation and recommendation of the LIS water quality monitoring system. Tedesco also highlighted the need to think about the implications for future years and that the base needs will be higher next year (NOAA and USFWS Liaisons are on a two-year budget cycle). Jim O'Donnell said it takes about \$40,000 per year to support the buoy.

The Committee discussed the various options and concluded by voting 9 to 6 that the additional buoy be funded along with the NYSDEC coastal hazard mapping project in two towns and that the remaining funds be allocated to the LIS Futures Fund. Some of the other concerns expressed included the future base budget implications of these projects and other funding sources that may be available for ongoing operations or future expansion of these projects; and the utility of the entire water monitoring program

as it relates to in-situ monitoring. Gary Wikfors indicated that Dr. Krumholz could be tasked with leading an effort to evaluate the monitoring program and develop specific recommendations on future monitoring sites and methodologies to gather appropriate data for management purposes. Mark Tedesco advised the members that the LISO will send out grant application guidance to the partners receiving funding and will work with all funded partners in the final work plan development process. The NEP summary Work Plan is due to EPA Headquarters by June 1, 2012, while grant applications are due to EPA Boston by June 1 and to EPA New York by May 18.

Organization & Base Program Activity	2012
	Final
1. EPA Long Island Sound Office	\$96,600
a. Office administration and operating expenses	\$11,600
b. CCMP Implementation Tracking [new 2010]	\$30,000
c. Administrative Support (NCOA)	\$55,000
2. CT Dept. of Environmental Protection	\$1,164,046
a. CT State Coordination	\$159,362
b. CT LISS Habitat restoration coordination	\$80,632
c. LIS Water Quality Monitoring Program	\$779,052
d. CT GI Symposium	\$45,000
e. LIS Stewardship	\$0
f. LIS Sentinel Monitoring	\$100,000
3. NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation	\$170,000
a. NYS LIS Coordination & Reporting	\$0
b. NY Coastal Zone Hazard Mapping	\$170,000
c. LIS Stewardship	\$0
d. Marsh Migration Modeling (NY) [NEIWPCC]	\$0
e. Habitat Restoration Coordination [NEIWPCC]	\$0
4. CT Sea Grant	\$109,564
a. LIS PI&E Coordination	\$74,515
b. K-12 Mentor Teacher Program Support	\$35,049
5. NY Sea Grant Cornell U.	\$142,074
a. Public Outreach Coordination	\$135,134
b. NY Mentor Teacher Program	\$6,940
6. NY Sea Grant Cornell U.	\$35,000
a. Sustainable Yard Care Program	\$35,000
7. NEIWPCC	\$276,502
a. Task 1 Outreach/Education Support/SH-PP	\$147,501
b. Task 2 Meeting/Travel Coordination Support	\$64,423
c. Task 3 NYSDEC Habitat Coordinator	\$44,629
d. Task 4 LIS TMDL/Upper Basin Outreach Support	\$16,949

e. Task 5 CCMP Revision Support	\$3,000
8. CT Sea Grant College Program	\$212,500
a. Connecticut Sea Grant Research Support	\$212,500
b. STAC Support (1 year)	\$0
9. New York SUNY Research Foundation	\$212,500
a. New York Sea Grant Research Support	\$212,500
b. STAC Support (1 year)	\$0
10. Enhancement Grants Program (NEIWPC)	\$447,221
a. NPS/Stormwater Tracking	\$44,619
b. Sentinel Data Synthesis	\$73,250
c. Habitat Data Improvements	\$54,427
d. Marsh Migration Modeling (NY)	\$44,500
e. Ecological Inventory Documentation	\$12,810
f. LIS Sentinel Implementation	\$150,000
g. LIS Economic Data	\$67,615
11. National Fish & Wildlife Foundation	\$1,290,450
a. LIS Futures Fund Large Grants	\$1,225,000
b. LIS Futures Fund Small Grants	\$65,450
12. UConn CLEAR	\$66,603
a. NPS BMP Demonstration Project	\$66,603
13. NERACOOS	\$310,973
a. WQ Monitoring Enhancements	\$310,973
Total:	\$4,534,033
Funds Available:	\$4,551,200
Fiduciary Reserve:	\$17,167

Updates. Mark Tedesco opened the floor to any updates from members or staff. Jay Mar, Connecticut State Conservationist announced that NRCS had received approval of its project initiative to designate Long Island Sound as a Multi-State Cooperative Partnership to help focus NRCS funding in the LIS watershed. While the amount of FY2012 funding is uncertain at this time, some funding will be available for the project. Project types may include landscapes, grazing, no-till, diversions, waste systems and anaerobic digestion as well as aquaculture.

Dr. Jim Ammerman told the Committee that the *Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography* is holding a meeting in New Orleans in February 2013, which isn't all that far away, and they're looking to broaden the scope of the meeting. Ammerman recommended that this might be a good opportunity with the synthesis book being published this year to develop a session at that meeting

on Long Island Sound. Ammerman indicated that he was willing to serve as a chair to develop this session and asked for a volunteer to co-chair with him. Jim Latimer, Mark Tedesco and Jim O'Donnell expressed an interest in working with Ammerman on this presentation proposal.

Joe Salata reported on the status of the on-line reporting tool that will take over for the paper copies of the annual CCMP Implementation Reports. An agreement was made for EPA RTP to host the tool. He expects this to be up and running by the end of the year, which is all contingent on getting money in place for the contract.

Jim Latimer reported that the synthesis book is in its final stages of review; that the chapters (all but one) are written and undergoing review and editing; the book should be published by Springer Publications this Fall.

Brian Thompson reported that the steering committee for the Cross-Sound Cable Fund has released a "request for interest and qualifications," and it was used to identify potential partners that are undertaking tasks as part of a comprehensive work plan. The steering committee hopes to take the work and lessons learned from the pilot project and apply the remaining funds to mapping other portions of Long Island Sound in future years. The Long Island Sound Policy Committee in 2006 established goals and targets for the use of the fund. These were to: 1. Support new projects and activities that enhance Long Island Sound rather than for the Fund's administration or to supplement LISS base or ongoing program activities (In accordance with Federal law and consistent with paragraph 6 of the MOU, the Fund may not be used for the expenses of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or to satisfy the financial obligations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency); 2. Promote improved scientific understanding of the biological, chemical and physical effects of existing or potential cable and pipeline crossings and mitigation of their impacts; and 3. Emphasize benthic mapping as a priority need, essential to an improved scientific basis for management and mitigation decisions. The emphasis on benthic mapping followed from the concern that evaluations of energy and other infrastructure project proposals in Long Island Sound were hindered by a lack of good information on the distribution of natural resources on the seafloor. State and federal agencies did not have the information necessary to evaluate whether proposals would have a negative impact on natural resources. The emphasis on seafloor mapping was also a result of technical conferences and workshops held in response to the Sound Cable project controversy.

Sylvain DeGuise reported that the LISS Research RFP is out and was written such that it will have management implications. This RFP has increased the money allowed per project, but has decreased the number of projects that will be selected. The hope is that larger projects will allow for more interdisciplinary coordination and a more thorough research project. Pre-proposals are due June 8th and full proposals will be due in October.

Virginia De Lima reported that groundwater levels in New England have been dropping since August 2011, reaching all-time lows in March 2012, including Connecticut and New York. The Connecticut River Basin is in the 25th percentile at this time, which is extremely low.

Future Briefing Topics. The Committee recommended that it receive a briefing on the synthesis book at its July 19 meeting. Jim Latimer will coordinate this effort. Sarah Deonarine said that the bi-state sentinel monitoring work group would be able to give a briefing on the selected project and/or

presentation on the data citation clearinghouse at the July meeting. There being no other business, Mark Tedesco thanked the Committee members and staff and adjourned the meeting at 2:30pm.
