

**LONG ISLAND SOUND STUDY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2010
UCONN STAMFORD
SCHREIBER READING ROOM**

Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:05am with introduction of attendees. Tedesco asked for any proposed agenda changes, as none were identified, he proceeded with the agenda.

Sound Ideas. Tedesco opened the floor for public comments, but none were offered and he closed the floor to public comments, but advised all attendees to seek recognition from the chair first during the meeting if there are questions or clarifications on any topic.

CAC Report. Nancy Seligson reported that the CAC met on June 10 and discussed the Gulf oil spill and potential implications for the Sound, and the reauthorization of the Long Island Sound Act in 2010. Curt Johnson indicated that the CAC members were reminded to write their Congresspersons regarding reauthorization. Seligson indicated that there was some movement in Congress to bundle all the great waterbody bills together. Mark Tedesco indicated that Judith Enck, the Regional Administrator for Region 2 had requested an all-CAC meeting that would be scheduled in New York City sometime in the Fall. More would be forthcoming on this as planning gets underway. The next scheduled CAC meeting is for September 16 in New York City at Pfizer World Headquarters.

STAC Report. Dr. Carmela Cuomo reported on the Science and Technical Advisory Committee meeting that was held on July 9 at the University of New Haven's graduate school. This was a topical meeting, which will be the preferred format for future STAC meetings. This meeting focused on hypoxia in Long Island Sound and what current research shows. There were approximately 10-11 speakers on the topic, a summary of which will be distributed in a variety of formats to be determined. There was a suggestion for LISS outreach staff to produce topical summaries for the public from these meeting topics, or for the STAC to produce a White Paper. It was agreed that the STAC will complete the topical summary for distribution, before considering other products or formats. The next meeting will be held on November 19, 2010 at Stony Brook University.

LISS Policy Committee Meeting. Mark Tedesco briefly reviewed the outline for establishment of a committee representing the LISS Policy Committee members – the EPA Regional Administrators for Regions 1 and 2 and the state environmental commissioners. The last meeting of the Policy Committee was in 2006 at the Jay Homestead in New York. There was a need identified for a committee composed of their representatives at prior Management Committee meetings. Tedesco distributed a handout of the outline of the group and indicated that scheduling a meeting of this group was proceeding, with NYSDEC taking the lead on it. The initial meeting will be held at a mutually convenient location in Connecticut or New York and preferably held before the October Management Committee meeting.

October Management Committee Meeting. Mark Tedesco distributed a draft outline for the October two-day Management Committee meeting [scheduled for October 21-22] and discussed the purpose and objectives of the meeting. As this would be the fifth anniversary of the first two-day meeting, this session would reprise that of the first meeting by reviewing environmental progress over the last five years in several key areas for the LISS – water quality, habitat restoration, stewardship, public information and education, scientific research, nonpoint sources and watersheds and Connecticut River work. Each LISS work group would summarize funding and progress in these areas over the last five years, with a focus on what the environment is telling us; what is the current resource status and trend; what is the focus of current efforts to protect or restore the resource; are current efforts adequate to meet CCMP and 2003 Agreement targets? If not, what is needed (funding, research/monitoring/studies, public will, etc.); are there emerging issues that are not being addressed by the Management Conference; and where can LISS be most effective at filling gaps or championing new initiatives? The session would be professionally facilitated. Ideas for dinner speakers and topics were solicited and Tedesco asked for volunteers to assist in planning and conducting the session. Mark Parker, Sarah Deonarine, Julie Rose, Robert Burg, Larissa Graham asked to be included in planning the meeting. Additional topics were recommended for inclusion on the agenda: discussion of the EPA triennial LISS program review results, update on Sound Vision project.

Presentations.

Marine Spatial Planning in LIS. Brian Thompson presented the status of marine spatial planning in Long Island Sound to date. The cable fund is the principal source for this effort, with approximate \$7.0 million currently in the fund including interest. In May 2010 CTDEP concluded a Request for Qualifications and Interest for the collection of geophysical data for use in mapping the seafloor of Long Island Sound. Areas to be mapped will include territorial waters of both Connecticut and New York, and is thus an example of the transboundary issues that are so important to the management of the Sound. The CTDEP, NYSDEC, and the EPA, with the assistance of the Connecticut and New York Sea Grant offices, have invited other state and federal agencies, oceanographic institutions and private contractors to join them in this effort. A 2004 settlement between the states of Connecticut and New York, two power companies, and a cable company is providing funding for additional seafloor mapping. The settlement resolved a permitting dispute relating to two electrical cable crossings of Long Island Sound. As part of the settlement, the companies agreed to contribute \$6 million to a Long Island Sound Research and Restoration Fund as a condition for its permit. In 2004, the Long Island Sound Study Policy Committee signed a Memorandum of Understanding on administering the fund for research and restoration projects to enhance the waters and related natural resources of Long Island Sound. In 2006, the Long Island Sound Study Policy Committee signed a second Memorandum of Understanding formally establishing a framework for the fund's use. The Policy Committee agreed that the Fund be used to support new projects and activities that enhance Long Island Sound; promote improved scientific understanding of the biological, chemical, and physical effects of existing or potential cable and pipeline crossings and mitigation of their impacts; emphasize benthic mapping as a priority need, essential to an improved scientific basis for management and mitigation decisions. The Policy Committee also established a Cable Fund Steering Committee, comprised of representatives of the EPA Region 1 Region 2 offices, the NYSDEC, CTDEP, and Connecticut and New York Sea Grant Programs, to administer the fund.

The project is in early stages of mapping identification needs. For more details see <http://longislandsoundstudy.net/research-monitoring/seafloor-mapping/>. Discussion focused on how to use the fund and seafloor mapping to be conducted to best support coastal marine spatial planning (CMSP). LIS is split between two regional planning groups, NROC and MARCO, and efforts to leverage other funding sources for CMSP will need to coordinate with both. In addition, LIS is a tier II priority for the NYSDOS CMSP effort in New York waters, with work expected to commence within 18 months. TNC is also conducting a CMSP pilot project in LIS. It was agreed that both DOS and TNC would be invited to future Cable Fund Steering Committee meetings to present their work.

Sound Vision Project. Curt Johnson presented the status of the Connecticut Fund for the Environment's project, Sound Vision. The project was approved by the Management Committee in 2009 for \$147,292 in LISS funding. CFE staff and hired consultant, Coastal Vision, have gathered data on various investment allocations for Long Island Sound protection and restoration. Through the input of multiple LISS partners and a variety of other sources, Coastal Vision compiled and analyzed trends in spending over the past 15 years; this exercise not only provided the CAC with a better understanding of where the LISS has invested, it also highlighted the significant, and largely underestimated, investments made by state governments. Following the day-long CAC meeting—which focused on reviewing Coastal Vision's findings and providing strategic input for a draft 5 yr action plan—the group selected five topical workshops to hone the strategies and tactics needed to create the action plan. The first four of these, scheduled for the week of October 4, will cover: Protecting & Restoring Water Quality; Protecting and Restoring Fisheries and Marine Biodiversity; Protecting and Restoring Vital Habitats & Maintain Healthy Watersheds; and Maintaining Navigability & Multiple Use of Public Waters/ Assuring and Acquiring Open Space and Public Access. The fifth workshop, Fostering Public Engagement, will build on the outcomes of the initial four. Several meetings with stakeholders have been held and more planned for the project. CAC has been heavily involved with the project thus far, and it is anticipated that they will begin vetting a draft Action Plan over the next three months. For a copy of the presentation contact CFE.

Updates/Announcements/Other Business. Mark Tedesco opened the floor to other business or updates.

Dr. Jim Ammerman reported that the [Regional Ocean Science Council](#) was formed and charged with developing a research plan in support of ecosystem-based management that coordinates and integrates regional research activities within the New York Bight. The Council will identify management goals for the New York Bight, analyze what data and information are available, and create a "Regional Ocean Science and Information Plan" that identifies data, information, research, monitoring, and technologies needed to address ecosystem-based management, along with priorities, a timeline for accomplishing goals, and costs. Sea Grant staff would create an outreach plan for technology transfer of research and monitoring data and information through training sessions. The New York Sea Grant held a workshop in New York City in July to bring together scientists and managers to discuss the important issues surrounding nitrogen and nitrogen controls in the New York Bight and associated estuaries from Barnegat Bay in New Jersey to Buzzards Bay in Massachusetts. Anthropogenic nitrogen is a major cause of coastal water quality degradation but nitrogen control is expensive and has had limited success to date.

The workshop results and report will be incorporated into the planning process of the New York Bight Regional Ocean Science Council as it develops plans for ecosystem-based management in this region. For more information see <http://www.seagrant.sunysb.edu/article.asp?ArticleID=472>.

Sharon Marino reported that the USFWS eelgrass survey was conducted with more efficiency and there is sufficient funding remaining to allow another flyover in 2011. USFWS is working with EPA to extend the interagency agreement to include this additional work.

Brian Thompson reported that the CTDEP vessel the John Dempsey is out of commission this summer due to engine failures. While repairs are underway, the RV Patricia Lin will be used to conduct the annual water quality surveys.

Louise Harrison reported that there will be a meeting of the stewardship work group on July 27; the Griswold Airport acquisition will be a focus of that meeting.

John Kachmar of The Nature Conservancy reported that a research grant project to look at stressors of eelgrass has been funded for \$500,000 in 2009 under H.R.1105 the Omnibus Appropriations Act. The intent of the proposed seagrass work is to identify gaps in baseline information as well as necessary primary and restoration research that will piece together regional solutions for protecting and restoring known and potential seagrass communities. In particular, the work will lead to the identifying locations in Southern New England and New York where seagrass restoration has the best chance for success. See <http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/newyork/press/press4013.html> for additional information.

Sarah Deonarine reported that the NYSDEC proposal for no discharge zones in Long Island Sound is under review for department approval, then will be submitted to EPA Region 2 for its approval. NYSDEC hopes to have this in place by the end of 2010, which will mean all New York waters in the Sound will be no discharge areas from vessels.
