

**Long Island Sound Study
Management Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, January 23, 2003
Stamford, Connecticut**

Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:04AM, asking attendees to introduce themselves. (see **Attachment 1**) Tedesco asked if there were any changes to the October 31, 2002 meeting notes; it was pointed out that the notes incorrectly reported 112 square miles of LIS were anoxic in 2002; the correct figure was 41.7 square miles. The notes were accepted as modified. Tedesco proceeded to the following agenda items.

1. CAC Report

Nancy Seligson reported that the CAC held its 2003-2006 officer elections at the December meeting and that John Atkin was reelected as Connecticut co-chair, Seligson was elected as the new New York co-chair, and Caroline DuBois was reelected as CAC secretary. The CAC voted and approved a Resolution of Appreciation honoring David Miller, who had served as New York co-chair for more than 13 years. On behalf of the CAC and LISS staff, John Atkin and Joe Salata presented Miller with several small tokens of appreciation, and Miller received a standing ovation from the membership. Seligson reported that the CAC had not received any new applications for membership since the last (September) meeting; there are 34 CAC members, 20 from New York and 14 from Connecticut. The communications subcommittee asked the CAC to develop a letter of support for the volunteer water quality monitoring 2003 budget proposal submitted to the management committee. The sediment and dredge management subcommittee proposed a dredging conference, to be funded from the LISS budget, but that proposal was sent back to the subcommittee for discussion, and it was presented in the LISS 2003 budget proposals. The subcommittee asked the CAC for a letter of support for its proposal, and the CAC had agreed to provide a letter of support from the co-chairs. The living marine resource subcommittee (LMR) was disappointed that the new Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) met without inviting Jennifer Wilson-Pines, CAC LMR subcommittee chair, to attend. As a result, the CAC nominated Wilson-Pines to represent the CAC on the STAC, and designated Dr. Mickey Weiss as the alternate. The co-chairs had previously sent a letter to the STAC co-chairs requesting a coordinated meeting with the STAC and CAC LMR subcommittee. The CAC also voted to send a letter of support on the LISS budget to the full New York and Connecticut Congressional delegations. The CAC received a presentation from CTDEP and NYSDEC on the environmental impact statement process for designating dredged material disposal sites in LIS. Rob Pirani and Robin Kriesberg gave a presentation on the Long Island Sound Stewardship System strategy, and the CAC recommended that this work group should move forward to address comments received to date.

2. STAC Report

Mark Tedesco reported for STAC co-chair Dr. R. Lawrence Swanson, who was not able to attend the STAC meeting on November 22, 2002; the management committee received copies of the summary of the meeting in the mail. Tedesco responded to the CAC's concern over the lack of an invitation to the CAC LMR subcommittee chair to attend the meeting, indicating that the STAC felt it was only fair to meet first to discuss CAC representation on the committee. The STAC voted unanimously to invite the CAC to nominate a representative and an alternate; the STAC will therefore now include Jennifer Wilson-Pines and Dr. Mickey Weiss in future meeting notifications. The STAC reviewed its purpose and goals, and agreed on forming three subcommittees: a eutrophication group, a submerged aquatic vegetation subcommittee; and a food web subcommittee. In addition, the STAC will provide input on tidal wetlands through the Habitat Restoration Team and through participation in the planned workshop on tidal wetlands loss (see #5 below). The subcommittees will be composed of volunteers from the STAC who will meet via conference call. The STAC agreed to meet again in February 2003, but a firm date had not yet been established. Dr. Swanson announced that the STAC had agreed on a new member, Dr. Duane Waliser, associate professor at SUNY Stony Brook and a meteorologist. Upon an observation from the floor regarding an apparent lack of "fish people" on the STAC, Paul Stacey pointed out that Dave Simpson, of CTDEP's fisheries bureau, is a member of the STAC, and Don Henne advised that Tom Halavik, senior biologist with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, is also a STAC member. Tedesco indicated that the STAC will open up its membership to others as necessary based on identification of future needs.

3. Nutrients Work Group

Mark Tedesco reported that the nutrients work group had met regularly over the past ten months, last meeting in December 2002. The work group is a joint effort between the NY/NJ Harbor Estuary Program (HEP) and the LISS to help guide the HEP in the development of actions on a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for the harbor. The management committee had set aside funds over the last two fiscal years (2002, 2001) for modeling work through a contract with HydroQual; the work is ongoing. The next scheduled work group meetings are February 4, 2003 and March 28, 2003. Contact Phil O'Brien of NYSDEC at 516 402-8237 or pxobrien@gw.dec.state.ny.us for further information concerning participation in work group meetings.

4. Connecticut River Work Group

Paul Stacey reported for the Connecticut River work group. One of the LIS TMDL actions is to identify nonpoint sources of nitrogen and to establish a reduction program for sources from New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Vermont. Pursuant to this goal, a work group was convened to explore ways and means of defining nitrogen sources and loads in the upper CT River basin, estimated to be a significant contributor to the problem in LIS. Stacey handed out a project synopsis (**see Attachment 2**). The committee discussed and formalized the work group to ensure coordination of appropriate resources and conveyance information to the committee for decisions. Karen Chytalo suggested that the work group coordinate with the STAC. Given its formalization by the management committee, the CT River work group will report on progress periodically at management committee meetings.

5. Habitat Restoration Team

Lisa Holst reported that the team met in November 2002 and drafted the FY2003 budget proposals that are included in the budget packet for review at today's meeting; all have been reviewed and supported by the team members. The tidal wetlands loss conference is now scheduled for June 23-25, 2003 since many of the key invitees were not available in January 2003. Approximately 90 percent of the invitees are available in June. The team submitted its restoration data for EPA's Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) in FY2002; six restoration projects totaling 13.75 acres were restored in New York and six projects totaling 407 acres were restored in Connecticut. Connecticut also installed a fish ladder at Bunnells Pond dam in Bridgeport, opening three miles of river habitat to spawning. In December 2002 nine habitat restoration projects for LIS were funded from the New York Clean Air/Clean Water Bond Act funds. Several projects benefitting LIS include treating storm water from College Point in Queens; and a habitat restoration project of 10 acres at Phragmites Park in Huntington. Holst reported that New York formed a chapter of the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, which includes the marine district. The team is still working on the final chapters of the habitat restoration technical document and plans to produce paper, CD and web versions. Mark Tedesco requested that Bond Act projects fully or partially funded by LISS funds, or Bond Act projects used as LISS project match be submitted to the management committee as part of the consultative process. Karen Chytalo indicated that the New York staff is awaiting the announcement of approximately \$25 million in additional qualifying projects by the Governor. The complete list of project will then be provided for the Management Committee's consideration.

6. Ad Hoc NPS Work Group

Walter Smith reported on the results of a meeting of an “ad hoc” group of interested staff concerning NPS management related to the LIS TMDL requirements. The subject of re-forming a nonpoint source work group was first raised at the July 2002 management committee meeting (see p.3, July 18, 2002 meeting notes). The committee deferred a decision on reestablishing a work group at that time and asked that the issues be explored informally. Smith subsequently convened a meeting of interested state and federal staff to discuss possible actions necessary to address NPS contributions to the TMDL loadings reduction goal. The staff met again via conference call and agreed that the issue is a difficult one to address, and that further organized discussions were warranted to explore all avenues of thought. Smith reported that the “ad hoc” group had discussed an appropriate role for a formal NPS work group, raising three broad issue areas for consideration, including how to identify, track and monitor nonpoint sources/loadings/reductions; the kinds and methods of implementation assistance to municipalities and/or communities that might be necessary or desirable; and how to best use available resources and programs across the board to avoid duplication of effort. The implications of EPA’s Phase II storm water regulations is another factor lending complexity to the issue, and warranting a continuing formal focus of the LISS. The committee agreed that this work group should be recognized as a formal advisory subcommittee reporting to the management committee, renaming it the NPS Advisory Work Group.

7. LIS Stewardship System

Robin Kriesberg and Rob Pirani reviewed progress on updating the draft LIS stewardship system strategy that was presented at the October management committee meeting. The management committee had directed the team to revise the draft document prior to further stakeholder circulation. Kriesberg reported that the team met on January 22, 2003 and revised the draft strategy to focus on exemplary “areas” rather than try to include all sites identified; the “areas” will include surrounding properties, regardless of ownership/stewardship; the strategy will include arrangements for collaboration with potential stewardship partners and will help initiate projects and work towards development of management plans for each exemplary area. The strategy is being revised to reflect the agreed-upon changes, and the team will meet again by conference call in February to finalize the draft prior to stakeholder meetings. The revised draft stewardship system strategy will be presented to the management committee at its April meeting. Tom Halavik provided an overview of progress in identifying the components of the ecological areas, focusing on key representative habitat types or species.

8. 2003 LISS Budget & Work Plan

Mark Tedesco introduced the budget discussion by indicating that the purpose of this session was not to make final budget decisions, but to identify issues, seek clarification or additional review of proposals. Based on the issues raised by the management committee, the implementation team will obtain the information needed to address the issues and it will meet to develop recommendations for the committee's final decisions at the April 10 meeting. Tedesco handed out a summary of the commitments and targets contained in the Long Island Sound 2003 Agreement signed by the policy committee in December 2002. Tedesco asked the committee to consider the resource implications of any of the commitments during the discussions on the budget. Tedesco then led a discussion of each of the proposals submitted for funding; committee members raised a number of questions and issues that the implementation team will consider in a subsequent meeting. The committee agreed to provide copies of technical proposals to the STAC for their review prior to the April 10 meeting. Given the submission of several education/outreach proposals that were not coordinated with the communications team, the committee agreed that the education/outreach proposals should be sent to that team for review. Ed Monahan advised the committee that Diana Payne of his staff would represent him on the communications team, and that Dr. Robert Johnston would participate on the implementation team. Committee members expressed a strong desire to only consider future proposals that have been reviewed by the appropriate work group or team prior to management committee review. The LISO will develop budget and work plan guidance that provides for maximum review of proposals, which is consistent with EPA grant regulations, program guidance and applicable OMB Circular requirements.

9. Sound Ideas Public Comments

Bill Gash, president of the Connecticut Maritime Coalition introduced Joel Severance of the Connecticut Harbor Management Association, who spoke at length concerning dredging and cable crossings in the Sound. With the permission of the chair, Severance introduced Geoff Steadman of the Association, who presented a summary of a study conducted by the Association concerning the federal dredging management process in Connecticut. For copies of the study or other information, contact Joel Severance at 860 526-9750 or jpseverance@snet.net or Geoff Steadman at 203 226-9383.

10. Updates

Due to time constraints, verbal updates were not given. (See attachments for written summaries of updates that were provided at the meeting)

11. Wrap Up & April Agenda Items

The next management committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 10, 2003 in Stamford. Management Committee members should submit suggestions for agenda topics to LISO. There being no other business, Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 3:30PM.

List of Attachments

1. List of Attendees
2. CT River Project Synopsis
3. Invasive Species Update