

**LONG ISLAND SOUND STUDY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 17, 2008
UCONN STAMFORD**

Welcome/Introductions. Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:02am, asking attendees to introduce themselves. Tedesco then introduced Larissa Graham, the new LISS communications coordinator with New York Sea Grant College program. Tedesco asked for any changes to the agenda; as none were noted, he proceeded to the following agenda topics.

Reports. CAC. Nancy Seligson reported that the December 13, 2007 CAC meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather; rescheduling the meeting was not possible, and the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 13, 2008 in New York City. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis will attend and speak to the CAC.

STAC. Dr. Larry Swanson reported that the STAC met on Friday, November 16, 2007 at UConn Stamford. The STAC discussed implementation of the Long Island Sound Fellows program, including the current process to select Fellows, program and projects accountability, and reporting issues. The STAC reviewed the proposed projects that the new LIS Fellows will be working on this year. Dr Marilyn Weigold, who wrote two books on the history of Long Island Sound, presented an overview history of Long Island Sound, and will be writing the historical perspectives chapter of LIS synthesis document. A potential title for synthesis report was proposed: *Long Island Sound, An Urban Estuary -- Perspectives for the Future*. Springer Publishing has been contacted to produce the final book and a number of issues need to be resolved, including the number of pages and chapter sizes, as well as the final number of copies for publication. The text editors will be Drs. Yarish, Swanson and Garza, and Mark Tedesco. Dr. Garza, who left the LISS on January 4, 2008 to take a faculty position at Cal State University Monterey Bay, obtained the University's agreement to continue work on the LIS document. The goal is to complete a draft in 2008 and publish in 2009. Drs. Yarish and Swanson said that additional funding could be used for writing workshops and to offset the cost of the publication. Mark Tedesco indicated that the funding provided for the project was in FY2006 budget, and that requests for additional funds should be made through the 2008 budget process. Karen Chytalo asked about the status of the chapters, if the writing was getting done and if the chapter groups were meeting. Dr. Swanson said that the project was proceeding, not as quickly as they would like, but each chapter has a lead, some of the groups have met, and it would help if funds could be available for writing workshops. Dr. Wikfors was asked about the replacement for Dr. Garza's position. Dr. Wikfors indicated that the recruiting paperwork has been submitted to NOAA's personnel office, and he will be distributing the announcement to the LISS for wide distribution. A June 1 start date is projected. NOAA and EPA will be negotiating a new agreement for a two-year period for the position beginning on October 1, 2008. The next STAC meeting is February 22, 2008 in Stony Brook. [NB: Subsequently the February 22, 2008 meeting

was cancelled due to inclement weather and rescheduled for April 4 at Stony Brook University.]

Communications Team. Robert Burg reported that the 2008 Long Island Sound Citizens Summit will be on Saturday, March 8 at the Holiday Inn, Bridgeport. The theme of the program is *Long Island Sound Fishery: Flourishing or Floundering?* The communications team, along with Save the Sound, has been working on the agenda. There will be presentations on fish stocks and health; registration forms will be distributed widely, and will be posted on the LISS website.

Robert Burg and Mark Parker are working on updating the LIS environmental indicators report, which is posted on the website; the report is the basis for the Sound Health report, which will be published later this year. Burg also reported that he and the communications team are working on the social marketing workshop that was funded in 2007. Two sessions are planned, one each in New York and Connecticut on September 9 and 10 respectively. The planning group is bringing in experts from Utah and Washington State who are knowledgeable about social marketing. In the long term, the program is looking to develop a region-wide social marketing campaign for the Sound.

Stewardship. Louise Harrison reported that the Stewardship Initiative work group met on November 20, 2007, and will meet again on January 29, 2008 in Stamford. At the November meeting the work group discussed development of a strategy to coordinate their work with the requirements of the 2006 Stewardship Act, P.L. 109-359. The Act mandates creation of a Stewardship Advisory Committee; at this time it is unclear how the committee would be created and whether it would be subject to Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) rules. The Act was enacted in October 2006 with no appropriation in FY2006 or FY2007. The Policy Committee approved 33 inaugural Stewardship areas in September 2007, and these need to be related to the legislation. The work group needs to update and improve its work plan to be consistent with the Act. For example, the work group needs to develop criteria for nominating and selecting stewardship sites.

Dr. Yarish asked how The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) new LIS initiative will interact with the Stewardship program. Harrison replied that she and Mark Tedesco met with TNC staff in December. The meeting with TNC explored areas of mutual interest, how to support each other and work in concert with each other, and there is mutual interest and involvement. At a suggestion from the floor for more information, Tedesco said he will invite TNC to present their initiative at a future Management Committee meeting. Ron Rozsa expressed concern over potential duplication of TNC's efforts with that of the stewardship initiative and replication of some work that had already been done. Tom Halavik responded that the USFWS has worked with TNC, which will employ one full-time person dedicated to LIS, and that TNC is investing its own time and money in the Sound; we will work with them to ensure that duplication is avoided to the extent feasible. Mark Tedesco recognized Art Glowka, who commented that TNC's is a new push into LIS and that it is a powerful voice in environmental stewardship as a national organization that is very involved in the Great South Bay and Peconic programs.

Habitat Restoration Team. Karen Chytalo reported that the habitat restoration team is continuing work that was funded by the LISS in 2007 to develop a restoration database. Elements of that project include expanding the database, and use of Google Earth to track and locate restoration sites. A contractor has been selected and is in place. The team had also assisted in developing habitat project guidelines for latest LISFF request for proposals. NYSDEC has an intern looking at shellfish issues, and is developing information for the habitat team. The team has discussed revising the current restoration map, which is seriously out of date, especially about project status and completions.

Lynn Hamjian asked if the team is working on a list of restoration projects, to feed into different available funding sources. Ron Rozsa answered that no one has had time to survey sites; new projects come to light through RFPs and a good effort is made to try to coordinate funding with restoration efforts; timing is critical, as some sites may not be ready when funding is available. Efforts are made, after announcements, to try to contact coastal communities to let them know funding is there, and to work with them in submitting applications; in some cases it is difficult to get localities to apply. The habitat restoration team does not have a list of priority sites at this time. With the database, it is anticipated that all sites will be put on line so all can see and that will help prioritization. It is difficult to reconcile details of sites with available resources, and it is a constant mix and match process.

Westchester County Membership Request. Mark Tedesco reported that the meeting package sent to the Management Committee included the letters from Westchester County regarding membership on the Committee, and the responses from New York State. Also included for Management Committee members was a two page discussion paper. Tedesco reviewed the background concerning a local government committee in the early 1990s. The agreement was that New York City would be added to the Management Committee and would represent local governments in New York; at that time Connecticut opted not to participate with a local government representative. In the intervening years, local governments did not participate, and New York City essentially functioned on its own. Tedesco summarized the options, which included accepting Westchester County on the Committee; not accepting the County; accepting the County under the condition that if there were requests by other local NY governments, that a local government committee be formed and chaired by the County and a Connecticut entity, which would then represent the local governments as co-chairs similar to the STAC and CAC. Tedesco invited Westchester County to address the meeting.

Westchester County was represented by Tom Laurel, Susan Gerry, Mike Coley, and Bob Funicello. Susan Gerry thanked the Committee for its consideration and highlighted Westchester County's reasons for its membership request, noting a clear understanding of its role as both a regulator and member of the regulated community. Committee members discussed Westchester County's request, including: the degree of participation and interest by local governments, given other local priorities; the potential to overburden the program, making it unmanageable; the time and staff effort necessary to support the effort; the value of collaboration, communication and cooperation in decision-making; the importance of providing a forum or venue for local concerns; the challenges

associated with bringing divergent views together; the value of stakeholder participation and balanced representation; concerns with the regulator role and regulatee role in a voluntary management conference structure; and the role of the LISS in state regulatory matters. Tedesco then opened the floor for discussion.

Several members spoke in favor of involving local governments, while several expressed concerns about the level of interest and participation by those governments. Past experience showed initial participation that waned with time, and the program needs to consider the level of support to carry out this kind of function. Concern was also expressed about the diverse and political nature of local governments that hold widely divergent positions. The challenge would be how to get them to speak with one voice, within one state, let alone two or more states. The state governments have a right to be the focus of regulatory matters within their jurisdictions, not the LISS, which holds no regulatory authority. Historically due to size and distances, there has not been interest by local governments in attending or participating in discussions of a broad-based set of issues concerning the Sound. Upland and coastal entities have differing views on the Sound and matters affecting the Sound in their communities. They have always looked to the states for guidance and regulation where necessary. As issues arise of interest, local governments have participated on specific work groups as formed to address issues.

Mark Tedesco recognized the CAC's honored guest and retired Connecticut State Representative Doc Gunther of Stratford, who advised the Committee that, in his opinion, the issues surrounding this membership request seemed to be more concerning of the legislative process itself, and that the Committee cannot make decision on this at this point. The issues of the permits and consent order are a concern of Albany, and that is where the issue is right now. Karen Chytalo stated the opinion that the Committee cannot make a decision today, and asked to best to proceed on the issue.

Sylvane DeGuise made a suggestion to form a local government work group instead of an advisory committee. The advantage of a work group is that it would be charged with specific tasks by the Management Committee and would not need to have the bi-state balance that an advisory committee would need. Paul Stacey suggested that April was simply too soon and that either the July or October two-day meeting would be more realistic to consider any proposal. Mark Tedesco indicated that the Implementation Team will evaluate the potential of a local government work group and develop a specific proposal to present to the Management Committee in April.

2008 Agreement. Mark Tedesco distributed a draft redline/strikeout version of the 2008 Agreement and reviewed the process to revise the agreement to date. The CAC, STAC and work groups were asked to submit their thoughts on the new agreement. The Management Committee reviewed the lists of ideas and ranked them at their October 2007 meeting. The agreement team took that feedback and developed this draft for review. Nancy Seligson stated that the agreement should be made more challenging and show real accomplishments. While the work group has done great job, and has resisted the temptation to put the kitchen sink in there, the agreement should set measurable goals and targets. Dr. Lance Stewart commented that some actions on issues that were

suggested in earlier reviews, such as effects of chlorine discharges, pesticides, and the V-notch program, were not included in this version. Tedesco asked for comments on the draft to be submitted to Joe Salata by February 1. The team will meet in February to review the comments and develop a final draft for consideration by the Committee prior to its April 24 meeting.

Governors/Policy Committee Meeting. Mark Tedesco reiterated the commitment to a spring meeting of the Policy Committee with the Governors to sign a new 2008 Agreement. The states need to begin enquiries to the Governors' offices with proposed dates. Since this meeting will be in Connecticut, CTDEP should take the lead on potential dates and locations for the meeting, which could then be conveyed to Governor Spitzer's office. Paul Stacy agreed to begin the enquiry process.

2008 Budget. Joe Salata distributed a summary of the 2008 LISS budget request, which totaled approximately \$3.4 million. Overall, the LISS has been appropriated \$5,500,570, including NEP Section 320 funding and a 1.56 percent Congressional rescission. The LIS earmark was \$4,533,000. Salata described the next steps in the process, which would involve a review of the proposals and development of recommendations by the Implementation Team, which will be presented at the April 24 Management Committee meeting. Thereafter the grantees must quickly turn around grant applications and work plans to meet a new NEP requirement for work plan submittal to HQ by June 2. Dr. Charles Yarish spoke in support of restoring LIS research funds to make up the shortfall from 2007, and funding development of criteria for establishing the LIS Sentinel Monitoring Sites that have been proposed for inclusion in the 2008 Agreement. Larry Swanson and Charles Yarish commented that additional funds may be needed for honoraria for participating authors of the LIS Synthesis. Sylvain DeGuise suggested using the research RFP to support LIS 2008 Agreement actions that require additional scientific understanding and offered the existing Sea Grant programs as a potential mechanism to direct those funds. A general question from the floor was will the LIS earmark funding continue in future? Mark Tedesco responded that we just do not know. The Congressional hearings sponsored by Congressmen Israel and Shays were helpful to that purpose. Nancy Seligson indicated that it may be more helpful to work with EPA in increasing the President's Budget request for the Sound than to argue for earmarks every year.

TMDL Revision Proposal. Mark Tedesco reviewed the process to reassess the LIS nitrogen TMDL. The TMDL itself included a reassessment stage that it would be reviewed, improved with any new modeling, issuance of revised DO standards, and consider the impacts of new research, as well as the feasibility of upstream impacts. Tedesco indicated that we are well past the original date due to many factors. There is an action item in the draft 2008 agreement to revise the TMDL. The process will be very active over next 12 months, to finalize additional cost information, and work with the Connecticut River states because a key element is to agree on waste load allocations to apply upstream as well. Becky Weidman stated that the Connecticut River work group is coming up on completing its last task, to finish in February, which is the cost of upgrading plants in NH, VT, and MA, using those costs to feed into the TMDL revision

process. There will be a meeting with the water directors next month to talk about next steps and to get buy-in to the process. A key issue with the Executive Committee of NEIWPC is how to get the water directors active in the revision process and coming up with an allocation. Nancy Seligson asked if atmospheric deposition is included. Weidman responded that the work group has not specifically focused on atmospheric deposition but it is a component of all results.

Updates. Mark Tedesco distributed the Long Island Sound Futures Fund request for proposals (RFP), indicating that the RFP was posted on the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) website, www.nfwf.org, in conjunction with the Bronx River restoration fund RFP. Questions on the RFP should be directed to Lynn Dwyer at NFWF, and her contact information is listed on the website.

Seafloor Mapping Workshop. Brian Thompson described the November 28, 2007 seafloor mapping workshop. Ron Rozsa is the CTDEP lead, who was involved in planning the work shop with UConn. It was attended by regulatory and resource management agencies and scientists, and its intent was to gather needs for seafloor mapping. A survey of prospective participants was conducted, divided in to issue areas, including general mapping, energy infrastructure, local hazards, and habitat and species. The groups discussed each area, looked at past work, and came up with ideas for a strategic plan for seafloor mapping in LIS. The Cross Sound Cable Fund was the driver for this work shop, with about \$7.0 million available. Information from the work shop can inform the Cable Steering Committee on use of the funds.

Suggested April 24 Agenda Topics. Suggested April agenda topics included the Nature Conservancy's LIS initiative; an update on the local government work group proposal; a presentation of the riparian buffers project; and 2008 budget recommendations/decisions.

Announcements. The second Connecticut Conference on Natural Resources is scheduled for March 10, 2008 at UConn's Storrs campus. The conference will bring together individuals working with natural resource and environmental management in Connecticut to share research, information, and ideas. The sentiment "many resources: one environment" reflects the conference vision that while many may focus their efforts on the conservation of particular natural resources, Connecticut has but one environment, and we all work and live much too close together to not gather and interact with one another. The conference features a mix of professional and informal forums to promote information exchange, networking, a sense of community regarding Connecticut's natural resources, and recognize achievements of dedicated individuals and groups. The conference is for all those working with the environment and natural resources through state and federal government, academia, non-governmental organizations, and the engaged public whom might belong to and volunteer with non-governmental organizations, place-based conservation organizations, and the engaged public whom might belong to and volunteer with non-governmental organizations, place-based conservation organizations, and local government committees. Contact Glenn Warner, sponsored by the College of Agricultural and Natural Resources. For details see: <http://www.ccnr.uconn.edu>.

Ron Rozsa announced that the New England Regional Ocean Council is gearing up its work groups: coastal hazards, maritime security, energy infrastructure; and ecosystem health, co-chaired by Massachusetts and Mel Cote.

Karen Chytalo announced that the New York state taskforce for seagrass is meeting on January 29, 2008 and is making recommendations for an upcoming planning session for oceans/Great Lakes for sea grasses, management, regulation, research and monitoring. There was a New York Ecosystem-based Management (EBM) meeting on Friday, January 11, 2008, at which a litany of many different efforts of EBM programs, and how agencies are interacting with each other.

Public Comments. Dr. Lance Stewart from UConn spoke concerning toxics contamination in the Sound. Ed Stilwagen, President of Atlantic Clam Farms of Easton spoke about silt and runoff contributing to pollution of the Sound. He described the amount of garbage and silt that accumulates on the bottom of his clam farm. He then discussed techniques, including vacuuming, to clean up and optimize seafloor beds for clamming and other purposes. Mr. Stilwagen offered to take any Committee member out on one of his boats to demonstrate his techniques. Due to expired time, Mr. Art Glowka was not able to address the Committee, and asked that this be noted in the meeting summary.

There being no further business, Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 2:50pm. The next Management Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 24, 2008 at UConn Stamford.
