

**LONG ISLAND SOUND STUDY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2007
UCONN STAMFORD**

Welcome/Introductions. Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:10am and asked those present to introduce themselves and to sign the registration form. Management Committee attendees included: John Atkin, Karen Chytalo, Dr. Sylvain DeGuise, Lynne Hamjian, Don Henne, Mark Klein for Commissioner Alfonso Lopez, Dr. James Latimer, Dr. Jack Mattice, Brian Mitchell for Howard Golub, John Mullaney for Virginia De Lima, Nancy Seligson, Walter Smith, Paul Stacey, Mark Tedesco, Brian Thompson, Becky Weidman for Ronald Poltak, Dr. Gary Wikfors, and Dr. Charles Yarish. Tedesco asked for any additions or changes to the agenda; a report on the Northeast Regional Ocean Council was added by Ron Rozsa.

Reports

CAC. John Atkin briefly reported on the December 14, 2006 Citizens Advisory Committee. Dr. Joel Ziev, the CAC sediment/dredge management subcommittee chair, attended the national dredging conference in Portland, Oregon and presented the purpose and objective of that conference. As a result, the CAC invited members of the regional dredging team to present their recent activities, and Jean Brochi, from EPA Region 1, and Doug Pabst and Eric Stern from EPA Region 2 discussed recent developments in the Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) process for Long Island Sound and beneficial uses of dredged materials. Depending on 2007 budget outcomes, the ACOE will lead the effort on the LIS DMMP over the next few years. The ACOE appropriation contains an earmark of \$1.7 million. Atkin reminded the Committee members that the LISS had provided \$100,000 in FY2005 funds to help kick off the public participation process, and planning for this will be coordinated with ACOE, once the overall funding picture is clear.

STAC. Dr. Charles Yarish reported on the November 17, 2006 meeting of the LIS Science and Technical Advisory Committee. The STAC discussed the process for funding and conducting the LIS synthesis report, which will summarize relevant research on the Sound within a framework of global climate change. Dr. Peter Auster of UConn reported on this LISS-funded project to establish a habitat classification system for the Sound.

2007 LISS Budget Requests

Copies of the 2007 LISS base budget request were distributed for discussion at the meeting. Mark Tedesco briefly outlined the 2007 budget situation; at this point EPA's appropriation bill (Interior and Environment/House, Interior/Senate) has not been acted upon. The current bill marks are: Senate \$1.0 million; House \$1.8 million. With the recent elections, the overall 2007 budget situation is uncertain. Due to this uncertainty, Tedesco advised that there will be no budget decisions at today's meeting; rather, the time will be used to present each program budget request and to identify any questions or further information in preparation for the April meeting. Each agency requesting LISS

funds presented their budget requests and briefly described their activities and accomplishments over the last several years.

LISO. Total Request: \$79,600; +\$6,805 from 2006 due to impending relocation of the office to new quarters, requiring purchase of office furniture and relocation expenses. Continuing major expense is cooperative agreement for office administrative assistant, \$45,000. Remaining funds support office operations, postage, printing, telephones.

Comments: Committee members expressed concern that sufficient funds were provided for moving expenses.

CTDEP. Total Request: \$846,339; +\$617,526 from 2006 due to use of \$536,128 in prior year carryover funds in 2006 for the water quality monitoring program; including those funds, an actual increase of \$81,398 to cover cost of state coordination. New position for state coordinator requested; ongoing support for communications, habitat coordination and monitoring. **Comments:** John Atkin expressed concern that Paul Stacey continue to represent CTDEP on the Management Committee if the CTDEP budget request to fund a coordinator is approved. [**NB:** By policy, Management Committee members are not paid from LISS funds.]

NYSDEC. Total Request: \$431,275; +\$58,831 from 2006 to support congener analysis for the PCB analysis project; LIS coordination, habitat restoration coordination (to be administered through NEIWPC), National Coastal Assessment support (\$40,000).

Comments: 1) Clarify if funding for congener analysis (\$43,648) is included in total budget request; 2) clarify exactly what the \$40,000 LISS budget request for the PCB project will pay for; 3) EPA NCA national funding has not yet been determined as of meeting date; if NCA funding not provided, the request from NYSDEC would be withdrawn.

CTSEA. Total Request: \$64,840; -\$6,700 from 2006, savings due to adjusted costs for personnel support and fringe. Conduct of LIS Mentor Teacher program/workshops.

NEIWPC. Total Request: \$172,395; -\$696,811 from 2006 due to application of \$96,887 in carryover funding towards 2007 CCMP Enhancements projects, forward-funding in 2006 of communications coordinator (\$211,972), and fewer CCMP Enhancement RFP project areas. **Comments:** The social-based marketing workshop was included for \$10,000.

NFWF. Total Request: \$535,000; level-funding requested from 2006 to conduct LIS Futures Fund (\$450,000) and Small Grants (\$85,000) programs. **Comments:** As Lynn Dwyer was unable to attend the meeting to present the budget, Mark Tedesco advised Committee members to submit any questions on the budget to LISO, which will be forwarded to NFWF.

STAC. Total Request: \$55,000; new request to develop and publish LIS environmental data/research volume (\$30,000) and convene analytic congress of experts (\$25,000).

LIS Research. Total Request: \$600,000; +\$300,000 from 2006 due to prior year funds being utilized to forward fund other program elements. **Comments:** Paul Stacey stated that the LISO, through the NOAA liaison, should follow-up on research projects.

Other. Several programs had been forward-funded for two years from FY2006 to ensure effective utilization of these funds prior to their expiration (NEIWPC communications; NY Sea Grant PI&E, CTSEA LIS Fellow). In other cases, programs had received prior year funding and the implementation of the project (USFWS biologist) or the program was delayed for cause (NOAA ecologist position) or the program had used carryover funds in a prior year (CTDEP/monitoring; SBU/RF NYLIS Fellow) to fund a 2006 program or activity.

Tedesco reported that because the program is under pressure to fully obligate its fiscal year funding prior to the end of the year, the program uses forward-funding methodology to ensure the effective utilization of funds. However, this makes annual budgeting somewhat confusing, as certain programs then do not submit annual budget requests. The attempt here is to provide an idea of the annualized cost of the program for the Management Committee's information.

Updates/Reports

Lynne Hamjian reported that EPA Headquarters is very concerned over the large balances of obligated but unliquidated funding, especially in the NEP program. The appearance is that the program is dollar rich, and that new funds are not needed if old funds have not been spent. Hamjian indicated that the Regions would be working with grantees closely over the next few weeks to address this concern. EPA NEP is considering development of guidance that would set time frames for spending down grant balances, and it would be best if grantees would be very responsive to these concerns.

Ron Rozsa distributed copies of the 2007 work plan for the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC), established in August 2005 by the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers. The primary intent of NROC is to link together and cultivate regional ocean management and science institutions and program for the Gulf of Maine, Long Island Sound, and southeastern New England. Contact Ron for more information. Karen Chytalo suggested a presentation to the Management Committee on New York State's ecosystem efforts.

Sound Ideas

There were no public comments provided at the meeting. Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 2:50pm.