

**Long Island Sound Study
Management Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, January 27, 2005
UCONN Stamford**

Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:11am, asking attendees to introduce themselves and sign the attendance sheet (**see Attachment 1**). Tedesco asked if there were any changes to the October 19, 2004 meeting notes, or if there were any additions to the agenda; as no changes or additions were offered, the notes were accepted as written and Tedesco proceeded with the agenda.

1. COMMITTEE/WORK GROUP REPORTS

Science & Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). Charles Yarish, Connecticut STAC co-chair reported that the four STAC subcommittees are communicating via email -- food webs; eutrophication, SAV, and others will get more active in the next few weeks for the upcoming February 25 STAC meeting; he will be communicating via email to members of STAC. **[NB: The February 25 STAC meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather, and has been rescheduled for April 8 at UCONN Stamford.]**

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Nancy Seligson, New York CAC co-chair reported that the CAC met on December 9, 2004 in New York City, passing a resolution supporting an annual meeting between the STAC and the CAC. The CAC produced its annual letter on CCMP implementation priorities in July 2004, to which the EPA Regional Administrators responded on October 16, 2004 – the letter was included in the December 2004 meeting package. Seligson urged the state environmental Commissioners to give the CAC the courtesy of a reply. Seligson reported that the CAC had a presentation from Broadwater Energy officials on their proposal to construct and operate a liquified natural gas (LNG) facility in LIS. The CAC learned that there is language in an energy bill to preempt local control of these types of energy projects. The CAC created an ad hoc subcommittee to look into questions that the Broadwater representatives could not address at the meeting, and to look into the bill language that preempts local control. The CAC passed a resolution supporting the Long Island Sound Stewardship bill, which was sent to the Long Island Sound Congressional Caucus, the Governors, and other state and local elected officials. The CAC will be following up on the Broadwater LNG proposal through its ad hoc subcommittee in the coming months.

Nutrients Work Group. Mark Tedesco reported that the work group had not met since September 2004, but has had follow-up conference calls. Hydroqual has submitted some final System-Wide Eutrophication Model (SWEM) outputs during that time period, including the final unit response matrix and nitrogen flux calculations.

- The water and nitrogen flux calculations identify nutrient inputs and exchange between the Sound and its boundaries at the East River and the Race, over 24 months during the 1988-1989 modeling period. The calculations are also annually averaged. These flux

calculations were compared to the LIS 3.0 model. Tedesco distributed a sample figure showing the nitrogen inputs and boundary fluxes.

- HydroQual also completed a revised SWEM-based unit response matrix. A LIS 3.0 matrix was an important tool for nitrogen planning and was used to develop the trading ratios. There had been concerns with previous SWEM-based matrix outputs; management zones four and five had strong response in all response regions. HydroQual noticed a calculation error in the matrix. The revised matrix is being assessed by the workgroup.

Tedesco recognized Art Glowka, who asked what the bottom line is on the flux chart (**see Attachment 2**); does NYC affect N discharge to LIS? Tedesco indicated that the chart shows nutrient fluxes in surface and bottom waters from the Harbor to the Sound. It doesn't break out NYC from other sources affecting nitrogen concentrations in the Harbor. There clearly is an impact, as evidenced by the calculated unit response from management zones eight and nine. However, the unit response from these zones mitigated by the net transport. Tedesco then recognized Cesare Manfredi, who asked that, as the information comes in, does it match up, with data from five years ago; from when the designs were planned; as new information is developed on nitrogen loading, will the base change? Tedesco replied that the TMDL says they cannot exceed a certain mass loading; designs would have to go back to achieve results from the base. The LISS CCMP Implementation Tracking Reports identify the trends in nitrogen loading from all the facilities covered under the TMDL.

Tedesco recognized Laura Blake, who clarified that atmospheric deposition shown on the chart is direct. Mark Klein requested a meeting on the trading ratios and how they would be incorporated into a revised TMDL. Tedesco responded that EPA, NYSDEC, and CTDEP were going to meet in the near future to discuss the TMDL. The outcome of that discussion would be added to the Nutrient Work Group agenda and then presented to the Management Committee. Tedesco commented that he gave a presentation in summer 2004 to the Management Committee on proposed steps and time frame to revise TMDL. Laura Blake gave a similar presentation at the same meeting on the CT River work group efforts to develop a nitrogen management plan.

Action: A presentation will be made at a future MC meeting on the schedules and next steps related to TMDL revision and the CT River nitrogen management efforts. Tedesco confirmed that the LISS has already budgeted for the completion of these tasks.

Nonpoint Source/Watersheds Work Group. Paul Stacey reported for chair Walter Smith. Stacey indicated that the NPS work group is struggling with the same issue -- how to quantify and track the NPS load allocation. This can not easily be done in the field by monitoring because of cost, high natural variation, and the relatively small levels of change to be detected; rather, it would require significant monitoring over several years. The project awarded to HydroQual to develop a NPS tracking system will likely use land use as surrogate for monitoring data in a GIS-

based model framework. This will allow users to update categories and distribution of land cover to account for change. For example, changes in acreage of developed land could be tracked for a town, as could the level of BMP application and estimates for nitrogen reduction for each BMP applied to show how the nitrogen load has increased or decreased over time. Literature would be referenced that quantifies this information. The Management Committee approved funding for this project, HydroQual was selected, and a kick off meeting held on November 3, 2004 where ideas for tracking approaches were discussed by the consultants and the LISS NPS Work Group. This meeting proved useful to understand what HydroQual felt would be needed with respect to Work Group and TMDL tracking needs. The hard part, once we have the model/tracking system in place, will be to get data into it to see how we're doing, particularly BMP application data. Charles Yarish asked if the HydroQual contract covers both halves of LIS? Stacey replied that it covers both the CT and NY portions of the drainage basin. Lynne Hamjian commented that we will also own whatever HydroQual develops. We should be sure that it has broader applicability to other areas. Stacey indicated that he thought it would have broader applicability. In particular, the NPS Work Group wants something that can be easily used by towns and the general public, and is non-proprietary so it can be run without special software. Cesare Manfredi observed that NYS DEC gave Westchester County funds to relate land use to pollutant loads, which might be helpful to the project. Stacey replied that Rob Doscher, of the Westchester County Planning Department, is on the NPS Work Group and has been very helpful in bringing information like that to the table.

EPA Regional Applied Research Effort (RARE). Mary Garren reported on the EPA RARE grant program established to promote collaboration between EPA's Office of Research and Development and the Regions. Dr. James Latimer and Garren received one of two grants within EPA New England. The \$100,000 grant will be used to further the goals of the LISS Connecticut River work group through analysis and evaluation of nitrogen loss in CT River watershed. The grant was awarded through a competitive process to NEIWPC, partnering with USGS. USGS and NEIWPC have matched the EPA funding. The SPARROW model (SPATIally Referenced Regression On Watershed attributes) predicts that minimal nitrogen attenuation occurs in CT River watershed. This prediction results in a larger estimated contribution of nitrogen to LIS from the upstream states of MA, NH and VT. The goal of the RARE study is to better quantify nitrogen loss in the river and ground-truth the levels of attenuation calculated in the model.

Connecticut River Work Group. Laura Blake reported for the work group. The work group had a conference call on January 18, 2005; a full summary is available (contact Laura). The three-year upper Connecticut River nitrogen monitoring program (in MA, NH, and VT) is set to end in September 2005. The monitoring effort will provide a substantial amount of data, which will be used to characterize trends in the watershed. NEIWPC is currently talking with the upper basin states and USGS about plans to continue monitoring (on a smaller scale/frequency) for a period after the monitoring program is over. USGS is going to present suggestions on targeting monitoring. The workgroup is also using results from the New England SPARROW Model to

predict nitrogen loading (and sources) to the Sound from the Connecticut River Watershed. Over the next 6-8 months, time will be spent working to get consensus to get states to agree on developing a plan and facilitate that process to move ahead to develop options for a TMDL or reduction plan. The work group is also in the process of updating the time line to incorporate plans for the next two years of the project. The work group is also preparing to implement a nitrogen attenuation study, which is being funded by an EPA RARE Grant (see above discussion by Mary Garren for more details). John Atkin inquired about the difference between the 3-year nitrogen monitoring program and the nitrogen attenuation study. Laura explained that the 3-year monitoring program is focused on characterizing loads and sources, while the nitrogen attenuation study is focused on quantifying the actual loss of nitrogen as it travels through the watershed (from headwaters to the Sound). Laura also mentioned that she has been talking with Mark Tedesco about integrating future LIS TMDL revisions with CT River results to make sure the processes have political support.

Stewardship Initiative Work Group. John Atkin reported for chair Al Caccese. The Stewardship Initiative work group is working with resource managers in CTDEP and NYSDEC to develop a draft list of stewardship sites. A series of public meetings is planned for this spring in order to get feedback from the public on the proposed inaugural stewardship sites. The work group invites any organization interested in becoming a member of the work group to contact John Atkin or Mark Tedesco. A brochure describing the Stewardship Initiative and highlighting some LIS "stewardship successes" (such as the acquisition of the KeySpan property in NY) is in the final stages of development.

Atkin reported that while the Stewardship bill passed the Senate in the 108th Congress, it died in the House. Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) reintroduced the bill in the 109th Congress on January 25, 2005, which would authorize \$40 million annually for five years – the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act of 2005 (S.158). Rep. Rob Simmons (R-CT) introduced the bill in the House (H.R. 307). Atkin indicated that the CAC co-chairs are scheduling meetings with Caucus members when they go to Washington for briefings on the Bill later this spring. They will try to meet with Rep. Richard Pombo (R-CA), chair of the House Committee on Resources, which killed the bill in the last Congress.

2. OCTOBER 19 ACTION ITEMS UPDATE

LIS 2006 STAC Priorities. The LISS STAC is beginning the process of identifying its priorities for FY06. LISO staff developed a Research, Monitoring & Assessment Needs Inventory to generate discussion among the STAC regarding priorities for management of the Sound's ecosystem. The Needs Inventory, which will be emailed to STAC members, is the first step in a longer process of identifying STAC priorities. STAC members are being asked to rank the topics included in the document and recommend additional topics for consideration. These rankings will be used to focus the discussion regarding priority topics at the next meeting. The STAC will also

discuss their objectives, review and approve a mission statement, and evaluate the STAC's composition. **[NB: The Needs Inventory was sent to the STAC in preparation for the February 25th STAC meeting, which was cancelled due to snow; the meeting has been rescheduled for Friday, April 8, 2005 at UCONN Stamford.]**

LIS Accomplishments Forum. Mark Tedesco circulated a draft proposal on the conduct of a two-day Management Committee meeting to review LISS accomplishments (**see Attachment 3**). With so much ongoing activity, it is very difficult to keep up with all of the environmental conditions, status and trends from all the LISS partners at limited quarterly Management Committee and STAC meetings. The proposal is to hold a two-day forum around the July 21 Management Committee meeting. The purpose is to synthesize ongoing work in areas, e.g., water quality conditions, living resources, wildlife and habitat trends through summary presentations of implementation progress, identify where are we making progress, where there are gaps and focus on key needs. We would take that information, review it in the context of the status of programs, and develop a final set of priorities that set funding targets and research initiatives for 2006. To make this a success, Tedesco indicated the need for a commitment by members to attend the full meeting. Jack Mattice recommended to focus the purpose of the meeting and not develop too many goals. Virginia deLima said it was important to focus on synthesizing information and presenting that information in a coherent manner. Much advance work would be necessary, and there may be a need for planners to meet several times in advance of the meeting. Lynne Hamjian suggested a session to review the budget and how it aligns to priorities. Ed Monahan suggested employing the services of a facilitator for the meeting. Monahan also recommended that the meeting be held on the Wednesday and Thursday of that week rather than Thursday and Friday due to the heavy summer vacation travel on Fridays. The Committee agreed to proceed with planning for the meeting, and that it should be held on Wednesday, July 20 and Thursday, July 21. Tedesco suggested formation of a small planning team to identify specific topics and to develop a draft agenda for approval at the April meeting. **[On February 16, the Implementation Team established a planning team consisting of Tedesco, Karen Chytalo, Rick D'Amico, Paul Stacey, Laura Blake and Walter Smith.]**

Action: The planning team will prepare a draft agenda for approval of the Management Committee at the April meeting.

LIS Settlement Fund Policy Guidance. Kate Brown reported for Betsey Wingfield. The \$6.0 million settlement fund is in an interest-bearing account. CTDEP is reviewing the permit application; it appears that the permit will take, at a minimum, to the end of 2005. The fund cannot be spent until the regulatory issues are worked out and Long Island Power Authority can maintain the cables. The permit must be in place before the fund can be spent. Betsey Wingfield and Brown are working on criteria and eligibility requirements, and it is still early in the process.

3. LIS FUTURES FUND UPDATE

Lynn Dwyer, Assistant Director of the Eastern Region of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) reported on the status of the newly created Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF). NFWF received 61 project proposals under the LISFF request for proposals (RFP) that closed on December 3, 2004. A total of \$2.9 million in funding was requested; the average proposal cost was \$45,000. Thirty-four projects are located in Connecticut; twenty-four are located in New York, and three are regional projects. The largest to smallest number of projects were as follows: habitat restoration; education, public outreach/training; water quality improvement and monitoring, and stewardship. The RFP was open to non-profit organizations, municipalities, and educational institutions with applicants from all categories represented in the final list of proposals. The review team meets on February 16 to recommend projects for funding, and a late April award announcement date is anticipated. There is a total of \$1.0 million in fund, which would be enough to fund roughly one-third of the average proposals. Dwyer thanked the states, EPA, NOAA, NRCS, and the USFWS for their technical review of the proposals.

4. 2005 BUDGET PROCESS UPDATE

Review of Priority-setting Process. Mark Tedesco reviewed the process used to establish program and funding priorities for 2005, which began immediately following last year's April MC meeting. The MC, STAC and CAC had been solicited and briefed on priorities at many points in the process for 2005. In May-June 2004, LISS work groups and teams were asked to develop and submit priorities for 2005 by June 25. The June CAC and STAC meetings focused on those organization's priorities for 2005. The July 2004 MC meeting was used to vet draft priorities, and the MC made its decisions via email on July 30. The work groups were asked to submit their project descriptions for the CCMP Enhancements Request for Initial Proposals (RFIP) in August. The RFIP included five Outcome Areas based on the priorities identified: 1. Water Quality & Living Resources Data Analysis; 2. SWEM Additional Model Years and Parameters; 3. Mapping Existing Riparian Buffer Areas; 4. Riparian Buffers Toolbox; and 5. LIS Public Perception Survey. The RFIP was open from October 15-December 15, 2004, and fourteen proposals were received. The LISS base program budget call was released on October 29 and closed at the same time as the Enhancements RFIP. The process will culminate with the MC decisions on the 2005 budget at its April meeting.

Proposal Review Process/Next Steps. Joe Salata reported that fifty external experts agreed to peer review the fourteen enhancements project proposals. Peer reviewers are from academic institutions, e.g. University of Virginia, Boston University, University of Florida, University of Delaware, University of Washington, Rutgers University, University of Rhode Island, University of California at Davis; government agencies, e.g., EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program Office and Narragansett Laboratory, US Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Coastal Services Center, National Park Service, Town of Westport, Suffolk County Dept. of Health, Woods Hole

Oceanographic Institution; and a number of private organizations or institutions, e.g., Applied Analysis, ESRI, and CBS News. LISS staff, work groups and teams are reviewing proposals in their areas of responsibility, e.g., communications, NPS/watersheds, and nutrients. All work group and external peer review scores are due by February 15. The LISO will compile the results and provide the Implementation Team with copies of the reviews and the summary scores. The I-Team is scheduled to meet on March 23 to develop funding recommendations to the Management Committee for the 2006 LISS Base Program and CCMP Enhancements projects. The funding requests for the base program total \$2,645,092, including a \$300,000 reserve for the 2006 research program; the Enhancement Projects total \$1,470,828; there is approximately \$2.7 million available in the 2005 budget for LIS. The EPA Operating Plan for FY2005 has not yet been approved by Congress, and therefore final funding allocations among the various sources of funds that make up the LISS budget have not yet been determined by EPA HQ. **[NB: Forty-three of the fifty peer reviewers submitted reviews by the deadline; the review package was prepared and submitted to the Implementation Team on February 28.]**

5. FLOOR UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS

EPA/ANEP Conference. Mark Tedesco reported that the biannual EPA/ANEP meeting is scheduled for the week of March 7 in Washington, DC. A draft agenda has been circulated, and staff wishing to attend should make their plans accordingly.

EPA NEP HQ Implementation Review. Joe Salata reported that he is the LISS lead on development of the 2005 NEP Implementation Review. This EPA Headquarters' triennial review of progress in implementing the CCMP covers the three year period since the last review – 2002-2004. A team of Headquarters and Regional staff will plan a site visit to review LISS progress; we will coordinate their schedule for a mutually agreeable date for the site visit. Since the 2002 review site visit took place in the Norwalk River watershed, this review would be scheduled for an area in New York. A written report in a format specified by HQ is due to the review team on March 3. The results of the review will determine whether the LISS continues to receive Section 320 NEP funding. **[NB: The report was submitted to HQ on March 3.]**

Attachments

1. Meeting Attendance
2. SWEM Handout\
3. Draft Accomplishments Forum Outline
