

**Long Island Sound Study
Management Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, January 19, 2006
UConn Stamford**

Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:05 am, asking attendees to introduce themselves and sign the attendance sheets. Tedesco asked if there were any changes to the agenda; none were offered.

Reports

Citizens Advisory Committee. Nancy Seligson reported that the CAC invited the co-chairs of the Long Island Sound Congressional Caucus, Reps. Rob Simmons (R-CT) and Steve Israel (D-NY), to attend the December 8 CAC meeting to explain the federal budget process and how the CAC might play a stronger role in that process. Neither could attend. Paul Pimental, staff to Rep. Christopher Shays, did attend and talked about the budget process and the need to highlight priority needs. He also recommended that the LIS program needs to garner more grassroots support citing that they have received letters relating to the Cross Sound Cable proposal and not many on the need to sustain funding for Long Island Sound. Nancy noted that the CAC approved and sent a letter to the Policy Committee to inform them of the CAC's management priorities. The letter included a request to both states to develop a priority project list to support requests for funding support under LISRA. She noted that the CAC was concerned that LISRA implementation funding was not appropriated in FY 2006. Karen Chytalo noted that NYSDEC could provide a list of projects that would have been funded under DEC's recent call for proposals had there been additional LISRA monies. Paul Stacey replied that CTDEP conducts a needs survey to identify priority projects for funding; he recommended that information from that report be used to highlight LISRA funding opportunities. Charles Yarish, STAC co-chair, indicated that he believed that the STAC and CAC should work together to develop a joint letter highlighting mutual areas of concern and agreement.

Action: It was agreed that staff would work to develop the project list using the aforementioned resources. This list will be used by the LISO Director and representatives from the CAC when they visit with the Long Island delegation in DC in March 2006. The CAC and STAC should develop a joint letter identifying mutual areas of concern on or before their June 16 joint meeting.

General discussion ensued on how to increase program visibility and communications with the congressional caucus. A number of methods were suggested, many of which have been employed.

Action: The Communications Team will review the LISS legislative communication strategy this spring when it assesses how the education/communication activities are supporting LISS Management Conference needs.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee. Charles Yarish reported on the December 8, 2005 STAC meeting. Milan Keser presented data collected by the Millstone power plant monitoring program over more than 30 years. Signals of increased temperature and pH are clear. The following discussion highlighted the potential benefits to synthesizing available data to discern larger scale processes affecting LIS. The STAC also heard presentations from the Sound Fellows on their research topics: Christine O'Connell, a student at Stony Brook University, will investigate models of marine reserves and ocean zoning and the potential application to LIS; Kari Heinonen, UCONN, will support development of an invasive species plan for LIS. Finally, the STAC agreed to form a steering committee that will meet in between full STAC meetings, most via conference call, to provide additional direction and support to the STAC.

Communications Team . Robert Burg provided an update on LISS communications/education activities. He emphasized that Sound Health 2006 is being developed for release around Earth Day. Many have participated in its development and review.

2006 Budget Decisions

Mark Tedesco provided a handout with the details on the projected LISS FY2006 funding levels based on the 2006 appropriations - \$2,763,600. EPA will set the exact amount of funding to be made available in its 2006 operating plan. He reviewed the process that has been used to develop base program budget requests. The Implementation Team reviewed these requests and prepared a "strawman" budget for Management Committee consideration. Line item adjusted recommended by the I-team was annotated in the budget summary package provided to Management Committee members. Tedesco also noted that an additional proposal to measure chemical residues in LIS fish was circulated to the Management Committee on January 18 via email. This proposal was developed after CTDEP announced that it had sufficient unexpended funds in the monitoring category from prior year awards to cover monitoring operating expenses this year. As a result, the CTDEP base budget proposal does not request funds for monitoring. To take advantage of the unexpected reduction in the base budget request, a proposal was developed to fill a need identified in prior years to support consistent fish consumption advisories based on current data.

Tedesco reported that the amount carried over from the 2005 LISS budget amounted to \$35,000, bringing the available funds to \$2,798,600. With that Tedesco opened the floor for discussion, asking for comments and proposed changes to any of the funding recommendations.

- Rob Johnston, CT Sea Grant, stated that CT Sea Grant had concerns with the some of the reductions proposed in its base program request and he reviewed the justification for maintaining funding that was distributed to the Management Committee in a January 18, 2006 email. Diana Payne, CT Sea Grant, provided details on the mentor teacher program and answered questions regarding the program.

- Kimberly Zimmer, NY Sea Grant, reported that NYSG could not administer the STAC Fellows program without support for the fiscal officer.
- The PCB monitoring proposal was discussed. There was general support for the work but concern was expressed that the proposal, requesting a significant amount of funds, had not gone through peer review nor had it been provided in advance to the I-Team or Management Committee in a timely fashion as had the other proposals. Tedesco recommended that the proposal be submitted for peer review, coordinated by the LIS office. The results of the review would be shared with the Management Committee and the proposal altered as necessary and appropriate to respond to the comments.

Tedesco summarized that there was a budget shortfall of \$54,149 if all three budget recommendations were followed. Discussion ensued on how to make up for the shortfall. One option proposed was to include the PCB proposal in the funding mix with the \$423,100 available to support the Enhancement Grants being solicited by NEIWPCC. Another was using a portion of the \$300,000 Research Grant funds. Karen Chytalo, NYSDEC, also said that the PCB monitoring was a bigger priority than the NCA monitoring support request and that they would support shifting the \$20,000 for that program.

Action: The MC agreed to the proposed budget changes (see enclosed final annotated budget). The LISO will conduct a peer review of the PCB monitoring proposal. The LISS approved \$109,921 for the PCB monitoring proposal; opportunities to fully fund the proposal after a review of enhancement proposals, the NCA funds, or other options will be investigated.

Policy Committee Meeting

Tedesco handed out a proposal for a Policy Committee meeting in 2006 and asked for planning committee volunteers. He also noted that the meeting should be held in New York this time and asked for NYSDEC to host it, taking the lead on proposing a location. The specific agenda would depend, in part, on the results and recommendations coming out of the July 19-20 MC meeting.

Action: Nancy Seligson, Mark Parker, Kate Brown, Rick D'Amico, Johanna Hunter, Kimberly Zimmer volunteered to work with the LISO in planning the meeting.

July 19-20 Management Committee Meeting

Tedesco handed out a proposal for the July 19-20 MC meeting. The meeting would center on progress in implementing 2003 Agreement actions, with emphasis on the TMDL implementation. The upstream state representatives would be invited. The MC supported the general agenda concept. Beth Card, NEIWPCC, suggested that the agenda be provided to the upcoming upstream states briefings. Chytalo recommended that last

year's meeting recommendation be reviewed and that water quality conditions should be presented.

Action: the agenda will be developed at the next I-team meeting and submitted to the MC for approval at the April 20 meeting.

Updates

- Robin Kreisberg, Save the Sound, announced that the 16th annual Citizens Summit will be held on Saturday, April 8 at the Holiday Inn in Bridgeport, CT. The topic will be the effect of climate change on Long Island Sound.
- Lynn Dwyer, assistant director of the New England Region of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) reported that the due date for proposals had just closed and that NFWF was logging in the proposals. In addition to the LISS approved funding, NOAA and USFWS funds are included. **[NB: There were 69 proposals submitted.]**
- Tedesco reported that 15 proposals were submitted in response to the September 27 LISS Research Grant RFIP. Fourteen qualified for review and 6 were invited to submit full proposals. The final proposals, due January 31, 2006, will be subject to external peer review. The LISS Review Team will meet March 23 to recommend proposals for funding.

Sound Ideas

Mark Tedesco opened the floor to public comments, recognizing Art Glowka, who mentioned the GAO report on Chesapeake Bay.

Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 2:45pm.