

LISS Science & Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
Friday, February 10, 2012

Meeting Summary

Introductions, Review of Agenda: Larry Swanson opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. and called for introductions. The attendees are listed in attachment 1.

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Update: Nancy Seligson provided an update on the Citizen Advisory Committee meeting.

- There was a presentation from Judy Preston, LISS CT Outreach Coordinator on discussions among regional estuary programs on common green lawn and yard care practices. The CAC sent a letter to the Natural Resources Conservation Service advocating that it designate the LIS watershed as a priority watershed similar to Chesapeake Bay. A CT congressional delegation letter followed. The CAC discussed the planned update of the LISS Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (in 2014), and expressed direct interest in holding a joint meeting with the STAC to discuss this item. In addition to CAC subcommittee update, Charles Yarish gave a presentation on his seaweed bioextraction projects off of Fairfield, CT and Hunts Point, NY.

LISS 2008 Research RFP Project Results: Cornelia Schlenk provided background on the six research projects funded under the LISS 2008 Research Grant Program that was administered jointly by the New York and Connecticut Sea Grant programs. Presentations of five of the six projects were made, with plans for Mark Altabet being invited to the next STAC meeting to present. The STAC discussed overall implications of the project results.

1. Interaction of biological and physical factors controlling bottom dissolved oxygen, Kamazima Lwiza and Gordon Taylor;
2. Impacts of climate change on the export of the spring bloom in Long Island Sound, Darcy Lonsdale and Christopher Gobler;
3. The distribution, causes, and impacts of *Alexandrium fundyense* blooms in coves, near shore, and open water regions of Long Island Sound, Christopher Gobler;
4. Summer synoptic weather variability as the control of the seasonal evolution of hypoxia in Long Island Sound, Robert Wilson, Brian Colle, and Daniel Codiga;
5. Geochemical budgeting of dissolved gases for understanding Long Island Sound hypoxia, Mark Altabet (to present at next meeting)

Priorities for LISS Research RFP: Jim Latimer presented the proposed timeline, process, and research priorities for developing the next LISS research RFP to be released in late spring/early summer 2012 (Attachment 2). The list of research priorities from the 2010 RFP were presented along with possible additions from ongoing work, including recommendations from the Synthesis Book. The STAC provided comments and recommendations for additional priorities. However, there was also discussion on the need to focus the list for the actual RFP release. Jim Latimer also presented a proposed review the process. The STAC emphasized that additional science review in the pre review process was desirable. There was discussion on how this could be done and on the impact it would have on staff administration costs for Sea Grant.

- **Action: STAC recommendations will be considered by EPA and the CT and NY Sea Grant Programs in developing the research RFP. Jim Latimer will take the lead in developing a revised priority list. EPA and Sea Grant will review options for increasing external science review in the pre proposal stage.**

Synthesis Book Update: Jim Latimer reviewed the status of the synthesis book. All technical chapters have now been submitted and are at various staging of review and final editing.

LISS CCMP Revision: Larry Swanson introduced the topic and Mark Tedesco provided a brief overview of the intent to revise the CCMP by 2014, 20 years after the original. There was discussion about program evaluation options, including National Academy of Sciences reviews, but it was noted that the cost and time could be

prohibitive. It was specifically recommended that the LISS provide planning stage and document drafts for external review by other estuary programs to get input on the concepts, organization, and action strategies.

- **Action: STAC recommendations will be discussed at the next CCMP revision planning meeting.**

STAC 2012 CT co-chair results: Mark Tedesco thanked both Carmela Cuomo and Jim O'Donnell for being willing to serve as the CT STAC co-chair. With one vote separation, Jim O'Donnell was elected for a two year term as CT STAC co-chair. Tedesco thanked Carmela for all her contributions serving in the role for the past two years. It was also noted that the co-chairs should identify an alternate to represent the STAC at management committee meetings that they are unable to attend.

- **Action: Each co-chair should identify an alternate to represent the STAC as needed.**

STAC Membership and 2012 Meeting Schedule: Carmela Cuomo encouraged the STAC to consider gaps in expertise needed to address key priorities when considering additional nominations to participate on the STAC. The next meeting is June 15 in Connecticut, with exact location to be decided.

FY 2012 LISS Budget: Mark Tedesco gave an update on the LISS FY 2012 budget, noting that funding is at \$4.5M, a reduction from \$5.9M in 2010 and \$7.6M in 2011. As a result, the Management Committee has decided not to fund acquisitions under the Stewardship Initiative (funded at \$1.2M in 2011) and is considering a prorated reduction to the Futures Fund RFP (for implementation projects) and the Research Grant Program. Numerous "enhancement" proposals are also being reviewed, including the one submitted by a STAC subcommittee on enhancing water quality monitoring.

Future STAC Agenda items: It was agreed that Mark Altabet would be asked to present the results of his research at the next meeting. Carmela Cuomo also asked whether the STAC was interested in hearing about some of the implementation projects that have been funded, e.g. habitat restoration, stormwater management, from the standpoint of assessing how successful they have been in meeting desired outcomes. There was no consensus this as a topic for the next meeting. A draft agenda will be circulated on possible topics for the next meeting. They included discussion of the integrated priorities from the synthesis book, development of the 2012 research RFP priorities, selection of the CT co-chair, presentations from PIs of the 2008 and 2010 research RFPs.