



**Long Island Sound Study
Management Committee Meeting Notes
Housatonic Community College
Thursday, April 25, 2019**

Attendees: Jim Ammerman, NEIWPC; Casey Personius, NYSDEC; Robert Burg, NEIWPC; Mel Coté, EPA/R1; Nelle D’Aversa, NEIWPC/NYSDEC; Richard Friesner, NEIWPC; Dave Lipsky, NYCDEP; Audra Martin, NEIWPC; Jonathan Morrison, USGS/CT; Leah O’Neill, EPA/R1; Mark Parker, CTDEEP; Mark Tedesco, EPA; Harry Yamalis, CTDEEP; Anna Weshner-Dunning, NY Sea Grant; Kathy Bunting-Howarth, NY Sea Grant; Koon Tang, NYSDEC; Holly Drinkuth, TNC/CAC co-chair; Evelyn Powers, IEC; Sylvain De Guise, CTSG; Tracy Brown, STS; Tripp Killin, Jeniam Foundations; Richard Balla, EPA/R2; Emily Hall, CTDEEP; Chet Arnold, UConn CLEAR; Nancy Ferlow, NRCS; Denise Savageau, CAC; Todd Randall, USACE; Nancy Seligson, NY/CAC co-chair; Brian Thompson, CTDEEP; Philip Trowbridge, CTDEEP.

Introduction:

Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 9:35 and self-introductions followed. Mark relayed regrets from the STAC co-chairs Darcy Lonsdale and Jim O’Donnell that they could not attend. Mark reviewed the agenda for the day and there were no changes.

Reports:

- **CCMP Implementation Progress Reports** - Summary reports from workgroups will be sent out after the management committee meeting.
- **Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)** – Jim Ammerman presented the STAC update. The STAC met on February 15, 2019 at Stony Brook University. Both Malcom Bowman and Philip Orton gave presentations on potential storm barriers for NYC. Julianna Barrett presented on the Long Island Sound Climate Change and Vulnerability Assessment and Mark Parker presented volume two of the Sentinel Monitoring for Climate Change in the Long island Sound Estuarine and Coastal Ecosystems of New York and Connecticut. A full summary of the meeting can be found [here](#).
 - **Long Island Sound Research Conference (LISRC)** – Kathy Bunting-Howarth and Sylvain De Guise summarized the LISRC that occurred on March 15th at Danfords in Port Jefferson. Four proposals were selected for funding in the most recent Long Island Sound Research Program competition and principal investigators representing three of those projects were able to present. In order to fully fund the top four proposals, the LISRC borrowed money against next year’s appropriations, which was discussed in the FY19 work plan and budget agenda item. Learn more about the funded projects at <http://longislandsoundstudy.net/research-monitoring/lis-research-grant-program/2019-research-project-descriptions/> .
- **Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)** – Holly Drinkuth gave a CAC update. The CAC met on March 14, 2019 when they elected officers. Nancy Seligson was reelected as the NY Co-Chair and Marty Garrell was reelected as Secretary, both for 3-year terms. The CAC drafted and ultimately submitted a letter to the LISS MC highlighting three main priorities for 2019: Increase nitrogen science collaboration and

clarify management actions, improve implementation action tracking and hold a LISS Nitrogen Summit and Two-day Management Committee meeting to facilitate planning and prioritization. A full summary of the meeting can be found [here](#).

FY19 LIS Budget:

FY 19 Budget and workplan process –

- Mark Tedesco reviewed the budget process from submittal of initial proposals in October and going forward.
- The January MC Mtg was cancelled due to the government shutdown. Instead EPA hosted a FY19 budget call for Management Committee member on Feb 14 and there were two I-team meetings held to review proposals in detail. The focus of which was mainly on CCMP enhancement proposals. The enhancement proposals will continue to be the focus of today's meeting as well.

Base Budget Overview –

- FY19 LIS total budget is \$14.6 million; with \$14 million from Clean Water Act Section 119 LIS funds and \$600,000 from Clean Water Act Section 320 NEP funds. The total base budget is approximately \$8.14 million, including the necessary fiduciary reserve. Two changes to note in base proposal:
 - CT DEEP staff position – \$110,000
 - Research Program support – Last year LISS provided the full amount to support the Research RFP solicitation and Conference (\$1.3 million). Additionally, in order to fully fund the chosen research projects, a portion of FY19 funds (\$154,000 NY and \$175,000 CT) were used. Therefore, out of \$1.3 million needed to forward fund the next Research RFP only \$329,000 needs to be allocated in FY19.
- Discussion about Staff position for CT DEEP in Base budget:
 - Why is it needed and why is it in base?
 - Philip Trowbridge explained that in general, project management should be about 10% of the budget for a project. Therefore, the PM budget for a \$1.6 M project is 160,000. Project management is essential to project success and this position is to provide project management to the various modeling grants that CT DEEP administers.
 - Koon Tang asked about whether it is appropriate for LISS funds to be used for a permanent CTDEEP staff position. He noted that support for permanent staff should be a commitment of state resources and that positions created to support new initiatives should transition from LISS to state funding.
 - CT DEEP believes it can make better use of grant money they request from the LISS to put toward hiring a quality staff position because CTDEEP does not charge 'Indirect' in all our LISS project tasks.
 - To get the position through the CT DEEP HR process there needs to be more consistency in funding than is provided by the enhancement proposals. However, if the support is retracted in the future then the employee would be moved to a full-time position within CT DEEP (due to upcoming retirements).

- Mel Coté commented that it is unlikely that a contractor (if position was alternatively funded through NEIWPC) can manage State Funds.
- Mark Tedesco mentioned that if program funding is cut in the future, the Base Budget is not immune to cuts as well. Additionally, significant investments in prior years (with large budget increases) have been put in modeling and monitoring and many of these have been in base budget. He supports the importance of project management to project success.
- Denise Savageau expressed support for the projects and commented that LISS Futures Fund cannot be responsible for all the implementation.
- Overall, discussions show support for the CT DEEP staff position but unsure the best mechanism to implement (Base vs NEIWPC enhancement) and not necessarily for continued LISS base program support.

Enhancement Budget Requests –

- Current enhancement proposals total approximately \$7.4 million, which is more than available funds, approximately \$6.4 million. Mark Tedesco presented I-Team recommendations to the MC that delegates 3 funding recommendation categories:
 - Green Items: Recommend full or partial funding
 - Current green proposals = \$4.4 million
 - Yellow Items: Option to fund
 - Current yellow proposals = \$2.4 million
 - Orange Items: Consider alternate funding source or year
- **Discussion on “green” (fund) recommendations:**
 - There was generally support for green items.
 - Question (Q): Is the new CT DEEP modeling proposals, #23 and #24, for just CT or NY too?
 - A (Philip Trowbridge) – These are to implement CT DEEP’s 2nd Generation Nitrogen Strategy. There is a need for much more fine grain data and modeling and monitoring ultimately go together. The goal is to identify the sub-regional watersheds that have the biggest N load to implement mitigation efforts where there is the greatest return on investment. Proposal #23 is inland and will cover all 380 subwatersheds (not individually but through representative sampling) and #24 is for eight priority embayments in CT identified in its Integrated Water Resource Management Plan, found [here](#) pg. 19.
 - Q (Sylvain De Guise) – Since this is a 3-year project, would these efforts be rendered useless if future funding doesn’t come through?
 - A (Philip Trowbridge) – No, the study was designed in a way that they can still use the data collected from part 1. However, it would be ultimately better as a cohesive picture with all 3 sections of the state after all 3 years.
 - The Management Committee agreed to recommend funding for all green highlighted items as listed by the Implementation Team.
- **Discussion on orange (not funded) recommendations:**

- Q (Kathy Bunting-Howarth): Is there a match difference for proposals that were redirected to apply for the Futures Fund (FF).
 - A (Mark Tedesco): Match requirements are essentially the same for both.
- Q (Holly Drinkuth): Does the different funding mechanism affect potential competitiveness of proposal?
 - A (Mark Tedesco): It depends on the applicants in any given year. Historically there seems to be adequate funding in FF to support high-quality proposals. However, there are funding caps on FF projects.
- Q (Mel Coté): Asked Richard Friesner about proposal #7, which the I-Team recommended to “hold for 2020”. How would this be different or compliment work that is already being done.
 - A (Richard Friesner) – It is meant to add onto those projects. The goal is to do some similar planning and production work and to push what is already being done North to New Hampshire and other parts of the watershed.
- Q (Dave Lipsky)- Is #7 meant for a specific WWTP?
 - A (Richard Friesner) – Yes, it would be to a specific plant, so the plant would have to be willing to participate in the process.
 - For the future, MC would like to see a commitment from the participating facility to ensure that recommendations are ultimately implemented.
- Mark Tedesco suggested some discussion about enhancement proposals #9, #10, and #20, which were recommended for funding by I-Team and subsequently the proposed costs were increased.
 - Koon Tang explained the increased ask as a misunderstanding of requirements. The project cost has not changed but he misunderstood the match requirements and therefore initially asked for less than the project costs. He is unable to find other support mechanisms for these projects.
 - Q (Sylvain) – Would like more specifics about hydrodynamic modeling?
 - A (Koon) – In some of the embayments modifications may be needed to effectively treat the waterbody.
 - A short discussion about hydrodynamic modification and the extent and scope of this project took place.
 - While there is continued support for this proposal, more details about the products and outcomes are needed.
 - **Action Item:** Koon will provide a revised proposal within two weeks and the MC will have a subsequent call to clarify outcomes. In the meantime, the MC will maintain an “alternate list” of proposals.
 - No comments or additional questions on # 10 and # 20.
- Mark Tedesco introduced proposal #12, which included two acquisitions, for discussion. The I-team recommended support for acquisition of the Kniffen property but had initial concerns about the timing of the Shoreham property.
 - Casey Personius explained the updated timeframe. Since this is a large, \$20-40 million and 4-5 year acquisition, NYS is going to phase the acquisition. The assessment process for phase 1, the northeast corner of the property, has already begun and is estimated at \$5-10 million.
 - There is general support for both properties but can NYSDEC provide over match? The currently proposed budget is approximately \$700,000 short for match. If NYSDEC can provide overmatch it would be beneficial to overall program goals.
 - Casey Personius will look into potential overmatch and report back to the MC.

Current budget status: Base + enhancement “green” proposals = \$13,513,317

Remaining: \$1.086 million remaining for additional projects but current budget is short approximately \$0.7 million for match.

- **Discussion on “yellow” (option to fund) recommendations.** The yellow category consists of approximately \$1.448 million in projects (compared to \$1.086 unallocated).
 - There is some flexibility in the amount set aside for research grant funds. Since approximately \$300,000 from FY19 was “borrowed” in advance to support the 2019 LISRC projects, there is \$975,000 in the base budget that will be banked for 2021 LISRC.
- **#13 and #14:** Mark Tedesco gave a quick explanation of the rationale for the expansion of the acquisition category to include restoration. A document was circulated previously to clarify priorities and eligibility for this newly expanded category.
 - There is general support for #'s 13-14 but there were some I-team concerns:
 - #13 – main concern is property ownership.
 - Harry Yamalis commented that CT DEEP currently has two people working on getting easements from land owners for #13. The property owners are on-board, and intent is there.
 - #14 – main concern was timing of the project.
 - What would happen if funding didn't come through from Save the Sound (Tracy Brown commented that STS is expected to know about funding on June 1st). This project already has planning and design at 95% but can't move much farther without contract and construction funds since those final designs can't be made by without funding. Therefore, perhaps the timing not right.
 - **Results:** green light for Sluice Creek (#13) and put off Merwin Meadows Dam (#14) for next year.
- **#25:** Dave Lipsky summarized proposal #25, Living Resources Management (NYCDEP). A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met in 2018 and delivered a report which was incorporated into development of RFP which, after delays, NYCDEP is close to releasing.
 - Q (Philip Trowbridge) – If RFP just went out, what is the timing of project?
 - A (Dave Lipsky) – Can have contractors on board by end of this year or first quarter of next year at the latest. They can start early with project scoping.
 - Mark Tedesco's summary: This would be the 3rd piece in the original funding. There is general support. There are advantages to making the commitment in funding now and finishing this project.
 - **Results:** Moved to green
 - **Action Item:** Tedesco discussed the need to reconvene the Model TAC once the contract is established. In the meantime, the LISS should convene the Management Advisory (MA) component of the TAC to discuss management needs for modeling and to coordinate multiple initiatives. The Management Committee supported convening the MA in summer 2019. The EPA will take the lead in scheduling the meeting.
- **#2:** Philip Trowbridge mentioned that while there were questions about the type of trading, there seems to be general support for this proposal.
 - **Result:** Moved to green

- **#4:** Chet Arnold gave an overview and answered questions about the “Decision Support Tool” proposal. Correction: the project is meant to obtain one meter resolution (not 1 foot resolution as previously stated). The enhanced resolution will help stimulate action at a local level. Whereas the large-scale resolution does not allow small municipalities to identify their area of responsibility and take subsequent action. This project will support general NEMO efforts. It will help to make the connections between landscape metrics and nitrogen inputs.
 - Q(Koon) – Is this only for N or can other pathogens or parameters can be measured?
 - A (Chet) – focus is N but can be applied to other nutrients down the road.
 - **Results:** Move to Green
- **#6:** Mark Tedesco mentioned that the I-team had questions about how this “Major LIS Tributary Sampling” will relate to current efforts?
 - Jon Morrison explained that this work will support current efforts on CT river and ultimately provide similar efforts in the Thames and Housatonic Rivers. The goal is to install continuous monitors at the mouth of each of those rivers and this monitoring will help identify installation sites. It will also fill in gaps in current monitoring efforts.
 - Mark Parker, on behalf of the CCSMWG, Dave Lipsky and Philip Trowbridge expressed support. This project will help CT DEEP with their large river monitoring strategy.
 - **Result:** Move to green

(Note: Subsequent to the meeting NYSDEC communicated that a change in state funding made the Flax Pond habitat restoration project no longer viable. As a result, funding was added to NYSDEC for land acquisition of the Kniffen and Shoreham properties and funding was provided to CTDEEP for the Merwin Meadows dam removal project. The final FY2019 work plan and budget should be referred to for the final projects and levels funded)

Appropriations update: with the additional “green” recommendations there is only \$13,000 remaining in unallocated funding. The Management Committee agreed to move forward with the recommended slate of projects and finalize budgets with the applicants.

CT Blue Plan:

Emily Hall gave an overview and update of CT Blue plan. The blue plain aims to protect natural resources, protect traditional human uses, and reduce future use conflicts within the LIS. LIS Blue Plan is holding Public Meetings and a movie release to inform the public about its use in April - June. More information can be found at www.ct.gov/deep/LISBluePlan

2 – Day Management Committee meeting:

Updates: Oct 23-24 are best dates. There are three elements that we will try to bring together in advance of that meeting:

- 1) Science needs assessment – Jim Ammerman
- 2) Ask Work Groups to identify critical needs and enhancements to bring initiatives to fruition.
- 3) Review of CCMP implementation. Will look at updating Implementation Actions.

Updates:

Next Meeting: there will be an update from Julianna Barrett on the LIS Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA).

Additional Comments: Headquarters will attend June 5th I-team meeting and will include a site visit. Program review will be much more streamlined than previous years.