



**Long Island Sound Study
Citizens Advisory Committee Monday, April 9, 2018
EPA Region 2 Headquarters, New York, NY
Meeting Summary**

Welcome

Nancy Seligson, New York CAC Co-Chair, welcomed participants and established that a quorum of 27 was present. This was the meeting originally scheduled for March 22, but re-scheduled due to inclement weather. The committee was very encouraged by the Long Island Sound Study's significant budget increase totaling \$12.6 million dollars.

Guests:

Pete Lopez, EPA Region 2 Administrator
Koon Tang, NYSDEC, Director Bureau of Water Resource Management
Lorraine Holdridge, NYSDEC

CAC Survey Results, Discussion and Next Steps:

Holly Drinkuth, Connecticut CAC Co-Chair, presented the results from the CAC Survey that was sent to members on February 14, 2018. Based on the results from 25 participants, CAC members collectively communicate with more than a quarter-million stakeholders! The survey results indicate that all the CCMP themes are important issues to member organizations, with the highest level of focus on "Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds." The CAC discussed the potential lack of clarity and understanding about the meaning of "Sustainable and Resilient Communities" and highlighted the need to further define themes to demonstrate how they fit into the big picture. Members worked in pairs to discuss and record what results from the survey were most important and to suggest one or two actions the CAC should take to be even more effective. Top two most important:

- Reach and increase our audience of 250,000
- Strengthen and balance CAC member representation

Suggestions included 1) re-engaging representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers and marine trades, 2) checking with lapsed members to determine interest, 3) developing shared outreach materials, 4) holding public meetings (like the Citizen's Summit).

Actions - Holly and Nancy follow up on the following actions and report at the June meeting:

- Contact active organizations that did not complete the survey and ask to them to participate
- Contact organizations that have not attended meetings in 12 months or longer to confirm interest, ask them to participate in the survey and/or update the roster
- Categorize discussion items and suggested actions for CAC member review and prioritization

Pete Lopez EPA Region 2 Administrator

Pete Lopez EPA Region 2 Administrator gave a warm welcome and a very encouraging and inspiring introductory speech. He stressed the importance of working across party lines and his openness and willingness to work with diverse audiences and groups. He stated his commitment to the environment, particularly the Long Island Sound and thanked the CAC for their representation. He was optimistic about collaborating with EPA Region 1 as well. The CAC members expressed the importance of continuing the EPA's Nitrogen Strategy as well as other projects that the LISS is working on.

LISS Social Media Campaign

Robert Burg, LISS Communications Director & NEIWPC, presented on last summer's #DontTrashLISound social media campaign including successful campaign metrics. Both Twitter and Facebook traffic increased during the months of the summer campaign with increases in likes, shares, posts and followers. According to the metrics, all themes and posts were equally successful and there was no correlation between what was popular on Facebook and what was popular on Twitter. The campaign's posts and tweets were seen more than 52,000 times. The Communications Team asked CAC members to support this summer's continuation of the social media campaign. Some members brought up the idea of making the campaign a year-round effort, instead of seasonal. A member also suggested that organizations highlight positive/successes on their social media platform. Members expressed interest in helping to share the information and post on their organizations' social media page, as well as possibly distributing materials.

Actions: The CAC members were invited to participate in the Public Involvement and Education Work Group call on April 25, 2018. For more information or to participate in the social media campaign contact:

LINAP Update

Koon Tang, Bureau of Water Resource Management Director at NYSDEC, provided an update on the LINAP. For Long Island Sound work, \$1.5 billion dollars went into upgrading wastewater

treatment plants. He also announced that Nassau County has two projects, which are designed to reduce nitrogen from wastewater treatment plants, in Bay Park, NY. They are currently reviewing and contemplating updates to the bacteria TMDL for the north shore of Long Island, due to concerns about accurate representation of pollution sources. New York State has also allocated \$75 million dollars to support a multi-year effort to upgrade onsite wastewater systems in New York. Suffolk County is set to receive \$10 million and Nassau to receive \$1 million dollars for septic system upgrades. Stony Brook University Center for Clean Water and Technology is also working to test more advanced nitrogen treatment systems that could be implemented in the future. The NYSDEC awarded a sub watershed grant to study how nitrogen enters the water and the resident time of nitrogen pollution and is contracting with USGS to look at how bacteria enters the waterways. Lorraine Holdridge also announced the new hire of the Bioextraction Coordinator, Nelle D'Aversa with NYSDEC.

CCMP Tracking and Reporting:

Mark Tedesco, EPA LIS Office, provided an update on the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) reporting. The GAO report has been delayed and the LISS office is awaiting recommendations before designing the overall CCMP tracking effort. Robert Burg showed members the 20 ecosystem targets are currently being tracked, which can be seen on the LISS website. Members voiced support and made suggestions for making obvious linkages and connections to all the targets on the website.

LIS Report Card

Tracy Brown, Save the Sound, presented an update on the LIS Report Card. The report card tracks and publicizes the ecological health of Long Island Sound and is targeted to the general public and community members. It measured five water quality indicators: dissolved oxygen, water clarity, chlorophyll *a*, and a nutrient score combining total nitrogen and total phosphorus. Tracy highlighted changes since 2016 reporting and explained how the Unified Water Study (UWS) technical advisory committee conducted a literature review, evaluated options and designed the new monitoring approach. Annual dissolved organic carbon concentrations – will replace nutrients (N & P). There was also a re-assessment of how grades are assigned. A newer component, adopted from Chesapeake Bay, was a chart showing trends over time. Jamie Vaudrey is putting together a white paper and could use assistance marketing it and getting it out to the public.

Action: CAC members to contact Tracy tbrown@savethesound.org if they can help with marketing and publicizing the UWS white paper.

Policy Committee Update

Tracy Brown and Adrienne Esposito will schedule a meeting to clarify goals for the Policy subcommittee for the year. Suggested priorities include scheduling a trip to Washington D.C. in the fall. Adrienne is making efforts to get the CAC access to visit Plum Island. Adrienne also discussed outcomes of the Suffolk County bag fee (5 cents/bag) that did not receive good reception from residents *but* a citizen science survey showed a huge jump in consumers

bringing reusable bags to the stores. An estimated 6% of consumers brought bags to stores before the law was enacted, compared to 60-80% of consumers after the law was passed. The CAC agreed to send Thank You letters to elected officials for the LISS budget increase.

Actions: Tracy and Adrienne to schedule Policy committee meeting. Nancy and Holly to draft thank you letters.

2018 Work Plan and Budget

Mark Tedesco provided an update on the budget. The budget increased to \$12.6 million dollars and part of the discussion was where to allocate the extra funds. Members shared ideas for use of additional funding including: Sea Grant research, dredge material relocation, septic replacement, communications, aqueous soil mapping (for eelgrass installation). More details will be confirmed at the Management Committee meeting on April 19, 2018.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35pm.

The next CAC meeting will be on June 7th at the Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport, CT.