



**Long Island Sound Study  
Management Committee Meeting Notes  
Housatonic Community College  
Thursday, July 19th, 2018**

**Attendees:** Jim Ammerman, NEIWPC; Rick Balla, EPA Region 2; Cassie Bauer, NYSDEC; Peter Linderoth, Save the Sound; Robert Burg, NEIWPC; Mel Coté, EPA/NE; Nelle D’Aversa, NEIWPC/NYSDEC; Nancy Ferlow, NRCS, Peter Francis, CTDEEP; Richard Friesner, NEIWPC; Chuck Lee, CTDEEP; Dave Lipsky, NYCDEP; Audra Martin, NEIWPC; Jonathan Morrison, USGS/CT; Jim O’Donnell, UConn; Leah O’Neill, EPA; Mark Parker, CTDEEP; Nancy Seligson, CAC/NY; Mark Tedesco, EPA; Harry Yamalis, CTDEEP; Gary Wikfors, NOAA Fish; Anna Weshner-Dunning, NY Sea Grant; Judy Preston, CT Sea Grant; Kathy Bunting-Howarth, NY Sea Grant, Denise Savageau, CAC; Koon Tang, NYSDEC; Lorraine Holdridge, NYSDEC (on phone); 27 people present

**Welcome/Introductions/Logistics.** Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 9:40am. Mark welcomed Koon Tang, NYSDEC Division of Water and Kathy Bunting-Howarth, NY Sea Grant, as new Management Committee members. Audra Martin, an Environmental Analyst for NEIWPC, was also introduced and welcomed to her first Management Committee meeting. Koon had question on the April Management Committee meeting notes related to the FY18 proposals on benthic invertebrate monitoring and NPS tracking tool, NYSDEC wished to stay engaged on both efforts (with Sue Van Patten the NYSDEC contact on the benthic work). There were no additions to the agenda.

**REPORTS**

**Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC).**

Jim Ammerman provided the STAC update. The STAC met on June 15, 2018 at Stony Brook University. The meeting started off with presentations on the multiple nitrogen reduction efforts. Mark Tedesco presented on EPA’s nitrogen strategy updates, Ken Zegel gave an update on the Suffolk County subwatersheds wastewater plan, and Kelly Streich presented on CT’s 2<sup>nd</sup> generation nitrogen strategy. In the afternoon, Bob Wilson and Charlie Flagg presented on modeling harmful algal blooms in north shore Long Island embayments, Laura Grieco gave a status update on the integrated modeling framework effort, Jim Ammerman presented on data management options for the future, Scott Friedman presented on the synthesis and analysis of historical hypoxia data in the western narrows of LIS, and Jim Ammerman discussed chlorophyll *a* measurements in LIS. The [STAC meeting summaries](#) are available on the LISS website.

**Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).**

Nancy Seligson provided the CAC update. The CAC met on June 7<sup>th</sup> in Bridgeport, CT. The CAC took a field trip to Pleasure Beach and was joined by City of Bridgeport staff working on Pleasure Beach and National Audubon shorebird staff. While in the field, Harry Yamalis and Dave Kozak updated the group on current habitat restoration efforts. In the afternoon, Stephen Gephard, CTDEEP, presented on state efforts to increase fish access to riverine migratory corridors and the CAC discussed the upcoming Don’t Trash #LISound social media campaign.

The CAC is planning a trip to Washington on Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup> and encourages others to join them. The CAC sent a letter to NYSDEC in support of filling the seagrass coordinator position. The next CAC meeting is currently scheduled for September 13<sup>th</sup> in NY. The [CAC meeting summaries](#) are available on the LISS website.

### **FY18 Budget and work plan discussion**

Leah reviewed the final FY18 budget. CTDEEP received the full \$250,000 for technical integration of modeling this year. Leah also pointed out that EPA added a new item to the budget to support and respond to the recommendations from the recent GAO report. The LISS workgroups should start thinking about follow up funding needs for FY19, which will be discussed in more detail at the October Management Committee meeting.

Jim Ammerman brought up a discussion about research support and whether we are putting enough funding towards research projects. It was suggested that the STAC discuss what the key research priorities are at their next meeting and bring it back to the Management Committee.

EPA emphasized that it will continue to work with applicants to finalize the base budget requests, confirm required 1:1 aggregate match, review available remaining funds, and clarify final enhancement proposals. EPA will then send out funding guidance to all applicants. As a result, the final budget numbers may vary slightly from figures discussed at the Management Committee meeting. The final work plan and budget will be summarized in the annual LISS work plan.

### **GAO update**

Draft report released in June to federal & state agencies for comment. The report focused on assessing progress of the program and evaluating of where we need to focus our work in the future. The report included three specific recommendations that followed the CCMP revision format. The final report should be released in July and will be distributed to the Management Committee.

### **CCMP IA PROGRESS REPORTS**

Work group summaries were sent out to the Management Committee members prior to the meeting. There were no comments.

### **Social Media Campaign**

Robert Burg announced LISS will be doing another Don't Trash #LISound social media campaign, which will run from July 31- September 14. The LISS communications team developed stickers to show support for the campaign and these stickers have been mailed out to CAC members.

### **Water Quality Monitoring**

The water quality monitoring work group met on July 16 (with the [meeting notes](#) now available on the LISS website). The work group discussed the different Chlorophyll *a* analyses the groups do and which way best represents chlorophyll *a* for LISS's interest in eutrophication. Koon mentioned that as part of LINAP, NYSDEC is working with USGS on a data sharing system. He supports use of the national WQX/WQP system as a sustainable platform. He offered to share

information on this at a future meeting. Peter Linderoth, Save the Sound, mentioned that the Unified Water Study kicked off in May and has 20 groups participating this season. They are already seeing hypoxia/anoxia in Eastchester and the Hutchinson River. Peter also did a Chlorophyll a comparison, with higher values than Jamie Vaudrey's study. The results should be out soon.

### **Integrated Modeling Update**

Dave Lipsky updated the group on the ongoing integrated modeling efforts. A technical advisory committee was established and the team provided a report on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The next step is to incorporate the recommendations from the report into the development of an RFP. The RFP should go out by the end of August.

### **Climate Change and Sentinel Monitoring Workgroup**

Cassie Bauer announced that the revised [LISS Sentinel Monitoring Strategy](#) has been finalized and is available on the LISS website. The work group is working on updating the webpages to reflect the new strategy document. Juliana Barrett will be giving an update on the climate vulnerability assessment at the next work group meeting, likely in September. It was suggested that the assessment also be presented at the next management committee meeting, if ready.

### **Nitrogen Strategy Updates**

**EPA Nitrogen Strategy:** Leah O'Neill provided an update on the EPA Nitrogen Strategy. At the April 19 meeting, the LISS Management Committee approved \$30,000 in FY18 funding for a technical review. EPA has now submitted the methodology to an external, independent technical review and plans to use that input in considering further refinements in the technical approach and analysis that will be conducted under Phase 2 of the Nitrogen Strategy. The focus of Phase 2 will be refining and completing the technical approach from Phase 1; responding to technical comments from external review, the Technical Review Steering Group, and public review, collaborating and communicating with other LIS nitrogen reduction efforts, and identifying gaps in the LIS water quality monitoring body of data.

On July 18, EPA provided an update on the Nitrogen Strategy to the CT Nitrogen Credit Advisory Board, and EPA is continuing collaboration calls and meetings with NYSDEC/LINAP and CTDEEP/2<sup>nd</sup> Generation effort.

LISS has made significant updates to the website with maps, draft reports, and updated data.

Leah also reminded the committee that it received a final report on the monitoring EPA conducted at the mouth of the CT River in 2017 and that EPA will continue the CT River monitoring in 2018.

**LINAP:** Koon Tang gave an overall update on subwatershed planning activities in both Nassau and Suffolk counties under LINAP and specifically reviewed the short-term actions of LINAP under water reuse, fertilizer, and bioextraction.

- Water reuse: There are currently 3 or 4 projects where DEC allows the recycling of wastewater on golf courses, etc. DEC is working on making a water reuse regulatory road map which should be available in the next few months.
- Fertilizer: The work group wants to put together a fact sheet and education material to minimize fertilizer use. Legislation has also been introduced that would limit the amount of nitrogen in fertilizer. A second bill also includes an application rate.
- Bioextraction: Nelle, the bioextraction coordinator, is developing a road map on how to set up aquaculture operations and a permitting guidance document. Both are currently being reviewed internally.

### **CTDEEP 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation Strategy**

Chuck Lee gave an update on CTDEEP's 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation Nitrogen Strategy. The contractor, Lombardo Associates will be wrapping up their work by September. CTDEEP partnered with RI to monitor and model the Pawcatuck River. CTDEEP will use the \$250,000 to look at other embayments. CTDEEP is working with UConn on an phone app to help stop over fertilization by taking measurements of grass. It was suggested that Jason Henderson hold a webinar.

### **2017 LIS Report Card**

Peter Linderoth and Tracey Brown from Save the Sound presented on the draft Long Island Sound report card. This year, dissolved organic carbon was used as a nutrients indicator, replacing nitrogen and phosphorus. DOC has a stronger gradient West to East and is considered a better indicator of human impact. Their scoring approach includes time weighting, which is similar to area under the curve. All stations start and stop within 15 days of each other. In addition, a 10-year trend line was incorporated into the graphic this year. STS was again encouraged not to have an overall sound-wide grade so that the variations in conditions are not averaged away. STS will be doing a beach report on the years they don't do a report card. STS will release the report card at simultaneous NY and CT press conferences in late September.

### **Updates**

- The FY 19 program evaluation is in the Spring of 2019. LISS will need to put together a self-evaluation by the end of the year.
- There is an ANEP meeting Oct 4-6<sup>th</sup> this year in San Francisco.
- The next research conference will be held in Spring 2019.
- Jim O'Donnell and Jim Ammerman are leading a session on oxygen at the AGU meeting in Washington, D.C. in December.
- USGS was asked by CTDEEP to put water quality sondes in Pawcatuck River. The data is on the website and show significant hypoxia in parts of the estuary.

Mark Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 2:25pm.

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