



**Long Island Sound Study
Management Committee Meeting
Housatonic Community College
Thursday, July 21, 2016**

Welcome/Introductions/Logistics. Sheri Jewhurst called the meeting to order at 10:02am, asking for any proposed agenda changes. No changes and no additions were proposed. Jewhurst indicated that NYSDEC would be calling in at 11:10am for the nitrogen update session. [Members/alternates in attendance: Charlie Dequillfeldt, NYSDEC; Sandy Breslin, CAC/CT; Mel Coté, EPA/R1; Jim O'Donnell, STAC/CT; Peter Francis, CTDEEP; Richard Friesner, NEIWPCC; Sheri Jewhurst, EPA/LISO; Darcy Lonsdale, STAC/NY; Tom Morgart, NRCS; Jim Mueller, NYCDEP; Jon Morrison, USGS; Nancy Seligson, CAC/NY; Mark Tedesco, EPA/R2; Gary Wikfors, NOAA; Bill Wise, NYSEA]

Announcements. Sheri Jewhurst introduced herself as the new Acting Director of the EPA Long Island Sound national program office, on detail for 120 days. Jewhurst said she is the Peconic National Estuary Program coordinator and has extensive experience with the National Estuary Program, having taken a detail at the Narragansett Bay program to study economic aspects of that program. Richard Friesner introduced himself as the new director for water quality programs at NEIWPCC, with prior experience in the Chesapeake Bay program.

REPORTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Nancy Seligson reported that the CAC met on June 23, 2016 in Connecticut; meeting minutes are posted on the LISS website at [CAC](#). Seligson reported that a small group of CAC representatives met with Congressional members and staff during a trip to Washington in June. The group advocated for increased funding for Long Island Sound. Subsequently the House voted for a \$10 million appropriation for Long Island Sound; the Senate version is about \$5.9 million, and a conference agreement would need to be reached on a final appropriation. Congressman Steve Israel is retiring at the end of his term in January 2017, and Congressman Lee Zeldin has agreed to take over as New York co-chair of the Long Island Sound Caucus, if he is reelected in November. The group was well-received by the members and staff.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). Jim O'Donnell reported that the minutes from the June 17, 2016 STAC meeting are posted on the LISS website at [STAC](#). The STAC met at the Stony Brook University campus. O'Donnell provided a recap of the LIS Research Conference held May 13 in Bridgeport, CT. The STAC and CAC are planning their annual joint meeting, currently scheduled for November 18.

Work Groups. Sheri Jewhurst described the process developed by the Implementation Team to keep the Committee updated on CCMP progress by the work groups. The I Team will review progress at its quarterly meetings and determine with the work groups which will report to the Committee and which will prepare an abstract summary of their progress. The focus of these abstracts will be on progress toward the CCMP Implementation Actions (IAs) the work groups are addressing. For this Management Committee meeting, the Waters/Watershed group will

report in person and the other work groups prepared abstract summaries that were attached to the meeting materials. Leah O'Neill also pointed out that the work groups were not responsible for all CCMP implementation actions, but that other accountable agencies were working on various actions. Jewhurst introduced Mark Parker, who then presented his work groups report.

Watersheds/Embayments. Mark Parker reviewed the workgroup's one page charter statement, which was done before the EPA nitrogen strategy and the Long Island nitrogen plan were released. The priority of the work group is focused on watershed and embayment projects up into the watershed. He introduced a discussion to support funding for a nonpoint source best management practices tracking tool pilot. A phase I assessment of tracking tool options was funded and completed and funds set aside for phase II implementation. However, NEIWPCCC reallocated those funds with the support of EPA to other activities so that the agreement could be close down. The workgroup will assess recent tracking tools developed for Lake Champlain, Great Bay New Hampshire, and the Massachusetts MS4 program, in addition to the Chesapeake Bay CAST tool, before making recommendations for a Long Island Sound BMP tracking tool.

Nitrogen Reduction Updates. Sheri Jewhurst recognized Lorraine Holdridge on the conference phone to discuss the Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan (LINAP). Holdridge gave some background on development of LINAP, the goals of which are to assess nitrogen pollution, identifying sources of nitrogen pollution and its impacts to waterbodies, both ecological problems and reductions required to meet ecological endpoints. The LINAP scope of work has been finalized and is posted on the NYDEC LINAP webpage and it identifies early action items and long term actions: [LINAP](#). NYSDEC is working to determine sub-watershed boundaries, compiling existing data, identifying relevant studies, conducting embayment evaluation, and working to set-up funding programs. April 2017 is the deadline to have targets set and identify 'no regrets actions.'

Rob Hust provided an update on CTDEEP 2nd Generation Nitrogen Reduction progress. Hust highlighted a three prong strategy focusing on (1) wastewater treatment plants (WWTP), (2) nonpoint source and regulated stormwater, and (3) embayments. CTDEEP has 6-8 WWTPs in the planning design stage to reduce nitrogen inputs, their MS\$ permit has been issued with nitrogen reductions, they met with the Connecticut Department of Public Health to discuss on-site nitrogen reductions and with the Department of Agriculture to discuss nitrogen fertilizer reductions. CTDEEP is planning on meeting with UConn CLEAR for embayment outreach program based on the results of the embayment monitoring study.

Laura Grieco gave a brief presentation on the New York City wastewater treatment plant upgrades. All the Upper East River plants will be set to meet the January 1, 2017 deadline to meet the new limit. The city has installed over 3,000 bioswales to reduce runoff. For a copy of the presentation contact Laura Grieco at lgrieco@dec.nyc.gov or the Long Island Sound Office.

Leah O'Neill provided background and a brief update on the EPA Nitrogen Reduction Strategy. EPA held a public meeting in Springfield, MA on May 12 to communicate the Strategy to the Upper Basin States and solicit input. The meeting was very well attended and participants were engaged in the discussion. On May 12 EPA, the Connecticut River Water Council, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, the Vermont Department of Environmental

Conservation, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and the US Geological Survey participated in a meeting to discuss nitrogen monitoring on the Connecticut River. As of this meeting, the EPA nitrogen reduction contract is still in negotiations, but once it has been finalized EPA will meet with the states and other partners to regularly disseminate the monthly contractor reports.

PRESENTATIONS

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Judy Preston presented work on the LISW-RCPP, a \$10 million, five-year grant from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to reduce nutrient inputs to Long Island Sound from working lands in the watershed. The program involves Conservation Districts, private land owners, non-profit conservation groups and university Cooperative Extension offices in six states and will provide an exciting template for cooperation and collaboration in the New England region. Actions include private forest land protection, implementation of best management practices on agricultural lands, and restoration of degraded riparian lands. More information can be found at: [RCPP](#) or by contacting Judy at: lisw.rcpp@gmail.com.

LIS Embayments Monitoring. Tracy Brown of Save the Sound, Connecticut Fund for the Environment presented their work on citizen embayments monitoring. The goals of the Unified Water Study were to collect consistent, comparable, high quality data on the aquatic health of the bays and harbors of Long Island Sound. Early in 2015 they established a Science Advisory Team consisting of Dr. Jamie Vaudrey (UCONN), Dr. Jason Krumholz (McLaughlin Research), Dr. Christopher Gobler (SUNY Stony Brook) and Dr. Darcy Lonsdale (SUNY Stony Brook), UMCES. The work will be ongoing in 2016, with a Tier 2 monitoring study planned. Contact Tracy Brown at tbrown@savethesound.org or the Long Island Sound Office for a copy of the presentation.

FIRE Technology. Dr. Judy Yaqin Li of NOAA's Milford Lab presented recent work using a Fluorescence Induction and Relaxation (FIRE) instrument for monitoring photosynthetic processes and primary production in aquatic ecosystems. The equipment and technique have proven effective and efficient in test runs in the Sound. NOAA had loaned FIRE equipment to CTDEEP, which conducted testing in the Sound. Contact Dr. Li at judy.yaqin.li@noaa.gov or the Long Island Sound Office for a copy of the presentation. Dr. Li will be further analyzing the data, the results of which will be circulated to the LISS monitoring work group and Management Committee.

UPDATES

LIS Disposal Site Designations. Mel Coté presented an update on the LIS dredged material disposal designations. EPA published a final rule on May 10 for Central and Western Long Island Sound. The New York State Department of State has concurred with EPA's Coastal Zone Management Act Federal consistency determination. EPA's proposed rule for a new Eastern Long Island Sound Disposal Site and notice of a draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement public comment period closed on June 27. EPA expects it will take two to three

months to respond to comments, with a final rule and final SEIS published in the Federal Register by October 2016.

Eelgrass mapping. USFWS did not attend the meeting to report on progress. Mark Tedesco reported that USFWS is updating its Interagency Agreement work plan with EPA for eelgrass mapping, which will be scheduled for 2017. Tedesco indicated that if this work is desirable for the LISS, discussion and agreements will have to be made in the coming years regarding how the work will be continued and how it will be paid for.

CIRCA. Jim O'Donnell was unable to report on the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) at the meeting due to a previous commitment. There will be an update at a future meeting. Information on CIRCA is available at, [CIRCA](#).

Other.

Leah O'Neill asked for suggestions for the October agenda. Rob Hust said he would provide a link to the lobster tissue analysis and members could decide if they wanted a presentation at the next meeting based on their read of it. The link is: [lobsters](#)

Nancy Seligson suggested a briefing by the nitrogen group on the results of their upcoming discussions on the nonpoint source tracking issue.

The next Management Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 20 at Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport. Logistics on the meeting will be posted on the LISS website when available. Sheri Jewhurst adjourned the meeting at 2:40pm.
