



# Long Island Sound Study

## Water Quality Monitoring Workgroup Phone Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

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Monday, December 5, 2016 1-2 PM

#### Participants:

Jim Ammerman (Chair)-LISS/NEIWPC  
Charles DeQuillfeldt-NYSDEC  
Richard Friesner-NEIWPC  
Lorraine Holdridge-NYSDEC  
Robin Jazxhi-IEC/NEIWPC  
Peter Linderoth-Save the Sound  
Jim O'Donnell-University of Connecticut  
Leah O'Neill-EPA  
Evelyn Powers-IEC/NEIWPC  
Beau Ranheim-NYCDEP  
Mark Tedesco-EPA/LISS  
Jamie Vaudrey-U. Conn.

#### Items Discussed

1. IEC/CT DEEP Combined 2016 Hypoxia report— Jim Ammerman mentioned that IEC and CT DEEP were combining their annual hypoxia reports for the first time with the upcoming 2016 report. This report should be completed by the end of the year or slightly after. Jim mentioned that he had provided links to past reports in the meeting agenda and that IEC and CT DEEP were looking for suggestions from the workgroup for improving the report. (Such suggestions should be addressed to Jim Ammerman or to Robin Jazxhi at IEC or to Katie O'Brien-Clayton at CT DEEP.) Questions were raised as to whether a draft report could be released to the workgroup for comment and whether it was possible for the report to incorporate data from NYC DEP. Robin replied that the idea of a draft report would be considered but including NYC DEP data at this time would not be possible.
2. IEC Western Narrows Monitoring Proposal-Jim Ammerman had previously distributed a preliminary Western Sound Monitoring Support Proposal from IEC to the workgroup. Even though the Management Committee is currently considering only Base Program proposals because of the continuing budget uncertainty, Evelyn Powers from IEC had been encouraged bring the IEC Western Narrows Monitoring Proposal to the workgroup for discussion. Evelyn described how IEC has been monitoring the Western Sound for 25+ years and fills a gap between NYC DEP and CT DEEP. They are currently funded for 2017 monitoring but not beyond and would like to eventually become part of the base program for 2018 and beyond. The issue of overlap with CT DEEP and NYC DEP in both sampling locations and analyses was discussed. It was agreed that some redundancy was a good thing but that unnecessary overlaps could be addressed. IEC currently conducts 12 weekly surveys from June to September with 22 stations, including 11 stations with biweekly nutrients, TSS, and BOD. IEC has recent upgraded its



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laboratory facilities and now measures its nutrient samples in house, though it continues to send some comparison samples to the University of Maryland.

Leah O'Neill and Mark Tedesco from EPA both mentioned that budget clarity was needed before consideration of proposals beyond the base, but that IEC had been included in this group for the last several years and that this was an opportune time to begin discussions assuming that this monitoring program is consistent with broader needs.

Jim O'Donnell asked about IEC's different data formats for different years and Evelyn replied that they had been modified as new parameters were added, but that standardization efforts would be made in the future, probably as part of the joint reporting with CT DEEP, which has a standardized ACCESS database. Jim also expressed concern about the inaccessibility of NYC DEP data.

3. Status of IEC Data Analysis RFP – IEC has been developing an RFP for analysis of what is now 26 years of monitoring data from Western Long Island Sound. Evelyn Powers said that the RFP may be released by the end of the year.
4. Status of Citizens' Embayment Monitoring Efforts-Peter Linderoth from Save the Sound discussed their upcoming Bridgeport meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup> for the Unified Water Study. They will provide QAPP and data templates and help new groups get started. So far, 50 people plan to attend. NYS DEC is interested in their LIS embayment data for potential use with LINAP. (The separate CT DEEP citizens' embayment monitoring effort was not discussed.)
5. Modeling efforts moving forward after failed NOAA CHRP Proposal, where do we go from here? – Jim Ammerman asked Mark Tedesco and Jim O'Donnell to brief describe the current state of and needs for modeling in Long Island Sound. Mark noted that the SWEM model has well-documented issues and a next generation of models is needed to move the EPA Nitrogen Strategy forward. For meeting with NYC DEP and other groups, better support from models is needed before expensive decisions are made. Jim O'Donnell noted that we currently do not have a good understanding of the links between nitrogen loading and oxygen depletion, especially in the Western Sound. However, models should not be considered along but as coupled with observational programs. Jim Ammerman noted that after discussions with Mark, they decided that the upcoming February 17<sup>th</sup> STAC meeting would focus on the current state of modeling and Jim Ammerman said that the next meeting of the Water Quality Workgroup would be a joint one with that STAC meeting. (Lorraine Holdridge noted that she would need a 30-day notice for any travel out of state, if the meeting were in CT.)
6. Beau Ranheim from NYC DEP joined the meeting late but in response to questions said that DEP had 5 remote monitoring stations in NY Harbor online and he was hoping to make them more widely available soon. The one at Wards Island had been destroyed and needs replacement. His archived data is in GIS format and hopefully can be more widely share in the next few months.
7. Additional Informational Items:



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- a. Gross and Hagy Restoration Paper (2017)-finds ecological goals important, long because of supplemental material with useful examples, statistics opaque but conclusions interesting– Jim A.
- b. NEIWPC – 2017 Short Conference on significance of P in estuaries –probably 1/1.5 days in Aug. or Sept., perhaps in RI – Jim A.
- c. Automated nutrient analyzers on Western LIS mooring, deployment soon – Jim. O.