



**Watersheds and Embayments Work Group Meeting Notes  
August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016: 10:00am-12:00pm**

**Attendees:**

Chet Arnold; Amy Mandelbaum; David Dickson; Judy Preston; Leah O'Neill; Mark Parker; Cassie Bauer; Paul DeOrsay; Michael Dietz; George Hoffman; Holly Drinkuth; John Mullaney

**Status updates on Nitrogen Strategies**

- Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan
  - o The LINAP scoping document was finalized in June and can be found on the DEC website (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/103654.html>).
  - o Early action items underway include: determining subwatershed boundaries (starting with NYS priority waterbody list); surface water modeling; Suffolk County's pilot program for alternative septic systems.
- CT's Second Generation Nitrogen Strategy
  - o In May, CT published an Integrated Water Resources Management Plan ([http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/integrated\\_water\\_quality\\_management/CT\\_Integrated\\_Water\\_Resource\\_Management\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/water/integrated_water_quality_management/CT_Integrated_Water_Resource_Management_Report_Final.pdf)) which addresses point source and non-point source reductions and call for developing actions plans for different watershed areas within the state that will be developed over the next 6 years.



- CTDEEP is partnering with UCONN CLEAR NEMO program to do a coastal communities outreach project on reducing turf fertilizer use in coastal watershed communities.
- CTDOH and CTDEEP are working to hiring a contractor to do a study of septic systems located in the coastal towns in CT.
- CTDEEP and CTDOA are working on legislative language that will add turf fertilizer usage amounts, application rates, times, etc. to the legislative state statues. They are hoping to get it into this year's legislative session.
- No updates on EPA Nitrogen Strategy. They are still in contract negotiations.

#### **Updates on the NEMO MS4 support program**

- UCONN CLEAR is hiring a new person who will be dedicated to MS4 and will help communities work through all the new requirements in the permit. A website with resources for communities will be created and a new webinar series will be available that will focus on MS4 issues. The geospatial team is also going to provide trainings on the new mapping requirements.

#### **Nitrogen Control Outreach project**

- This nitrogen project is still in the formative stages and there is no final work plan yet. This is a small project that is meant to raise awareness of nitrogen as a problem on the coast. There are a couple of work plan items: 1) convene experts on lawn/turf fertilizer and come to agreement on best science and 2) work with Jaime Vaudrey on her work and trying to translate that work into presentations



and graphics that are readily accessible so people can understand the link between them and the embayments. There will be webinars and presentations and educational material will be created. The goal is to make this part of the educational package available to MS4 communities.

#### **Discuss CCMP Ecosystem Targets: Impervious Cover and Riparian Buffer Extent**

- ***Impervious Cover:*** How can we identify and track disconnected impervious cover? Are we going to have to do ground truthing?
  - o UConn CLEAR's dataset, going back to 1985, is 30 meter data based on land set imagery so it is perfect for tracking large changes over large periods of time, but not appropriate for looking at specific elements, such as driveways and rooftops. However, because of the new MS4 requirements in CT, mapping of impervious cover and disconnected impervious cover is being done. There was a high resolution flyover of CT in 2012 and the current MS4 agreement includes a subcontract to create a high resolution impervious cover layer for the entire state of CT. This would be at the level of outlining specific impervious elements. Another high resolution imagery in LIDAR was flown last spring. The issue is that it is still largely a field exercise to determine which impervious cover is connected and which is disconnected. If we start with a baseline, we can record how much is disconnected with every new LID project and keep track of it that way. This is a very aggressive target in terms of being able



to measure it, but the good news is that the data exists and the MS4 communities in CT have a need to track this.

- Another way to estimate impervious cover could be to look at the response of stream gauges.
- ***Riparian Buffer Extent:***
  - The 30 meter resolution data collected by UCONN CLEAR is appropriate to track this ecosystem target.
  - Judy also tracks projects through the Coastal Certificate program.

#### **Non-point source tracking tool**

- LISS funded a study of potential NPS tracking tools for the LISS watershed. The recommendation from that final report was to follow a model similar to the Chesapeake Bay tool, CAST.
- A discussion of a NPS tracking tool was brought up at the last Management Committee meeting in July and there was interest from some of the members in supporting a tool and having the workgroup come up with recommendations on how to move forward with a pilot project in a CT and/or NY watershed.
- CTDEEP is considering piloting the tool in one of the watersheds in CT and putting in next year's work plan/budget request.
- For the next Management Committee meeting, we will put forth a recommendation to pilot a NPS tracking tool in a watersheds in CT and potentially one in NY.



### **Current embayment initiatives**

- There are several opportunities for this group to collaborate with other groups on current initiatives in the LISS watershed.
  - o The LISS communications group is working on initiating a behavior change campaign in Niantic.
  - o Save the Sound is spearheading a unified embayment study to support future LIS embayment report cards.
  - o CTDEEP is also working on an embayment monitoring protocol project.
- The Rivers Alliance used to maintain a database on current projects and who was working on them. Judy will reach out to them to find out if they still maintain this database.

***The next WEWG workgroup call is scheduled for November 16<sup>th</sup> from 10am-12pm***