

Sustainable and Resilient Communities Work Group
ZOOM Online Meeting
Tuesday, February 14, 2023 – Meeting Summary



Attendees

Sylvain De Guise, CTSG
Nancy Balcom, CTSG
Becky Shuford, NYSG
Kathy Bunting-Howarth, NYSG
Kristen Laccetti, EPA
Kathleen Fallon, NYSG
Diane Ifkovic, CT DEEP
Sarah Schaefer-Brown, NYSG/LISS
Elizabeth Hornstein, NYSG/LISS
Sara Powell, NYSG/LISS
Deb Abibou, CTSG/LISS
Samarra Scantlebury, NYSDEC/LISS
Kris Masterson, USGS
Alison Branco, TNC
Corey Humphrey, Suffolk SWCD
Marcy Balint, CT DEEP
Jennifer Street, NYSDOS

Diana Nguyen, TNC CT
Jess LeClair, Sustainable CT
David Kozak
Sarah Watson, CT DEEP
Jimena Perez-Viscasillas,
NYSG/LISS
Brian Thompson, CT DEEP Holly
Drinkuth, TNC CT
Nancy Seligson, LISS CAC
Mark Tedesco, LISS
Marty Garrell, Adelphi
Sue Van Patten, NYSDEC
Esther Nelson, EPA
Mary Arnold, NYSDEC/NEIWPPC
Nicole Govert, CIRCA
Salme Cook, USGS

Welcome and Introductions - *Becky Shuford & Sylvain De Guise*

- We will be sharing thoughts on our 5-year work plan based on everything done to date
- Feedback on November 9th, 2022 meeting summary
- Welcomed Diana Nguyen and Tim Clark of TNC to the work group. Diana remarked about collaborating on Eastern Connecticut issues.

Review SRC 5-Year Work Plan & Oversight Structure - *Sara Powell*

Sara discussed the proposed changes/updates to the work plan.

- Note that a tracked-changes version has been circulated via email.
- Outcome #2 - Trained Community Decision-makers & Task #4 - Create & deliver training programs to improve the use of existing tools - Expand scope beyond tools and based on NA results
- Task #5 - Improve Coordination among levels of government - Remove references to pilot projects and focus on facilitating implementation of BMPs
- Change 'Circuit Riders' to 'Extension Professionals' & other small changes

- Update task timeline table

The other major change we are proposing is to the oversight structure.

- The original intent was to have an Executive Committee and then an Oversight Committee, Compound Flood Model Steering Committee, and Breaking Down Barriers Implementation Team.
- We are proposing not to have an Executive Committee, as it doesn't seem necessary.
- We are also proposing to transition the Oversight Committee to more ad hoc task based committees to provide guidance on specific tasks.
 - In addition to the Breaking Down Barriers Implementation Team, other ad hoc committees for this year would include a Resource Hub Committee to provide guidance on the development of the resource hub and an Annual Workshop Steering Committee. SRC WG members can let us know if they are interested in being a part of any of these committees.
- Several members commented that these changes made sense. No objections were raised.
- Please send the SRC EPs additional thoughts/feedback by Tuesday February 28th. If you have any significant concerns, cc Becky and Sylvain.

Updated on LIS Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program - Sarah Schaefer-Brown

Sarah reviewed the purpose of the LIS Grant Writing Assistance Program and our efforts to promote the Program.

- We are sending out information on this program widely to our stakeholders. Please feel free to share it with your networks as well.
- There will be a Coastal Watershed Network Summit on March 30th in Port Jefferson and the SRC Team is hosting a roundtable on the Grant Writing Program and breaking down barriers to accessing competitive funding opportunities.
- Update on applications/awards: 7 applications so far; have approved 2, one in NY and one in CT. Unfortunately, we ran into timeline issues for the approved CT application and we were not able to successfully award the funds in time. Feedback was sent to other applicants who may resubmit based on our feedback.
 - Sue: What has been the issue with the applications that haven't been approved?
 - Most of the issues so far have been incomplete applications. One project (rebuilding a seawall) was not appropriate for the Long Island Sound funding)
 - We have a low threshold but don't to be handing out blank checks
 - Mark: Any lessons learned so far?
 - We are finding that communities may need more assistance helping them to identify what they can do to address the problem, what grants are appropriate, what are the project steps, etc. We will be focusing more on providing this support.

- The SRC EPs are planning to provide an example application and an FAQ document to help provide guidance on how to fill out the application/what information is needed.
 - We expect more applications in coming months as additional grants open up like the LIS Futures Fund. Additionally, we hope that once the program is more established, communities will know this is something they can count on.
 - We need to make sure we are encouraging folks to apply early, as soon as the grant comes out or even in anticipation of grants.
 - David: Can we make sure funding agencies are promoting this program when they release their grant announcements, like the LIS FF, for example.
 - We are working closely with Lynn on planning Long Island Sound Futures Fund workshops and will be promoting the grant writing assistance program during these workshops.
 - We can also speak with Lynn about including a shout out/blurb about our program in the LISFF announcement and/or on the website. We hope other grant programs will also promote our opportunity.
 - Program has only been out a short time and came out at the end of 2022 right around the holidays. We expect more interest as spring grant programs come out. We have heard from several stakeholders/groups that they plan to apply to our program.
 - Becky and Kathy have been meeting with NY state representatives and have been sharing this information with representatives in LIS districts.
 - If anyone else has ideas about how to get the word out, let us know!
 - Sarah Watson: Would be happy to share some of the things they did with the DEEP Climate Resilience Fund. But also finding that people need help filling out a simple application. Would love to connect with us and have the grant writing assistance program as a resource for the next round.
 - Recommend consistent reminders and make sure people are aware of typical grant announcements/deadlines, and then ramp up engagement 6 weeks or so ahead of grant announcements. Also could have designated office hours where folks can join a zoom and ask questions.
 - Throw Environmental Funding Workshop March 23rd workshop - could be a place to make contacts. [Note that the Central CT workshop is March 27th]
- BDB Implementation Team
 - Provide feedback as the pilot program goes forward, evaluating effectiveness and success to help the SRC EPs guide next year's program, planned to start October 1st, 2023.
 - The BDB I-Team will meet twice per year, May and August.

- Appointment to the BDB I-Team will be approved by consensus vote of the SRC Work Group members. Appointment terms will be limited to 1 year with the option to extend the term with approval of the SRC Work Group members.
- The LISS SRC Work Group BDB I-Team shall be sensitive to issues that could result in a conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest. Individuals/entities serving on the BDB I-Team will be ineligible to apply as an applicant for the BDB Program during and one year after BDB I-Team appointment. In general, no BDB I-Team appointment shall result in direct significant personal gain for the appointee, their immediate family, or company, agency, or organization as a result of the BDB I-Team appointment.
- BDB Proposed I-Team:
 - EPA (1): Nikki Tachiki/Kristen Laccetti
 - LISCI/EJ team (1): Ashley Desrosiers, Bessie Wright, or Jimena Perez-Viscasillas
 - NY State Rep. (1): Sue Van Patten (NYSDEC)
 - CT State Rep. (1): Brian Thompson (CTDEEP)
 - NY Org. (1): Alison Branco (TNC)
 - CT Org. (1): Anthony Allen (Save the Sound)
 - NFWF (1): Lynn Dwyer
 - LIS Funders Collaborative (1): Tripp Killin
 - We preliminarily reached out to the folks above and so far everyone has been fine with the conflict of interest statement and willing to serve. Would like to get approval from the WG.
 - Jimena noted there are 2 EPA reps. We can follow up and see if EPA's representation should be consolidated and if there should be a different rep for the Long Island Community Impact Fund.
- FY23 proposal
 - Continue program and grant writing assistance
 - Potential to expand offered services based on feedback but same general structure.
 - Asking for \$200K per region, for a total of \$1M so we can support more communities and help them capitalize on available federal and state funding opportunities.

Review Year 2 Goals and Tasks - *Deb Visco Abibou*

Deb walked through the Gantt Chart

- Needs Assessment: We are working on putting together a single final PowerPoint for the Needs Assessment process and findings that we can pull from, and developing a one-pager to summarize our main findings to share with stakeholders.
- Annual Workshop: Looking to form a Steering Committee in May or June to help us determine format, date, agenda, etc.
 - Likely aiming for December again.

- Currently considering hybrid and virtual options based on feedback so far.
- We would like to have a field trip component - if the workshop is in the winter, this may not be the best time for outdoor activities, so we may have field trips in the fall prior to the workshop and connect them with other trainings/workshops that we are doing that lead up to the workshop.
- Clearinghouse/Resource Hub: Put out RFP to bring on a contractor to develop the resource hub. We anticipate selecting a contractor by early April and hope to have the Resource Hub completed around October/November. We plan to form an ad hoc team to assist us with the Resource Hub development and have regular check-ins with this team and the contractor.
- Training Programs: Identifying potential training programs of interest based on the Needs Assessment. We are figuring out which ones make sense for us to do together as a team and which make sense for us to do individually in our regions.
 - Participating in various funding workshops and other events this spring
 - Envisioning a resilience series that complements/leads up to the annual workshop for the fall.
- Government Coordination: This is ongoing. A lot of the work/tasks relate to other tasks (e.g., workshops/trainings). Additionally we may be revising the tasks/deliverables based on our proposed changes to the SRC Work Plan.
- Compound Flood Model: Continuing to coordinate with USGS and provide ground truthing, community level recommendations etc.
- Project Pipeline: We have developed draft criteria and are looking how to coordinate this task with other guidance/project pipelines that are already out there (e.g, CIRCA guidance).
 - We have been speaking with funding agencies and have been distributing relevant funding opportunities to our stakeholders via emails/constant contact.
 - Assisting with LIS Futures Fund, including assisting applicants and with workshops. Also speaking with and working with other funding agencies.
 - Circulating a monthly funding guide which will eventually best hosted on the resource hub.
- Breaking Down Barriers: Grant Writing Assistance has been rolled out. The Implementation Team will assist us with evaluation and next year's iteration of the program in May and August.
- Also added Work Plan Revisions Task
 - In addition to the small revision we are doing now, we also will want to think about when it makes sense to work on the next new 5-year plan.

USGS Compound Flood Risk Model Updates – Kris Masterson

- Kris reviewed the approach for the USGS model
 - Two phase study, mostly discussing phase 1 today
 - Phase 1 - Risk associated with co-occurrence of multiple flood drivers
 - Resolution: 800m x 800m

- Identified risk factors associated with each flooding category (rainfall, coastal, groundwater)
 - For rainfall where there are multiple risks, ranked and weighted them using Multi-Criteria Decision Making approach
 - Flood extent for coastal storms: Inland flood extent for storms with return periods of 1 year, 10 years, 25 years, and 100 years
 - Groundwater: Identifying areas with shallow depth to groundwater
 - Exploring potential summary mapper where you click on each cell and it tells you which flooding events are likely for that cell
- Statistical analysis of past compound events
 - Time series 1970-2022 compiled for 20 precipitation gauges, 34 coastal storms, 287 groundwater monitoring locations
 - Triads - proximate groundwater, coastal and precipitation stations - identified to evaluate degree of correlation between time series
 - Preliminary observations: coastal and precipitation correlated
 - Still exploring correlation of storm events to water table attributes
- Experimenting with maps and how to display information
 - Plan to have maps to share for next meetings with the Steering Committee and Extension Professional Team, planned for April
 - Thinking about how to present information in a way that's digestible and useable
- Kathy: Will this model help communities predict inundation from these compounding flood risks during various types of storm events?
 - Phase 1 static maps showing risks for groundwater, coastal and rainfall; try to understand what factors contribute to these risk and when they may co-occur together
 - Phase 2 will be process based models (inset models) that simulate links between these flood risks, and links between infrastructure and flooding risks. Phase 2 will be focused on a few specific areas; may provide lessons for other areas. Pilot model underway for greenport.
 - Need to ensure data is available to calibrate models for selected locations; using NOAA flood event reports and stakeholder input.
- Question from chat: how do you calibrate model when considering future SLR?
 - First step is to make sure model represents actual current conditions and work to adjust model so that simulated model matches measured data
 - Once you have calibrated existing conditions model, then run different SLR scenarios
 - Processed based models will be used to look at existing data and some future SLR and storm surge scenarios
- Flood inundation will or will not be modeled?

- Phase 1 will be a series of maps to understand risks from groundwater, rainfall, and coastal flooding under existing conditions and various SLR scenarios. And then can go to other maps to dig more info about the data.
- Phase 2 will model more of the interactions/water movement
- Elizabeth asked USGS to elaborate on the mapping products from this project
 - Experimenting with different ways to present information. Maybe could have an online mapper where you can click on an area and see what the risks are and then dive deeper into the data. There are also clickable/interactive pdfs.
 - Looking to see what other data should be presented/incorporated into the project and called out.
 - Sylvain: Make sure EPs are engaged in conversations about what products would be most useful since they will be rolling out products to stakeholders.
 - USGS is meeting with the SRC EPs and this was a point of discussion at the last meeting.
 - Sylvain: Would think displaying compound risk and individual risks would be useful. Can we add or multiply risks to come to a cumulative risk? The combination of flooding from different sources may increase risks to a community during a storm and may get them to take action.
 - Kris: Want to make sure combined risk information presented is accurate; it's hard to model this. But will think about how best to combine this data. There may be an opportunity to learn from phase 2 models to make associations for areas not covered by the phase 2 models.
- Kathy: Would citizen science data be helpful? Recently launched MyCoast NY app where people can submit data/photos after storm and flooding events.
 - Kris: short answer is yes
 - Compared rainfall risk data with NOAA data as a qualitative check; could use other data/reports as well.
 - SRC EPs did share MyCoast link with USGS

Updates from SRC WG Members

- No updates

Wrap-Up & Adjourn

- Thank you for your participation! Please let the SRC EPs and USGS know if you have any thoughts/feedback on anything that was covered at today's meeting.
- Please send us any feedback on proposed work plan changes by 2/28. If you have significant concerns please make sure to cc Becky and Sylvain. In absence of significant concerns, we will move forward.
- Kris: If there are concrete examples of flooding events, please share them with USGS.
- Next SRCWG meetings: 5/09/2023, 8/08/2023, 11/14/2023