

# Communications, Outreach, and Engagement Work Group

## Meeting Notes

### Wednesday, January 10, 2024



#### Attendees:

Anya Grondalski	NIEWPCC
Braden Lynn	CT DEEP
Catherine Prunella	NYSG
Casey Abel	EPA
Christian Alexander	Greenwich Audubon Center
Christine Suter	Friends of the Bay
David Seigerman	Save the Sound
Derek Faulkner	Southern CT State University (SCSU) & ERWRI
Diana Payne	Connecticut Sea Grant, University of Connecticut
Emma Coffey	CT DEEP
Francis McParland	NYS DEC
Francine Gordon	Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Hannah Vagts	Fishers Island Seagrass Management Coalition
Holly Drinkuth	The Nature Conservancy
Irene Scheid	Alley Pond Environmental Center (APEC)

Jimena Perez-Viscasillas	NYSG
John Vallacchi	The Bronx is Blooming
Leona Chin	Kissena Synergy
Leigh Shemitz	Sound Waters
Lilli Genovesi	NYSG
Maggie Cozens	CTSG
Mary Ellen Mateleska	Mystic Aquarium
Michelle Maitland	Town of Groton Public Works
Maureen Murphy	Citizens Campaign for the Environment
Nicole Pocchiare	Town of Brookhaven Environmental Educator
Nina Quaratella	NESS
Paul Stacey	Footprints In The Water LLC
Robert Burg	NEIWPCC
Sally Connolley	City Island Oyster Reef (CIOR)
Sara Powell	NYSG
Samarra Scantlebury	NYS DEC

**Meeting site:** Virtual

**Co-Chair and Zoom host – Lillit (Lilli) Genovesi, NYSG**

**CT co-chair –Maggie Cozens**

#### Introduction:

The meeting was called to order by Lillit Genovesi and consisted of general updates and announcements.

**Jimena Beatriz Perez-Viscasillas (NYSG)** provided an update on the Environmental Justice Needs Assessment. She announced that the results of the assessment have been compiled and are ready to be shared. They are presenting the results of the assessments at the LISS Management Committee Meeting on 1/16, at the Environmental Justice Work Group Meeting on 2/8, and another meeting in February (the final date will be determined shortly.)

**Diana Payne (CTSG)** provided an update on the Long Island Sound Schools Network. Ten schools were selected as awardees of the program out of the 24 applicants. Four schools were selected from New York and the other six were from Connecticut. The projects will focus on a variety of topics related to Long Island Sound.

#### The network schools in Connecticut are:

Flanders Elementary  
East Lyme

Mystic River Magnet  
Torrington High  
Trumbull High  
Walter Fitzgerald Campus  
Southport  
Waterford High.

**The network schools in New York are:**

Jefferson Elementary  
New Rochelle  
PS175X  
Bronx  
Smithtown High School West  
Trinity Elementary

Lillit then introduced Anya Grondalski. Anya recently joined NEIWPICC as a science writer. Anya will be responsible for generating content for the LISS website, newsletters, and social media.

**Lightning Talks:**

1. **Nina Quaratella**, [New England Science and Sailing](#) (NESS). NESS is a non-profit located in Stonington, CT, and provides marine science education and recreation opportunities to young people throughout eastern Connecticut, and increasingly further into the watershed. NESS focuses on experiential and hands-on learning to encourage social-emotional growth and environmental literacy.
2. **Christian Alexander**, [Greenwich Audubon](#). Christopher gave a presentation on the general operations of Greenwich Audubon and their programming. They provide a variety of programming to families and school-age kids. Christopher flagged a major focus area of Greenwich Audubon as the importance of facilitating early childhood connections with nature.
3. **Catherine Prunella**, [New York Sea Grant](#) (NYSG). Catherine is a Water Quality Extension Specialist at NYSG and is focusing on extending marine debris research across NYC. She is specifically working with researchers from Columbia University on microplastics, specifically from laundry. She asked that individuals interested in learning more should reach out to [cjp275@cornell.edu](mailto:cjp275@cornell.edu).

**Presentations:**

**CCMP Writing Team Update – Casey Abel, EPA**

**Long Island Sound Study Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (LISS CCMP) – Casey Abel, EPA**

Casey presented on the current states of the LISS CCMP Revision, which is actively underway. The Revision and Oversight Group (ROG) developed recommendations for the CCMP revision including:

- Four Goals, each with 3-5 objectives to be developed by corresponding writing teams from January to mid-April:

- Clean waters and healthy watersheds- led by Sue Van Patten (NYSDEC), Kelly Streich (CTDEEP) and Tim Hunter (CT DEEP)
- Thriving habitats, and abundant wildlife – Harry Yamalis (CT DEEP), DeAva Lambert (CT DEEP), and Shauna Kamath (NYSDEC)
- Sustainable and resilient communities - Deb Abibou (CTSG), Elizabeth Hornsteign (NYSG), Sara Powell (NYSG), Sarah Schechter (NYSG), and Sarah Schechter (CTSG)
- Informed and engaged public – Robert Burg (NEWIPCC), Jimena Perez-Viscasillas (NYSG), and Maggie Cozens (CTSG)
- Draft vision and mission statements:
  - Vision: *The Long Island Sound in its watershed has clean waters, healthy habitats, thriving wildlife, resilient coasts, and an engaged public.*
  - Mission: *The Long Island Sound Study leads a collective effort to restore and care for the sound and its watershed.*
- There will be three public engagement sessions with in-person and virtual components held in May of 2024.

#### **Timeline:**

Jan – March: Develop one-sentence description of goals. Review and revise Objectives (formerly ecosystem targets)

April: Present progress to Management Committee (MC), CAC, STAC, and Work Groups

May: Present CCMP revision process at public engagement sessions

April – June: Continue to edit Objectives

June – August: Review and revise Implementation Actions and Supplemental Support Documents (one-pager to accompany each action).

July: Present CCMP revision progress to MC, CAC, STAC and Work Groups

September/October: Present CCMP revisions during 2 public comment information sessions.

October: Present progress to MC, CAC, STAC and Work Groups

October – Dec: Draft, edit, finalize remaining CCMP text

January 2025: start formal MC approval processes leading up to Policy Committee approval.

The deadline to join the writing teams was January 12<sup>th</sup>. Those interested in participating are still encouraged to reach out to the corresponding writing team leads. Casey asked folks to consider limiting themselves to one writing team. The team leaders for Engaged and Informed Public are Robert Burg (NEWIPCC), Jimena Perez-Viscasillas (NYSG), and Maggie Cozens (CTSG).

#### **Stormwater Campaign – Michelle Maitland, Town of Groton**

**Michelle Maitland, Town of Groton**, gave a presentation related to stormwater. After reviewing general information on pollutants and stormwater, Michelle highlighted several pressing municipal concerns. These include: volume of work, tax-payer buy-in, time, scientific monitoring of pollutants, capacity limitations, and sequencing.

#### **Canines for Clean Water – Maggie Cozens, CTSG**

The COE team is currently revising LISS stormwater materials and are developing messaging regarding specific stormwater contaminants. Maggie provided an overview of one of these projects, Canines for Clean Water. This

campaign is designed to educate and engage the public on best practices related to canine bacterial contaminants and stormwater health. Messaging and outreach materials are being developed currently, and the project will be soft launched later this year.

#### **Breakout Rooms:**

Maggie explained that the COE team is seeking input on the revision of their stormwater campaign. The former brochure was shared, along with video examples of a stormwater campaign from Lake Champlain. Maggie then invited attendees to participate in breakout rooms. During breakout room discussions, participants were asked to answer the following questions.

1. How can we present this information in a more inclusive way?
2. How can we disseminate this information in a more inclusive and accessible way?
3. What stormwater messages/focus areas are important to your organization and to communities within your watershed?

#### **Breakout Room Discussions:**

##### **Group 1 (Lillit)**

Update photos, holding people accountable and making “small asks” of people.

##### **Group 2 (Maggie)**

The group identified the importance of representation, multi-lingual outreach materials, and cultural sensitivity as priorities for presenting the information in an inclusive and accessible way. The group identified fisheries, oyster farming, and aquaculture as areas of importance regarding stormwater messaging and concerns.

##### **Group 3 (Jimena)**

Visual improvements, less text, translation of materials and disseminating information in a variety of places by partnering with local groups (libraries and churches, for example). Making plans for stormwater events and marine debris. Replacement of older septic systems. Encouraging community-wide solutions instead of emphasizing hard structures. Discouraging floodplain development.

##### **Group 4 (Casey)**

General Feedback on Stormwater Brochure: Multi-lingual representation (beyond English and Spanish), using more dynamic images that are place-based, K9 for Clean Water could have signage at dog parks and other waterfronts in easy to spot places (and Land Trust Areas), make sure to tailor the signage to the specific location. Important messages from organizations: Emphasis on storm drains as the transport systems of NPS pollution, focus on the basics of cleaning up the storm drains (make messaging clear for the general public), the benefits of living shorelines and nature-based solutions are important messaging. Targeting golf courses.

#### **The meeting ended with the following announcements:**

The next COE meeting is scheduled for April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and will be virtual.