

Lake Champlain Basin Program
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday February 1st, 2017
10:00 AM – 2:45 PM
LCBP Conference Room, Gordon Center House, Grand Isle, VT

TAC Meeting Summary

Attendance: Mike Winslow, Jamie Shanley, Eric Perkins, Kip Potter, Mark Malchoff, Ed Snizek, Angela Shambaugh, Kevin Farrington, Jenn Callahan, Martin Mimeault, Andrew Schroth, Breck Bowden

Staff: Matt Vaughan, Stephanie Castle, Meg Modley, Eric Howe, Josh Klavens

Public: David Borthwick-Leslie

I. 10:00 AM Executive session: Innovative Ag St. Albans grant(s) ROD

Kevin made a motion to approve the draft ROD. Kip seconded. All in favor. Angela and Breck abstain.

II. 10:45 AM Updates and Announcements

Andrew (UVM): New EPSCoR project is called BREE. There is talk of changing from REESES watershed model to SHPF model for the IAM for St Albans Bay. Breck has worked with this model and thinks it is a good choice. They are still working in Potash Brook. They will be hiring a lake modeler in the Engineering Department. They are currently down to a short list of candidates that will be visiting campus starting on the 13th. Andrew will be in touch about research talks.

Jamie Shanley (USGS): Laura Medalie has published trends that she presented to TAC. Jamie will forward link to Matt to distribute. She's doing similar analysis in Long Island Sound and will give a presentation at NEAB in late March. Keith Robinson is on the IJC flood committee. He would like to give a presentation to the TAC.

Eric / Breck: IJC had their official study board meeting to address Richelieu / Lake Champlain flooding. Technical and Public advisory groups. Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux (UVM) is heading Public advisory committee.

Breck received email from Deborah Lee (NOAA) who is heading up search committee to form advisory groups. The public advisory group helps the study board develop flood management policies. The social and political advisory group works with social and political acceptability. Looking for 2-3 US members for the committee on Economics also. Breck is accepting recommendations for committee member suggestions. He would like names and biographies within the week.

Kip (NRCS): Meeting scheduled next Wednesday Feb 9th with national coordinator for new tool that NRCS has developed: resource stewardship evaluation tool. This tool has bundled all of

their existing tools into one package. This is something they will use as a conservation planning tool in the future. The state is considering using it for Vermont Environmental Stewardship program as certification tool. Interest from private sector for certification programs. This meeting is open to anyone with interest. Please contact Kip if interested in attending.

III. Summary of Previous TAC meeting

Mark made a motion to approve the summary of January meeting. Angela seconded. All in favor.

IV. LCBP updates, Eric Howe, LCBP

IJC has focused on water quantity issues in the past. Now they are exploring water quality issues in Lake Champlain. Anything they do in the next year would come out of current budget. Eric is traveling to DC and trying to meet with IJC folks to discuss their future plans and to try to collaborate. Currently Stephanie is coordinating IJC work, but Matt will take over once Stephanie leaves.

Stephanie Castle is moving on in her career and will be joining the team at Tetra Tech in Burlington. New job description for the LCBP Technical Associate will be posted in the next few days

The Steering committee will be going over FY17 budget at their next meeting. Eric does not currently know how much money will be available in the next budget cycle.

The process to approve and finalize *Opportunities for Action* is rolling forward. We are now in public comment period. LCBP will be accepting comments through March 6th. Eric presented to NY Citizen Advisory Committee in Plattsburgh. He will also present at the VT Citizen Advisory Committee and on Feb 20 to Quebec Citizen Advisory Committee. Executive Committee meeting in March will wrap up *Opportunities for Action* so we can get the appropriate signatures. Martin: Quebec Citizen Advisory Committee members will see *Opportunities for Action* presentation from Eric. They are also trying to raise issues and feedback from citizens of Quebec through local watershed groups. Other issue to discuss is IJC work on water quality.

There is a legislative briefing in Montpelier tomorrow afternoon. This is an informal gathering for new legislatures and administration. The purpose is to help get them up to speed on management issues.

V. Continued discussion of FY18 Technical budget process, Eric Howe & Matt Vaughan

Matt discussed the current draft of the FY18 Technical budget process. The purpose was to solicit feedback from the TAC before it is presented to the Executive Committee and eventually to the Steering Committee for approval.

LCBP's Conflict of Interest policy will be revised soon. Mark had a question about working from SUNY. If a proposal comes from within your department, this is a conflict of interest, but if it comes from another department within your institution then is it not a conflict of interest? Currently LCBP goes by department, but this will be revisited when revising the Conflict of Interest guidelines.

Currently, we ask confidential reviewers to review grant proposals. Mike: would outside reviewers be confidential? Matt: Yes, they would be. LCBP Executive Session excludes members of the public but may bring in experts to address the issue at hand. The outside expert may not have the whole sense of the LCBP, however. TAC has the choice to bring in an outside expert. We define “outside” as someone who is not on the TAC and who does not have a COI.

There was conversation about how bringing outside experts would work procedurally. For example, should we think of this review committee as a subcommittee of the TAC? This offers the opportunity to bring in outside members if their expertise is required. The subcommittee could make a formal recommendation to the TAC.

Jamie: If I have a conflict of interest on one proposal then I am out of all the review? Matt: Yes. This is slightly different from the current policy. If you have a Conflict of Interest for one proposal, you could potentially bump others down, which would move yours closer to the top. Martin suggested that for pre-proposals TAC should be able to discuss and decide what to move forward with, regardless of existing Conflicts of Interest. Agreement around the table. If the TAC loses several members due to Conflicts of Interest, then it could be an issue. Eric: if we end up with 4 priority areas for preproposals, we can have subcommittees for each priority areas. Then the TAC would not rank them against each other.

MaryJo: EPA understands that there is concern about members of the TAC being cut out of the process. We need to think about folks outside of the TAC and ensuring that they feel like they are on an equal playing field.

Matt discussed having a separate pool of “core” projects that will be chosen by the Steering Committee and will not be part of the pre-proposal process. Core projects have gone back and forth between base budget and TAC ranked projects. Those projects might include the Long-term monitoring project, Water Chestnut project, MET stations, Local Implementation Grants, Boat Launch Stewards, etc. Some TAC members would like to review these core projects.

Martin: Is it possible move the pre-proposal process back into August instead of October? It could be done earlier. Matt: The timeframe as written reflects the schedule of Steering and Executive meetings. Keep in mind that LCBP will have full proposals before we would approve a budget and put out an RFP. The timeframe is draft and there is still room to move things around.

There was discussion about the role of the TAC with this new process. The TAC was developed to advise the Steering Committee. There is concern that this role may be limited if the Conflict of Interest guidelines cut out members. Breck: TAC members are invited to be here for their expertise not to represent their organizations. Even if there is a person that is a diabolic sinister person is one of over 20 and their influence may be limited. Others: one person often can have a significant influence over a group discussion.

There was discussion about possibly relieving the pressure of Conflict of Interest guidelines by splitting the pre-proposals and later proposals into “silos,” or general categories. This would result in separate ranked lists, and the Steering Committee could decide on how many in each

category to support. The idea here is that the ability for someone with a Conflict of Interest to undermine the process would be limited because only ranked lists go to the Steering Committee.

On-line vote will happen in between meetings and that may eliminate one full TAC meeting.

MaryJo- at a minimum it would be helpful to discuss the two options that were presented (1) rank within the categories or all-together, and (2) if a TAC member will stay in the process if someone from the same institution is in the running

Eric and Matt will take this process to the Executive Committee next week to discuss the two options shared today, and to solicit feedback on the Conflict of Interest policy.

VI. 12:00 PM Lunch

VII. 1:00 PM Examining Spatial Variability in Concentration-Discharge Patterns across the Lake Champlain Basin, *Kristen Underwood, UVM*

Kristen Underwood presented her dissertation research on concentration-discharge patterns across the Lake Champlain Basin using long-term monitoring data, and Bayesian statistics. She also presented the effects land use on nutrient loading, turbidity, and E. coli concentrations based on LaRosa Volunteer Monitoring data and GIS modeling techniques. Kristen's presentation on the effects of land use on these water quality parameters can be found at <http://www.uvm.edu/vmc/annualMeeting/2016/content>

VIII. Update from Lake Steward Program, *Meg Modley, LCBP*

Meg Modley and Phil Brett gave a summary on the current state of the Boat Launch Stewards program, and presented some of the findings from analyzing the past ten years of data collected by the stewards. In the 2016 season, 25,697 people were surveyed at 14 launches by 9 stewards. 80% of boaters took spread prevention measures, 15.8% of boats had aquatic organisms on them, and 6.7% of boats had invasive species on them. Over the past 10 years from 2007 – 2016, 83,000 boats were inspected, 181,000+ people were surveyed, nearly 8,000 inspections found aquatic invasive species, and 4,000+ inspections found invasive species. Boaters often came from the Hudson River before entering the Lake, and often were on their way to the Hudson River after the Lake. Other popular pre- and post-Lake Champlain destinations were Candlewood Lake, Saratoga Lake, Connecticut River, and Lake George. Motor boats carried the most organisms of all the crafts surveyed. Risk analysis showed that Shelburne, Mallet's Bay, South Hero, Colchester Point, and Ticonderoga were the five highest risk areas for introduction of aquatic invasive species. Meg and Phil will submit a final report on their findings.

IX. 2:45 PM Adjourn