

**Lake Champlain Basin Program
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday June 7th 2017
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

TAC Meeting Summary

Members: Mike Winslow, Jamie Shanley, Neil Kamman, Eric Perkins, Bernie Pientka, Laura DiPietro, MaryJo Feuerbach, Kip Potter, Ed Snizek, Bob Brower, John Kanoza, Fred Dunlap, Martin Mimeault, Angela Shambaugh, Jennifer Callahan, Steve Kramer (in for Eric Young), Dennis Deweese (phone), Bill Ardren (phone)

Guests: Keith Robinson (International Joint Commission), Lana Pollack (International Joint Commission), Michael Laitta (International Joint Commission), Hillary Solomon (Poultney Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District), Jennifer Alexander (Poultney Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District), Jeff Carter (UVM Extension), Myra Lawyer (NYSDEC), Bethany Sargent (VT DEC), Kari Dolan (VT DEC), Tom Berry (Senator Leahy's office)

Staff: Eric Howe, Ellen Kujawa, Meg Modley, Matt Vaughan

I. 10:00 AM Updates, Announcements, and Public Comments

Angela: Cyanobacteria monitoring is underway. Pete is out in the field, training sessions are underway, and volunteers begin the week of June 19th.

Martin: Brought posters and cards about invasive species for Meg and/or for the Echo Center. Meeting of watershed groups on Monday, June 19th in Saint Armand. Presentations on phosphorus and soil conservation. Hosting meeting of Missisquoi Bay Task Force next week.

Bill: Follow-up to earlier salmon habitat workshop: salmon habitat working group has been formed to integrate some of the prioritization of improving salmon habitat in the Winooski watershed. This joins with previous strong watershed work. Neil K. helped with initial development and Matt V. will be part of the team moving forward.

Neil: Mentioned at the last TAC meeting the development of the clean water state budget. The governor vetoed the budget, so the legislature will revisit it. The watershed management division has been working hard to get money on the group: river corridor easement grants (applications June 21st), block grant RFP for large amounts of funding (closed June 5th) standard ecosystem restoration grant (July 6th), local road management through municipalities and the Agency of Transportation.

Mike: update from VT EPSCoR: project technical advisory meeting two weeks ago to provide guidance to the research that will be taking place over the next five years. Focusing on refining work on Missisquoi Bay and moving forward to Saint Albans Bay.

Kip: NRCS has been running four targeted watershed workshops focused on financial assistance and technical assistance to watersheds. Developed estimates of phosphorus reduction and five-year goals (both McKenzie and Saint Albans Bay exceeded their first

year goal, and Rock and Pike both nearly met their goals). Rewriting agreements with local partners to ensure that progress continues.

Tom Berry: federal spending bills for 2017 were adopted last month, level funded for TAC's work, so allocation can hold steady to February estimates. Now onward to FY18.

Bernie P: Two state records recently broken for fish: redhorse sucker and carp. News release will come out shortly. Sturgeon caught will have late 1990s tag, added acoustic tag to follow in future.

Jamie: Level funding for next year except that Steven's Brook funding will be discontinued.

II. 10:15 AM Summary of Previous TAC meeting

- a. Review and approve minutes from the May 3rd TAC meeting
Neil moves to approve with minor changes, Martin seconds. Motion is carried.

III. 10:20 AM LCBP updates, *Eric Howe, LCBP*

- a. Updates on LCBP activities since the last meeting
Eric: Welcomes Lana Pollack and Mike Laitta. Ellen is coordinating the next Lake Champlain Research Consortium conference, and has put together a planning committee. A few possible sessions include monitoring in Lake Champlain, microplastics and pharmaceuticals. Likely a 2-day conference to be held in either Burlington or Plattsburgh. OFA release will be held on June 19th. Steering committee moved last month not to move forward on the edge of field monitoring project and to hold onto those funds for the time being.

Matt: the draft priorities discussed in TAC's last meeting were wordsmithed slightly and approved by the Steering Committee. The TAC discussed the new process and decided to keep the priorities as presented. TAC next meets in September and will see the draft call for pre-proposals before it goes to the Steering Committee. Mike recommends that staff develop scoring criteria for proposals in September.

IV. 10:30 AM Edge of Field Monitoring Discussion, *Kip Potter*

National edge of field monitoring program continues this year; applications are currently open and close July 10th. Only a handful of states have signed up so far. An opportunity this year to use those funds, possibly with match from the Basin Program. Kip seeks TAC's feedback on how NRCS should continue with edge of field monitoring. He thinks that a focus on above/below projects would be more beneficial than paired watershed designs.

Laura suggested developing a work group to develop a plan to move forward with edge of field and tile monitoring. All are in agreement with this idea. Laura suggests membership: Laura, Kip, someone from DEC, Mike, Matt. Proposes scheduling a meeting as soon as possible – Mike can't do until the end of June. Matt will send an email to TAC and coordinate meeting offline.

V. 11:00 AM International Joint Commission Project Update, *Keith Robinson*

Lana Pollack provided a brief introduction to the IJC's work. Water quality is of growing concern. Keith reviewed the current Lake Champlain - Richelieu River study. 2011 flooding was a motivating event for the study. For the 2013 plan of study, IJC recommended three options for a study. Lake-wide flood inundation maps that used existing LiDAR were the major product. A final report and interactive maps are available online. IJC had funds in 2015 to get work started on some recommendations from 2013 plan of study. The 2015 study looked at what kind of data needed to gather to improve flood forecasting. Last year, CA and US moved forward to create reference to carry out Option B of the plan of study.

A study board has been formed, including five US and five CA members. The team includes study managers, secretariats, technical working groups, public advisory group, and independent review group. LCBP is US secretariat, Bay Missisquoi is CA secretariat. The study board will be submitting 5-year final workplan by October 2, 2017. Public meetings to be held the week of July 10.

They have added a few new gauges to Lake Champlain for the project. They plan to add wave and meteorological monitoring stations.

Fred: Could the study products revise FEMA mapping? Keith: that's FEMA's decision. The tools will be available. Flood frequency analysis has already been done.

There is a new reference in negotiation for Missisquoi Bay and Memphremagog.

VI. 12:00 PM Lunch

VII. 1:00 PM Agronomist Program Updates, Hilary Solomon, Jeff Carter, and Myra Lawyer

Brief overview of ACAP: year 1 focused on building a base of cooperating farmers and water quality projects, year 2 focused on the Lake Champlain TMDL, year 3 focused on identifying farms with less history implementing BMPS and targeting WQ data. Year 4 has focused on working with these new farmers. Most farmers are the small producers, who are less closely regulated and have less of an ability to receive outside help (fewer staff). ACAP3 has had measurable success in nutrient managing, cover cropping, conservation tilling, etc. Worked with 47 farms (up from 35) to implement 75 WQ improvement projects. One of the central focuses for ACAP3 was nutrient management planning. They used aeration, cover cropping, conservation tillage, streambank protection (livestock exclusion and riparian buffers); additional small grants came from other partners. ACAP targets included number of farms and number of implemented practices, nutrient management, decreased nutrients in the water. Compiled summaries of farms, and results are mainly positive.

Jeff Carter: ACAP has allowed us to put staff in place, who can then be funded by a variety of other grants. Bus tour next Tuesday to observe agriculture and water quality – leaves from Conant's Farm in Richmond at 9:30. Worked with 410 individual farms over

the course of ACAP to implement nutrient management, manure storage and handling, cover crops, soil aeration, conservation tillage, field buffers, sensitive area seeing, and livestock exclusion from streams, mostly focused on nutrient managing, manure storage and handling, and cover cropping. A quarter of the corn crops in the state are now cover cropped. Scores of nutrient and land management have improved overall.

Myra Lawyer provided an update on the NY Ag program. On-farm “farming in the basin” meetings have been coordinated since early 2013; this year, the April meeting covered how to read a soil test, and summer meetings will focus on identifying pasture grasses. Participated in Ag Day event at SUNY ADK, other workshops included cover crop trials with interseeder, Adirondack Waterfest, Essex County farm safety day.

VIII. 2:00 PM 2018 State of the Lake Discussion, *Matt Vaughan, Colleen Hickey*

Matt circulated State of the Lake 2015 reports and solicited suggestions for things to keep and update, remove, or add. The TAC provided helpful feedback during discussion and in writing. The conversation will continue in the fall and spring. LCBP aims to release the 2018 State of the Lake by summer of next year.

IX. 3:00 PM Adjourn