

**Lake Champlain Basin Program**  
***Draft Meeting Summary - Executive Committee Meeting***  
**Thursday, January 11, 2018 9:30 AM – 3:15 PM**

***LCBP Office, Gordon Center House, Grand Isle, VT***

**9:30 Arrival and Networking**

**10:00 AM Meeting Convenes** – *Chair: Emily Boedecker (VT ANR representative)*

- **Committee Members:** Emily Boedecker (VT DEC), Martin Mimeault (QC MDDELCC), Mike Winslow (TAC Chair), Vic Putman (NY CAC Chair), MaryJo Feuerbach (EPA R1); conference call participants: Christina Marts (NPS), Mario (EPA R2), Lori Fisher (VT CAC Chair), Pierre Leduc (QC CAC), John Krueger (HAPAC Chair)
- **Staff:** Matt Vaughan, Jim Brangan, Eric Howe, Colleen Hickey, Ryan Mitchell, Bethany Sargent (VT DEC/LCBP), Fred Dunlap (NYDEC/LCBP)
- **Guests:** Kari Dolan (VT DEC)
- **Public Comments** – Lori commented that many people participated in the LCR Conference. It was excellent, many thanks to the LCBP team and partners. Lori would love to see these conferences repeated more frequently. Buzz asked about proceedings of the conference. Buzz has colleagues who are interested in learning more about the Champlain basin, and proceedings or summaries of the Conference would be helpful for them to learn about the lake and issues. The abstracts are up, with contact information as well, that interested people can refer to. Emily noted that there remains a lot of attention on Lake Carmi.

**ACTION ITEM:** Approve Meeting Minutes from November 30, 2017

Buzz moved to approve, John seconded the motion. Suggested minor edits. All in favor as amended; no abstentions.

- **Partner Updates:**
  - Jurisdictional:
  - NY: Fred reported that Bob Stegemann sends his regrets; he has a 2-day APA meeting conflicting with today. Governor Cuomo announced a HAB initiative statewide with about \$65 million available to reduce or prevent HABs in selected watersheds, including Lake Champlain and Lake George. Funding will include support to bring experts to the region. Summits will occur in each of the location; staff are currently identifying projects that could be implemented to address blooms in the Port Henry and Point au Roche beach areas. A consultant has been hired to begin work on this project. Draft plans will be assembled in advance of the summit for each region.
  - QC: Martin reported that Daniel Leblanc is back from leave full time. The Lake Champlain Research Symposium was a great event. Martin thanked Ellen and the LCBP team for their effort on this. There was a very strong participation from Québec on this. The “Lake Champlain Unfiltered” panel was very interesting, and a lot of fun. Martin echoed Kip Potter’s comments about the cuts to EPA and other federal programs and how these cuts may affect staffing levels in the LCB. The next step for the LCBP should be to provide a follow-up summary of take-away messages. The LCRC also has this responsibility to bring this out to the public, to connect with a broader audience.
  - VT: Emily reported that the VT Legislature is back in session, and several new reports have been or will soon be produced. On Monday, the Clean Water Investment report will be released, which demonstrates how funds are implemented and moved out the door and provides a beautiful snapshot of this story, with a nice graphic design. The MOA between

Québec and Vermont is underway, their next meeting is next week. DEC also is looking at stormwater solutions and Act 64 requirements. The Municipal general permit and MS4 permits are moving through the system and should be ready to go in the next few months. The VT Legislature has placed a lot of pressure on DEC to meet their deadlines for finalizing these permits. There has been a response from VAAFM to respond to a legislative mandate to update their required agricultural practices with respect to tile drain systems. VAAFM has identified infield inlets as a significant source of phosphorus. Kari reported that the VT DEC “brown bag” lecture series is still going; next presentation is on the Clean Water Investment Report. It will be Thursday January 18 at 11:00. Remote participation is available via the VT DEC webpage, or attend live at VT DEC offices in National Life. Kari credited her staff for their job assembling the Clean Water Investment report, with particular credit to Bethany Sargent and Emily Bird for their effort on this. Recently had a round of grants for Partnership Grants to build capacity. \$310,000 awarded to groups like VYCC and Lake Memphremagog to work with their partners to get projects on the ground, as well as train the trainer programs. VAAFM also closed an RFP to select projects for BMP implementation and improving farm efficiency.

- Federal partners
  - EPA R1: MaryJo reported that EPA R1 is continuing to track progress on the VT implementation of their TMDL. Second report card is due early this quarter. There is some concern with the delays that have occurred with the permit development. EPA staff are currently reviewing a pre-draft of their MS4 permit. Reminder that EPA ORD has a RARE project to UVM to look at use of drinking water residuals to apply to stormwater runoff. Also have a farm grazing project getting started that will look at economic concerns for farmers interested in moving from confined practices to grazing practices. At the symposium, there was a lot of interest in continuing monitoring. Office of ORD has been teaming with R1 to promote development of low-cost sensors. They have a prototype of a surface water sensor that is being tested in the Mystic River this year. Also have a sensor challenge in Cape Cod that is developing a low-cost septic system sensor to look at several forms of nitrogen. Particular focus is on alternative septic systems that are meant to reduce nitrogen, to provide additional information on the efficiency of these systems. Buzz suggested that EPA think about migrating these sensors into tile systems as well.
  - EPA R2: Mario did not have any additional comments.
  - NPS: Christina announced that NPS has a Deputy Director, Dan Smith. He has spent a fair amount of time working in NPS offices focusing on fish, wildlife and parks. Secretary Zinke is working on the reorganization of the Department to better align regional delineations within the Agency to enhance collaboration and coordination. A new regional delineation would split VT & NY along the watershed lines. The Secretary also is interested in greater reviews of agreements and grants to ensure that the Secretary’s priorities are reflected. Impacts from this effort on the CVNHP are unknown at this point. The CVNHP did make it through an initial pass at this in FY17. The Upper Missisquoi and trout rivers Wild and Scenic Rivers has released a grant program for proposals up to \$50,000 for projects that protect the wild and scenic values of this system.
- Advisory:
  - NY CAC – Vic agreed the symposium was excellent. 2019 is the official year of the Salmon. Town of Willsboro is interested in convening another salmon symposium next year. One approach would be to support events throughout the basin focusing around salmon, and perhaps connecting water quality.

- QC CAC – Pierre – no new updates on CAC since the December Steering Committee. Many thanks to the LCBP staff and to Ellen for their work pulling off the symposium. Pierre would like to have access to the presentations. Dan Egan was the Monday night keynote speaker, and this was very inspirational to promote new public communications strategies. His book, “Death and Life of the Great Lakes” is a great starting point. The Lake Champlain Unfiltered session also was very interesting, and informative for the younger generation. It was a very fun session, but also refreshing to hear people speak with no filter. Pierre wished we could give these people the chance to speak again, even though they are not part of our meetings any more.
  - VT CAC – Lori reported that the CAC is meeting tonight to finalize their 2018 Action Plan, to be presented to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Legislature. The Research Conference was a great jumping off point for upcoming CAC meetings. CAC also is trying to figure out how to engage the public in their meetings and make them more accessible. 2018 Action Plan priorities were outlined in the CAC updates handout, but high priority is establishing a publicly-accountable Clean Water Authority to oversee the Clean Water Fund, and establishing a sustainable long-term clean water funding source. Others include development of highly trained technical staff, increasing support for AIS spread prevention, increase public access to lakes and rivers, particularly non-motorized access. Also concerned about emerging contaminants and supporting practices to address flood resiliency.
  - E&O – Buzz reported that the E&O Committee met on January 5 to look at potential tasks for today’s budget discussion, and will meet again in a few weeks to dive deeper into these tasks in advance of the February 13 Executive Committee meeting. Buzz quickly reviewed the projects that would be discussed in further detail later in this meeting agenda. Buzz noted that they circulated a request to the watershed groups for suggestions; we received one (OBVBM), the rest were generated by LCBP staff. Pierre brought up the boots-n-bugs program; there was a similar program in Clarenceville a few years ago. The Artist in Residence is interesting, and Pierre wondered if this could include writing (such as Dan Egan). Buzz responded that the E&O Committee is still discussing, but at this point it is pretty broad.
  - HAPAC – John reviewed a handout with CVNHP updates. Eric provided a review of a conversation with Art Cohn regarding the restoration of the *Spitfire*. Art will be developing a proposal for the HAPAC and Executive Committee to consider for LCBP/CVNHP support for this effort in the coming year.
  - TAC - Mike reported that TAC has not met since the last Steering Committee meeting. TAC reviewed the technical pre-proposals for the FY18 budget in early December. The Steering Committee considered them and the applicants are now generating full proposals. Two additional RFPs are now closed and will be reviewed at the next Executive Committee. Mike added his voice in support of the conference.
- **Legislative Updates** – None provided.
  - **LCBP Updates** – Eric added that Conference attendance (over 230 people) was much greater than anticipated, which led to a few logistical challenges, but overall feedback from participants was very positive. Additional LCBP updates were circulated.

**11:15 AM HAPAC FY18 CVNHP budget priorities** – John Krueger (*HAPAC Chair*), Jim Brangan (*LCBP/CVNHP*)

- Jim reviewed the updated list of HAPAC priorities. There was some discussion around the Internship support task. The premise here is that it is an opportunity to give college-age people

the opportunity to gain some experience in this field, and at the same time provide staff support to heritage organizations in the watershed that need staffing assistance.

- The HAPAC re-ranked 12 of the tasks that were in the middle of the priority range since the November 30 Executive Committee meeting. The Collections grants would be to support 3 grants up to \$10,000 each.
- Buzz asked about the Spitfire project and whether Art Cohn has assembled a board of directors or anything similar to that to guide the project. To our knowledge, there is not anything official yet. The LCBP/CVNHP role here would be to support Art's vision, and to help move the project from conceptual to a program that can move the project forward. Buzz brought up that bridge funding will be necessary. Buzz is concerned about bridge funding and whether LCBP/CVNHP can serve in this capacity in the long-term. Buzz does not want to see LCBP/CVNHP get buried in this project because Art has not done the due diligence to get the right people on board. John agreed with Buzz, but is concerned that the project is going to at least go partway whether LCBP/CVNHP is involved or not. John believes that the project has a much greater chance of being successful if LCBP/CVNHP is involved, particularly at this stage in the project. The LCBP/CVNHP role would be to help facilitate the conversations, but not necessarily the leadership for the life of the grant. Christina agreed with the conversation, and expressed caution moving forward, and reminded the group that the real role of the CVNHP is to provide coordination and conversation facilitation. Christina agreed that Art has articulated this story very well, but also needs a good argument to justify that this is the only solution to move forward, particularly for the resources that would be required to execute this vision.
- The Georgia O'Keefe Scholarship Exchange – this project moved up in the rankings after HAPAC reviewed the list of projects. MaryJo wondered if this task could be combined with the E&O Artist in Residence concept. Buzz suggested that there could be a possibility here, would need to think about it.
- MaryJo asked about whether the wayside exhibit refurbishment will ever catch up. Jim said that this likely will be an ongoing project, as the older exhibits will eventually fade due to UV exposure, and occasionally vandalism or theft. They do come with a 10-year warranty from the manufacturer, which the exhibits are exceeding. This also is an opportunity to update the layout and design of the exhibits.
- Christina – Collections – grant recipients should have a Collections management plan to set priorities and ensure that investments are being strategically applied. The \$30,000 available is not a lot with respect to the overall need within the CVNHP, so will want to ensure that we prioritize funding to organizations that have developed these plans. The group should actually consider prioritizing proposals that develop collections management planning over grants.
- Pierre asked if there will ever be a point in the CVNHP where the recurring projects do not use up most of the available NPS funds. Eric pointed out that the CVNHP funding does not give us a lot of room to move past the core projects that HAPAC brings forward each year. Christina agreed, and wondered if, given the recent success of the symposium, if there is a way to integrate the Heritage Summit into the follow up of the symposium. Jim felt that the heritage session in the Symposium this week was a great start to making this linkage. The HAPAC is going to discuss the format of the Summit, perhaps to overhaul it, and possibly to use the Summit as a way to identify priorities to include in the Symposium.
- MaryJo is very interested in the African Heritage trail, because it seems that this group is poised to move forward and build momentum. Is there a reason to think that this might be a better time to support this project and allow them to expand and build this trail, or will it survive another year? Jim thinks that the project could wait for another year, but if the Executive Committee wants to move it up into the range to consider for funding, the group can do that. In the

meantime, Jim will talk with partners about the project for more information about the timing of funding for this project.

**ACTION ITEM:** Recommendation of support for FY18 CVNHP budget priorities to the Lake Champlain Steering Committee. Given that the FY18 appropriation has not been approved, the Committee chose to not take any formal action at this time.

## **12:00 PM Networking Lunch**

### **1:00 PM FY18 LCBP Budget Development:**

#### **LCBP Key Functions** – *Eric Howe (LCBP/CVNHP Director)*

- Eric reviewed the budget needs for FY18 LCBP operations including staffing and meeting support, office operations, grant program priorities. Staff position costs have increased over the FY17 budget, at NEIWPC and at Vermont and New York state-based positions. This is primarily due to increasing health care costs, but also for NEIWPC staff this reflects additional travel support due to increasing demands for LCBP to attend or host meetings around the watershed. The Key Functions budget also includes support for Computer Hardware upgrades, including a new network server and several new laptop computers. The support for Office Operations was reduced by \$10,000 from the FY17 budget due to in-house cost saving measures made over the past 12 months, but this line in the FY18 budget is level-funded due to anticipated 2019 re-print costs for the 2018 State of Lake report and increased requests for other LCBP-designed publications, such as the recent Federal Partners brochure. MaryJo said there was discussion last year to set up a subcommittee to look at financial opportunities, such as other grant opportunities or foundation support. Eric responded that he has not had an opportunity to move this conversation forward, but hopes to be able to do so in the next few months. MaryJo said there is still time for that.

#### **Education & Outreach Budget Process** – *Buzz Hoerr (E&O Cmte Chair) & Colleen Hickey (LCBP E&O Coordinator)*

- Buzz reviewed the E&O Committee budget development process, and then quickly reviewed the list of projects that the Committee is considering for the FY18 budget. The FY17 budget included support for approximately \$225,000 in E&O-related tasks. The Executive Committee members provided some feedback:
  - Video production: Ryan is managing these short videos. Task will produce 4-6 videos in the next 12 -18 months.
  - Video distribution: Vic suggested we also explore the videos at gas station pumps
  - Watershed signs on roads. Buzz suggested that we need to think carefully about how to do this so signs don't get ignored by people walking past them. There are political issues at the local level.
  - Seal the Deal: Matt has learned that coal tar based pavement sealants are packed with hazardous contaminants, and are released into waterways and also are tracked into houses. One part would be education on different types of sealants, second part to offer an alternative to coal tar sealants.
  - Bioengineering Training – will implement designs included in the upcoming VT Bioengineering Manual to fill gap between knowing design and how to install it. Would include training. MaryJo asked if it would be Lake Champlain shoreline or other inland lakes in the watershed. She felt there should be a priority to the Champlai shoreline, then other lakeshores that are directly connected to Champlain, such as Lake Carmi. These funds would go directly to the State of Vermont.

- Community Sailing Center Floating Gallery Submission: Artwork on one sail with an education message, such as “Clean, Drain, Dry”.
- High School Watershed Steward certification program: Certification of 20 students resulting in 20 projects to improve watersheds and increased opportunities for those students.
- CBEI: for conclusion of 2018-19 program, 4 workshops, etc.
- Artist in residence: this task would fund artwork about watershed issues as an outreach tool
- Education/Outreach Stewards: Stewards would conduct outreach at public events in NY, VT, QC to inform public on watershed issues.
- Outreach evaluation workshop for outreach partners: local groups to learn about tools to measure the success of their outreach efforts and gauge whether additional techniques can be used to measure behavior change.
- Watershed-level outreach evaluation: Support a survey of the public’s knowledge of lake issues and level of engagement in water stewardship including volunteering.
- New Education/Outreach Grant Programs: These grant categories would support the annual E&O local grant program, with consideration for the following new categories:
  - “Boots and Bugs” funding a program for K-8 classrooms for supplies for children to explore the watershed.
  - Enhanced Education/Outreach grants: local grants for up to \$75,000 per project. This would be an opportunity to gauge the degree of interest in larger E-O related projects.
  - Professional Development: annual opportunity for up to \$500 per year for watershed groups
- The committee will be meeting again in advance of the February 13 Executive Committee meeting to prioritize the list of projects for the Executive Committee to consider.

**Potential ACTION ITEMS:** Recommendation of support for FY18 LCBP Key Functions Budget, E&O Proposals for FY18 Funding to the Lake Champlain Steering Committee. No action taken today.

**2:00 PM [Executive Session]:**

- Grant Award Reviews: Education & Outreach Local Grants
  - Motion to enter into Executive Session by Buzz, second by Mike Winslow. All in favor. Vic Putman and Eric Howe recused themselves due to conflicts of interest.
- Advisory Committee Membership nominations

**3:00 Exit Executive Session: Grant Award Decisions & Committee nominations**

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Award Decisions for Education & Outreach grants
  - Motion to approve Record of Decision with instructions to LCBP Director to allocate additional resources to the last two projects identified for partial funding to allow them to be fully funded. Second by Martin M. All in favor.
- Committee nomination to Steering Committee
- Martin moved to forward a recommendation of the TAC nominee to the Steering Committee. Second by MaryJo. All in favor.

**3:15 PM Adjourn**

**Anticipated Outputs for this meeting include:**

1. Approval of meeting summary from November 30, 2017 LCBP Executive Committee meeting
2. Recommendation to Lake Champlain Steering Committee for FY18 NPS-CVNHP Heritage tasks. Action not taken at this time.
3. Recommendation to Lake Champlain Steering Committee for FY18 LCBP Key Functions Budget. Action not taken at this time.
4. Recommendation to Lake Champlain Steering Committee for FY18 LCBP E&O Budget Priorities. Action not taken at this time.
5. Grant Award Decisions: Education & Outreach grants. Motion to approve Record of Decision with instructions to LCBP Director to allocate additional resources to the last two projects identified for partial funding to allow them to be fully funded. Second by Martin M. All in favor (Vic Putman and Eric Howe did not participate in this discussion due to conflicts of interest).
6. Committee nominations to Lake Champlain Steering Committee. Martin moved to forward a recommendation of the TAC nominee to the Steering Committee. Second by MaryJo. All in favor.