

**Lake Champlain Basin Program
Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday April 8th, 2010
Valcour Conference Center, Peru, NY**

FINAL Minutes

Members Present: Betsy Lowe, Martin Mimeault (for Daniel Leblanc), Julie Moore (for Jonathan Wood), Buzz Hoerr, John Krueger, Fred Dunlap (for Mike Winslow), Roseanne Murphy, Marilyn Stephenson (for Astor Boozer), Mike Latham (via phone), Mario Delvicario, Erik Beck, Eugene Brickman, Karen Woodrich, Louis Hak, Marcia Kees (for Bob Reinhardt), Dave Tilton, Mary Watzin, Roger Allbee, Daniel Laven (for Rolf Diamant via phone), Gina Campoli
Staff: Bill, Jim, Colleen, Eric, Meg, Kathy, Michaela, Tom Hall, Mario Paula ; **Guests:** Laura DiPietro, Lynne Hamjian, David Mosher, Amanda Schaller, Jim Tierney, Steve Mahoney, Philip Halteman, Mark Malchoff

The meeting opened with a welcome from Betsy Lowe chair, introductions and a review of the draft agenda. January, 2010 Steering Committee meeting minutes approval

The committee considered draft minutes of the January, 2010 meeting. There was one correction – Gina was present.
ACTION ITEM: *Dave moved to accept the draft minutes with corrections; Mario seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous approval.*

Public Comments - none

Updates from Jurisdictions

VT – Julie described ongoing VT legislative activity. The TMDL implementation plan revision for VT was delivered on Jan 15th.

QC – Martin reported that the Lake Champlain MOU recently was signed in Quebec. A new project is underway in the Pike River basin to implement agricultural BMPS, including the work of an agronomist in Bedford. There was a recent meeting in QC about lamprey management in VT & QC and a review of reports and models used for the prediction of management success. A report of last year's lampricide application will be presented to TAC and SC with recommendations about future management. Daniel welcomed Louis Hak as a new SC member.

NY – Betsy introduced Jim Tierney, Assistant Commissioner for Water Resources who is a guest at the meeting today. In the past year, NYS has updated CAFO permitting to include down to 200 head of cows, Betsy noted that NYS is caught up in budget issues. CAC has met meeting with Congressman Owens. The dam on the Great Chazy River will be removed this summer.

EPA: Erik reported that the FY10 money is in office. EPA recently released draft permit for the Charles River that would be of interest relative to Lake Champlain. Lynne noted that EPA is holding a water summit, and Julie will attend for VT, Curt Spaulding, regional administrator will participate.

Reports from Advisory Committee Chairs

VTCAC: Buzz reported that VT CAC is pleased to distribute its action plan which is contained on a single page – the culmination of a big effort to include all watersheds in basin for coordinated look at what citizens want. CAC has been to legislature and is going again next Tuesday to testify and spread the word on the citizen activity. Next CAC meeting is Monday with a number of speakers. There will be a May end-of-year meeting at Tyler Place.

QC CAC: Martin reported that QC CAC will hold its Annual Meeting June 16th. They are working on their website and the project previously mentioned concerning BMPs, with the farmer clubs. CAC's recent publication providing guidelines for stream bank restoration was well accepted.

NYCAC – Fred reported that the NYS CAC annual report also has been prepared as a single page. The CAC took a tour of the Crown Point visitor center recently and saw the new LCBP display. CAC and LCBP staff will meet with Congressman Owens in Plattsburgh tomorrow at 2 pm to review what we do, and what current issues are. One issue that is of growing concern is old tug boat that sank off from Schyler Island and is thought it could have diesel fuel on board.

TAC: Fred reported for TAC that the committee has been very busy listening to various reports and reviewing RFPs and continuing OFA work. One was a report from Mary Watzin and Lula G. on P-accounting, which was considered a very well-done project. TAC discussed RFP developments on roadside ditching, on climate change, the skidder bridge proposal, and reviewed workplans for adaptive management of cormorants, water chestnut.

CHRAC: John noted that staff will present a 130 page draft CVNHP plan. CHRAC is being discontinued, and will be replaced by the HAPAC committee following Steering Committee approval of the final draft management plan.

EO: Buzz reported on the social marketing workshop, in which a lot of watershed groups learned more about how to use these new tools to get their messages out. There were 50 participants and a speaker from Utah, Jack Wilber. Yesterday, Richard Lauzier presented the LCBP annual farm award at the annual meeting of the Corporation. NY/VT farm awards are under consideration now.

Legislative Update – Tom Berry reported on a good meeting in DC last month on budget and funding development. Bill, Dave T, and Mark Gaden from GLFC, briefed Senator Leahy’s staff. NY delegation is being brought up to speed on this funding, and Dave, Bill and Tom visited some of those offices too. Tom handed out the Fiscal Year 2011 requests to date.

Manager’s Report

Bill reported on his recent meetings in Washington. In staff news, Nicole Ballinger has moved on to another position – we congratulate her on her long and excellent service to the LCBP and wish her well in her new position. Nicole Grohoski will take on website maintenance and other aspects of the vacant position will be filled shortly. The Boat Launch Steward program is being started and five out of 8 past stewards are coming back. LCBP hosted a meeting in Sherbrooke, QC, in partnership with the IJC on harmonizing data across the border. We will hold a workshop in the next year at which hydrographic mapping staff from both sides of the border will come together and work together on their data sets, to take back to their jurisdictions draft adjustments. The Critical Source Analysis RFP went out and has resulted in a strong response. TAC has reviewed proposals and made a recommendation. Normally would come to SC for approval, but this needs to go to IJC study board for review tomorrow. The Executive committee will meet Tuesday to make a decision on the ROD. The GLFC habitat RFP (FY09 funds) will be reviewed Monday and brought to EC. CVNHP plan was considered by EC last week has been updated. As we look at FY10 budget we need to be mindful of our staff capacity and in that regard we have been reviewing our staff workplans.

CVNHP Draft Management Plan/EA Review

Bill reviewed the status of the developing plan and the process by which NPS approval will be sought. Jim presented a review of the Draft CVNHP Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, and fielded several questions, registering several small editorial changes.

ACTION ITEM: *Erik moved to accept the draft CVNHP plan, with minor modification so that it can be released for public comment. John seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously.*

Opportunities for Action Draft Revision Review – A new timeframe for OFA was discussed – planning for it to be signed at end of Sept. SC would need to approve the full draft in early August.

Managing Toxins and Human Health – After a lot of great feedback from partners we hope to have the draft out to the EC for its meeting in May. The committee discussed whether or not to include additional implementation that may not be planned yet, but that will be required in order to achieve objectives, in each chapter. Also a question emerged about how to treat continuing research needs. Mary felt it was important to highlight research needs and agencies that could help answer emerging questions. Dave noted that in listing any research need it is essential to know how we are going to use that information. Mary encouraged that the plan be as quantitative and specific as possible, so that we and others will be able to assess performance. Julie noted that the plan should reflect what we challenge ourselves to do pending funding or other operating conditions. It was agreed that the plan should be more of a living document than in the past editions, and not all the objectives of all the chapters need to be completed at the same time.

Managing Fish and Wildlife – is in a similar state. Bill Ardren is drafting introductory text and hope to have it next week to circulate to technical partners for review and comment. More commitments have been secured for this chapter and will look at it for quantitative goals.

Gene noted that USACE cannot be a lead agency in this plan but does have funding to get some of these things accomplished - 65% as a cost share is significant. The best way to describe the USACE role is by putting something in the beginning of document, not making specific commitments but still having a commitment to help.

EPA, NPS and GLFC - FY10 proposed task update

Bill handed out a spreadsheet and early (partial) draft of the budget narrative for discussion. The committee reviewed tasks that seem most time sensitive and require approval as soon as possible in order to be successful this field season. The spreadsheet reflects decisions made in Quebec as well as recent TAC recommendations. Jim T asked about the

scope of authorizations for each budget appropriation. Bill noted that the legislative intent provides some guidance in some lines and the Steering Committee works most closely with the EPA appropriation, as it usually is the largest. The SC decides on expenditures and LCBP then submit proposals to the funding agency, resulting in an agreement. EPA, NPS, ACOE NPS and USFWS all sit on SC, so there seldom is confusion about the intent of the Steering Committee. NYSOGA and IJC will determine what is acceptable for funding through the agreement language. Last year was the first time the LCBP has received GLFC funds. Tom described the GLFC funds and their allocations as still uncertain, as the process of allocating dollars is a work in progress. LCBP has been consulting with Senator Leahy's office and partners, and looking at how tasks fit with the activities of other partners and the funding through the EPA. Jim T asked the SC to respond to the shortfalls in NYS government funding in choosing tasks, and that EPA funds go to offset the lack of funds in the state agencies to implement core programs.

ACTION ITEM: *John moved to approve the long term monitoring tasks and the blue-green algae monitoring tasks as described; Buzz seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote; Fred and Mary abstained.*

Julie asked that two other season-dependent and agriculture-related projects be considered, especially:

- 1) Rock River Sub-Watershed – targeted watershed implementation initiative \$250,000
- 2) Illicit Discharge detection and elimination in otter creek \$100,000

After lengthy discussion, the SC considered a motion.

ACTION ITEM: *Mary moved to approve funding of 2 projects (Rock River and Illicit Discharge) with funds to be determined by LCBP and Senator Leahy's office. Marilyn seconded the motion. The motion was approved by all, except for one nay vote, and Roger, Karen and Julie abstained.*

Bill agreed to revise the spreadsheet and task descriptions to reflect the latest update on funds and the status of approval for each. The committee discussed future meetings dates. Gene prefers meeting in June; Jonathan conveyed his suggestion of June 9th for the next SC meeting.

ACTION ITEM: *Erik moved to enter executive session to review a contract competition– John seconded the motion. The motion was approved by consensus.*

The Steering Committee entered Executive Session at 3:45. The Committee returned to Open Session at 4:00 PM

ACTION ITEM: *Mario moved to approve a Draft Record of Decision to award the phosphorus uptake research in Missisquoi Bay contract to LimnoTech. The motion was seconded by Gene. The motion passed by unanimous vote, Mary and Julie abstained.*

Adjourned 4:17