

**Lake Champlain Basin Program
Steering Committee Meeting
Friday October 20th, 2006 - Fish Hatchery Conference Room,**

Draft Minutes

Members present: Marilyn Stephenson (for Ron Alvarado), Randy Beach, Stu Buchanan, Gina Campoli, Canute Dalmasse, Judy Doerner, John Kruger, David Lane, Steve Lanthier, Daniel Leblanc, Kenny Miller, Erik Beck, Bob Reinhardt, and Mary Watzin.. **Staff:** Bill Howland, Colleen Hickey, Jim Brangan, Nicole Ballinger, Molly Michaud, Meg Modley, Kathy Jarvis, and Martin Mimeault. **Guests:** Bob Paquin, Chantal d'Auteuil, and Tom Berry.

Canute Dalmasse, Chair, convened the meeting at 9:30 AM with a welcome and introductions. The committee accepted the draft agenda as proposed. Canute invited public comments; there were no public comments. The committee considered the draft minutes of the July 2006 meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Randy moved to accept the minutes for the July 2006 meeting as presented. Dave seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Updates from the Regions

Vermont – Canute reported that the 3rd fiscal year of VT's Clean & Clear initiative includes the restoration of the Rugg Brook flood plain in St. Albans. Canute summarized the scope of point source management at 93 treatment plant in the Basin as well as the Clean and Clear focus on nonpoint source problems. Canute and Dave Lane have joined the Missisquoi Bay watershed planning efforts and have been meeting with the north lake advocacy and planning groups.

Quebec - Daniel described ongoing phosphorus reduction programs in Quebec. Quebec has translated and produced the companion Progress 2006 (copies distributed) for presentation at the 15th anniversary events later in the day. Daniel also introduced a new bluegreen algae guide, in French, that the ministry published in August.

New York - Stu reported on two wastewater treatment plant reconstructions in Westport and Moriah which will move New York ahead in TMDL compliance. DEC is working with Ron (NYCAC Chair) to get additional funding for other communities. Stu thanked LCBP staff, particularly Meg, for support of the ANS management program for the Adirondack Park. The City and the Town of Plattsburgh have signed a long-term agreement for the city's sewage treatment plant to handle the town's sewage. The Commissioner upheld the DEC position on Plattsburgh's phosphorus permitting appeal. Stu noted with sadness the recent passing of Dave Nettles, USFWS, who worked at NYDEC.

Federal Partners - Erik: The EPA LCBP grant amendments with VT and NEIWPC have been awarded, and the NY grant may be awarded in the next month or two. EPA is now working under a continuing resolution, and should receive some '07 LCBP funds in the fall. Federal partners are working on collaborative projects, including one in which EPA and the USFWS recently surveyed Lewis creek for native mussels, finding both native mussels and zebra mussels. Bill circulated a status report of current Section 542 Army Corps supported projects. The General Management Plan guiding the LCBP-Army Corps partnership will be revised and presented to the SC for approval in spring.

Committee Chair Reports

Executive Committee: Canute reported that the E C approved a Record of Decision recommending Army Corps of Engineers City support for the Burlington College Street Outfall proposal. The Committee had a long discussion resulting in guidelines to advisory committees in FY07 budget process. The TAC was asked to address the highest FY07 priority: a working indicators and scorecard program. Bob R. noted the NYS Open Space Plan will be released soon. Canute also spoke of a recent meeting with Bill and Stu to discuss LCBP work and noted the staff's very impressive output.

Technical Advisory Committee: Mary reported that TAC reviewed and recommended proposals for Army Corps support and for the IJC funded task. TAC also reviewed the USGS plans for their Lake Champlain funds. The Toxics Workgroup will meet next week to update the list of toxins of concern. Staff has assembled information on Economic Indicators and a follow-up winter workshop is planned. The ANS subcommittee is developing a rapid response plan. The proceedings from the Alewife workshop are now available. TAC also approved the 2005 BGA results. The team is meeting next week to look at the long term monitoring program in view of new data needs. This project will need LCBP staff support and for its agency partners to help assemble indicator information.

Mary noted the importance of the series of reports in the Burlington Free Press, authored by Candy Page. Stu thank the staff for getting copies of the articles out to the Steering Committee, and that he found them very useful. Judy noted that this series and the author seemed a good candidate for an award. The Committee felt that a nomination for the annual EPA award would be appropriate.

ACTION ITEM: Judy moved to nominate Candace Page, BFP, for EPA's 2007 Environmental Merit Award. David seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Cultural Heritage & Recreation Advisory Committee – John reported that CHRAC met September and had a presentation on lake archaeology from LCMM. Bob and Tom gave presentations on prospects for federal funding. Because the Institute for Museum & Library Services just awarded a major grant to support an historical documentary in Vermont, CHRAC advises that LCBP funds previously intended for a documentary be directed to a collaborative effort with the larger project. .

Education & Outreach Advisory Committee – Buzz reported that the E&O Committee will meet on November 3rd to discuss and recommend FY07 budget tasks.

VT CAC – Buzz reported that VT CAC is preparing its annual Action Plan. The CAC has hosted 10 meetings during the year including 3 in Swanton and 1 in the South Lake, attended by over 250 people, many more than usual. The CACs had a successful joint boat trip in the South Lake. The CAC focused on 2 major themes this year, looking at Bedford program how it might be applied to Missisquoi Bay, and a South Lake initiative working on water chestnut.

NY CAC – Ron reported on the brief bluegreen algae bloom in Essex. NYCAC had 3 goals for the year: (1) An August meeting of congressional staff, with state and local officials in Plattsburgh, to explore waste water treatment needs. Ron thanked Tom Berry for help in setting up the meeting and Bill for running the meeting. Staff of Senators Clinton and Jeffords participated. A follow-up meeting in December is planned. Assemblywoman Sayward took a preliminary funding priority list to Gov. Pataki who may be able to help in the next two months. (2) Exploring canal barrier options is a CAC priority and a meeting with the Canal Corporation is set for December. (3) CAC met with fish tournament organizers to ensure that tournaments do not spread invasive species into the Basin.

QC CAC – Pierre spoke of the 71 lakes in Quebec that were affected by bluegreen algae blooms this year. Our challenge is to keep a strong governmental focus on Missisquoi Bay. Pierre also reported on public meetings and the results of 2 projects. (1) Restoration of riverbanks on Morpion Stream, the

longest tributary to the Pike River. Volunteers have planted 20,000 shrubs and 1,000 trees on the riverbanks, and this is about 3.5% of what that watershed needs. (2) The other project was on a 70 meter reach of Pikes River and included some heavy engineering work to improve bank stability.

Legislative Updates - Bob P spoke of the Continuing Resolution (through Nov 13th) for funding the government. The Quadricentennial bill is no further along, though the four senators have asked for hearings. Tom reported that the Water Resources Development Act is in conference and could become law this year, but that nothing is certain. The big news is that the Champlain Valley Heritage Act was signed into law last week, a culmination of talks that began in 1992. The bill includes a 10-year \$10-million authorization through the National Park Service to support heritage programs. It will be managed by the LCBP. Usual initial funding of about \$500,000 a year may begin in FY08. Senator Jeffords will visit the LCBP office later this afternoon at the 15th anniversary celebration.

Manager's Report -Bill reported having filled the Technical Associate position with Kris Joppe-Mercure, recently on the UVM staff at the Rubenstein Lab. Bill attended meeting of IJC in Ottawa yesterday, making a presentation about the LCBP. The IJC is somewhat unfamiliar with unilateral funding, and several aspects of the program will be further developed if funding is continued next year. The IJC RFP was released and proposals will soon be reviewed and ranked. Staff reviewed recent program outcomes, including:

- Nicole demonstrated the new online searchable and the improved access to LCBP information on the 603 grants and contracts funded since 1992 (totaling over \$3,000,000).
- Molly and Meg reported on technical projects recently completed and Technical Reports published by the LCBP.
- Colleen and Nicole presented a map of map of LCBP staff presentations to 85 school groups, mostly in NY. Several were done in partnership with Cornell Extension at field days. The map also showed school locations of 48 teachers who participated in teacher training.
- Chantal gave presentations to approx 400 children last year and this year will reach about 1,000 children. Another 22 presentations were made to other groups.
- At the LCBP Resource Room with ECHO at the Leahy Center, from June to August, about 8,000 visited. Some days there were as many as 200 people visiting the Resource Room.
- Jim described the first ever international, interstate stamp cancellation event for the new Champlain commemorative stamp (issued simultaneously by the USPS and Posts Canada). Nicole developed a caché to be cancelled in 3 locations, Isle LaMotte, VT; Champlain, NY; and Lacolle, QC; 200 cachés were printed and made available to the public in attendance. In Isle LaMotte, USPS awarded LCBP a plaque that shows the interstate stamp.
- Jim described the wayside exhibit program outcomes, with several recent examples, including the bilingual signage LCBP encourages for the border region of the Basin.

Next Meeting: In January, the Steering Committee will act on Phase-2 EPA budgeting. It also will look at what the LCBP and partnering jurisdictions should accomplish by 2009 (and thereafter). The Committee also will discuss a process and timeline for the next revision of *Opportunities for Action*.

Review of the afternoon agenda, expected guests and recognitions: LCBP staff have prepared the 15th anniversary party. We have cheeses from VT, NY and Quebec, desserts, cider, coffee. There will be a brief program at 2 PM, recognizing Senator Jeffords in person, and his Congressional colleagues represented by their staff. Stu and Canute will recognize Senators Leahy and Jeffords, original sponsors of the Special Designation Act, representing the Steering Committee. As the Steering Committee determined at its last meeting, the event will be informal and light hearted.

ACTION ITEM: *Canute moved to adjourn, Ron seconded. Motion passed by unanimous approval.*