

**Lake Champlain Basin Program  
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, September 2, 2009  
10:00 AM – 3:30 PM**

**Final Meeting Summary**

**I. Updates and Announcements**

- a. NRCS has new Conservation Stewardship Programs (CSP) in place. The fact sheet checklist was passed around. Conservation activities started mid- summer and conclude mid-September; eligible landowners can receive a stewardship payment for work above and beyond stewardship and conservation (energy or environmental) practices can be rewarded.
- b. Update on wetland restoration program in VT: potential for increased funding; typically received 3-4 applications in past, received more than 40 applications this year; new partnership with VT DEC providing outreach for the wetland restoration program is likely responsible for the increase in applications – have been active in outreach efforts in Chittenden and Franklin counties, and will partner with USFWS for technical assistance.
- c. Lake Champlain Research Consortium conference: will be June 7 and 8, 2010; Call for Abstracts will be out by October 1. Journal of Great Lakes Research has agreed to do a special edition with the conference. Plan is to have two keynote speakers – one is John Casselman, who will address climate change effects on North American temperate aquatic species. Other is TBD; will be focused on ecological economics.
- d. CWICNY will be hosting a stormwater tradeshow in Lake George on October 15; registration will be out soon.
- e. Jon Erickson published a book with Bill Porter (SUNY ESF) and Ross Whaley (Chair, Adirondack Park Agency) in July; “The Great Conservation Experiment” captures reflections of local people living in the Adirondacks on their experiences with the environmental movement in the Adirondacks.
- f. TAC membership: Mary Watzin has formally resigned from TAC, but is still a steering committee member. Tom Berry also resigned. Bob Hirsch, Director of USGS Water Science Programs; now retired; back in area to work on phosphorus trends; giving a talk at UVM around October 7.
- g. Keith Robinson (USGS) will be providing workplans later this month on Short-term Monitoring project in Missisquoi Bay; Donna Francy USGS Ohio microbiologist is giving a talk in Pembroke office Tuesday next week on recently published work on emerging contaminants.

**II. Summary of Previous TAC Meeting**

- a. **ACTION:** Motion to approve draft summary from June 2009, as amended, (Doug F.), second (Vic P.), all in favor, no abstentions.

### III. Lake Champlain Basin Program Update, *Bill Howland*

- a. July 22 Executive Committee meeting
  - i. TAC recommended 3 new members, endorsed as recommendations to steering committee.
  - ii. TAC Chair: Goal is to have new chair in place by October 7 meeting; still accepting nominations, can be current TAC member or from outside TAC. Standard convention is Chair cannot be State/Provincial employee – Federal employees, non profits, and academia are allowed.
- b. IJC-funded projects
  - i. NMP program: Bourdeaus' and Bushey final report has been revised, with peer review by NRCS & VT AAFM
  - ii. Workshops: Summary has been completed and circulated to participants
  - iii. Peer-review of modeling methodologies is ongoing with report to nationwide experts; LCBP & advisors will then write and release RFP based on IJC study group recommendations, probably in October (behind in timeline by 2 months; work needs to be concluded by Sept 2011).
  - iv. STM monitoring sites: 6 new sites located in Missisquoi basin, 4 new meteorological stations, managed by USGS.
  - v. Will come to new agreement w/IJC by end of September for work for \$400,000 in next 22 months.
  - vi. Mont Saint Hilaire workshop: apologize to NRCS for short notice. Good workshop, dealt w/ BMPs and problem of communicating among jurisdictions, will follow up w/ second workshop that deals with measurement/metrics to develop common metrics among the jurisdictions.
- c. FY2010 EPA Budget procedure and timeline
  - i. New procedure: Projects must be proposed to Senator's office *before* appropriations. 2010 projects were proposed based on current priorities; subsequent years will be based on the usual method, but earlier in fiscal process to allow time to forward project ideas to Senator for funding.
- d. South Lake small grants RFP (\$400,000 from NYS OAG)
  - i. Still waiting for details from NYS Attorney General's office about specifics for this grant; will likely be in the form of small implementation grants to farms in NY and VT in South Lake with phosphorus and sediment reduction goals.
- e. GLFC Law Island Cleanup and Habitat Restoration Grants (Leahy appropriation)
  - i. Emerging spiny waterflea issue/feeder canal problem
  - ii. Habitat connectivity grants (implementation grants)
  - iii. Law Island removal of old buildings, toxics, etc.
- f. Local Implementation grants
  - i. Target release date is mid-September (pending information from NYS about specifics for south lake grants)
- g. Farmer mini-grants (Missisquoi & St Albans basins)
  - i. RFP will be released with local implementation, GLFC, and AEP RFPs
- h. BGA 2008 final report update
  - i. Report has been submitted; will be circulated to TAC for review & discussion; no presentation this year (will do these every other year now)
- i. LCBP conflict of interest guidelines – brief review (handout at meeting).
  - i. TAC members are selected for their technical expertise, not professional affiliation (except for 3 special designees, one each from NY, QC, VT)

- ii. Bullets 3, 4, need restructuring for clarification (will address this in future TAC meeting)
- iii. Any perceived conflict of interest should be brought to the attention of the TAC Chair and/or Bill Howland immediately.
- iv. Guidelines apply to LCBP staff, TAC members, external reviewers, etc.

**IV. Reducing Phosphorus Runoff from Small Livestock Farms into Missisquoi Bay – Final Report Review, *Jeff Carter*, UVM Extension, and *Sally Flis*, Bourdeaus’ & Bushey, Inc.**

- a. Presentation of the revised draft final report on the project to write nutrient management plans for small farms in the Missisquoi Bay Basin for TAC review and approval
  - i. Discussion points:
    - 1. IJC requested copy of plans for documentation of a final product that was generated. Per the contract, plans are confidential, as they contain personal information for the farmers. Bourdeaus’ and Bushey talked to one farmer, who agreed to allow them to release his report, with all private information removed.
    - 2. Farmers did not comply 100% with plan recommendations; could have seen ~18% P reduction, rather than the observed 8% P reduction
    - 3. If contractor had more time to work with farmers (more growing seasons), could achieve greater reductions
    - 4. NMP is a good thing to do, because costs to achieve 8% P reduction through NMPs is less than installation of structures
    - 5. P-index may need to be updated: has gaps that need to be addressed (# fields, manure application timeframe, buffer types)
  - b. **ACTION:** Motion (Doug F.) to send Thank You letter to participating farmers (via Bourdeaus’ and Bushey), second (Jon E.), all in favor, no abstentions. Laura D. volunteered to write the letter.
  - c. **ACTION:** TAC entered Executive Session
  - d. **ACTION:** TAC exited Executive Session
  - e. **ACTION:** Motion to approve revised report (Laura D.), second (Kip P.), all in favor, no abstentions.

**V. Lunch**

**VI. Quantification of sediment / phosphorus load contribution from eroding river banks, *Mike Kline*, VT DEC – River Management**

- a. Summary of a new task addressing streambank erosion in the Missisquoi
  - i. VT DEC Rivers section has been working with TAC to identify what contribution of sediment from unstable streams might be
  - ii. Hired Dr. Andrew Simon, USDA-Agricultural Research Station, National Sedimentation Laboratory (NSL) to conduct investigation using Bank Stability and Toe Erosion Model (BSTEM)
  - iii. Andrew Simon visited VT Aug 4-5; gave (very well attended) symposium on his methods and proposed field work
  - iv. Also held research meeting (Aug 5) to identify complementary projects in the Basin, represented by VT ANR, VT AAFM, NRCS-VT, LCBP, UVM and NSL
- b. Task Workplan Review
  - i. Workplan was not complete in time for Sept 2 meeting; draft workplan was reviewed.
  - ii. Timeframe: Project will be underway this fall; representative from Simon’s team is training VT crews September 1-2. NSL team will be on-site October 26-Nov 6.

- iii. Will use SGA (Stream Geomorphic Assessment) and other existing data as well as data collected from current field project to build model for Missisquoi tributaries; can then be applied to other tributaries in Champlain basin
- iv. Recruited UVM Engineering Professor Mandar DeVoolkar & his graduate student Jaron Borg to assist with advance field work to allow Simon's NSL team to complete their work on time during their visit in late October.

## **VII. *Opportunities for Action Revisions***

- a. Brief update on status of Phosphorus chapter (Eric Howe, LCBP)
  - i. Lead people from NY, VT, QC, and NRCS reviewed chapter in mid-August to finalize commitments
  - ii. Will be ready for TAC review at October meeting
- b. Discussion of the Fish & Wildlife chapter (Bill Ardren, USFWS)
- c. Basic outline provided, has been circulated to working group, still waiting for comments from all group members
- d. Goal is to be ready for TAC discussion at October meeting
- e. General OFA discussion
  - i. Still some confusion about the purpose of OFA Some concern about agencies committing to specific goals – this is the direction the Steering Committee wants OFA to take
  - ii. Need to have measurable outcomes to track progress
  - iii. New format will be web-based, and updated regularly
  - iv. Important to send ecosystem-based view to public
  - v. How to address points that overlap among chapters (i.e., zooplankton in F&W, Climate change), but is also in each of the other chapters

## **VIII. Champlain Valley Natural Heritage Partnership, *Jim Brangan, LCBP***

- a. Environmental Assessment briefing and discussion of updates since last May.
  - i. NEPA document required to go with designated Natural Heritage area
  - ii. Brings \$1 million/year to Heritage area for funding programs for technical assistance, coordination among stakeholder groups, chambers of commerce, grants program
  - iii. Planning framework document incorporates interpretive themes, such as: human interaction with the landscape, land use changes over time, local food markets, living in a natural world
  - iv. Environmental Assessment development is taking longer than expected because requires evaluating effects of environment, geology, climate, wildlife, water quality, land use, archaeology, ethnographic resources, economy, demographics, energy conservation and conservation potential, and more
  - v. Environmental Assessment should be complete by mid-Sept for Steering Committee meeting

## **IX. 2:00 PM Adjourn**

### **Members Present:**

Mike Winslow, Laura DiPietro, Doug Facey, Jon Erikson, Marilyn Stephenson, Fred Dunlap, Vic Putman, Kip Potter, Angela Shambaugh (proxy for Neil Kamman), Mark Malchoff, Bill Ardren, Bernie Pientka, Steve Lanthier, Jamie Shanley

Guests: Andrew Snell (CWICNY), Jeff Carter (UVM Extension), Sally Flis (Bourdeaus' and Bushey), Mike Kline (VT DEC), David Borthwick-Leslie (private citizen)

LCBP Staff: Bill Howland, Eric Howe, Meg Modley, Michaela Stickney, Jim Brangan