

A FRAMEWORK FOR CARRYING OUT KEY FUNCTIONS

The guiding principle for all Steering Committee actions and policies is to ensure that the Lake gets better.

The following section provides recommendation for continued operations of the Lake Champlain Basin Program to ensure the successful implementation of the Plan. A partnership approach involving numerous partners is recommended to respond to the functions described below.



The Lake Champlain Basin Program signed onto the US EPA's voluntary Clean Marine Engine initiative for Lake Champlain during July 2002. Left to right: Jane M. Kenny, EPA Region 2 Regional Administrator, Bill Howland, LCBP Program Manager, and Robert Varney, EPA New England Regional Administrator.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Continue the Present Steering Committee and Maintain the Breadth of Representation and Perspectives for Decision-making

The Steering Committee should continue to function in its present role as a participatory forum in which key state, provincial, and local leaders from New York, Vermont, and Québec can discuss issues of Lake Champlain and its watershed, and coordinate policies and programs. Each jurisdiction has identified its chief delegate, who hosts and chairs Steering Committee meetings in rotation. This pattern contributes to teamwork.

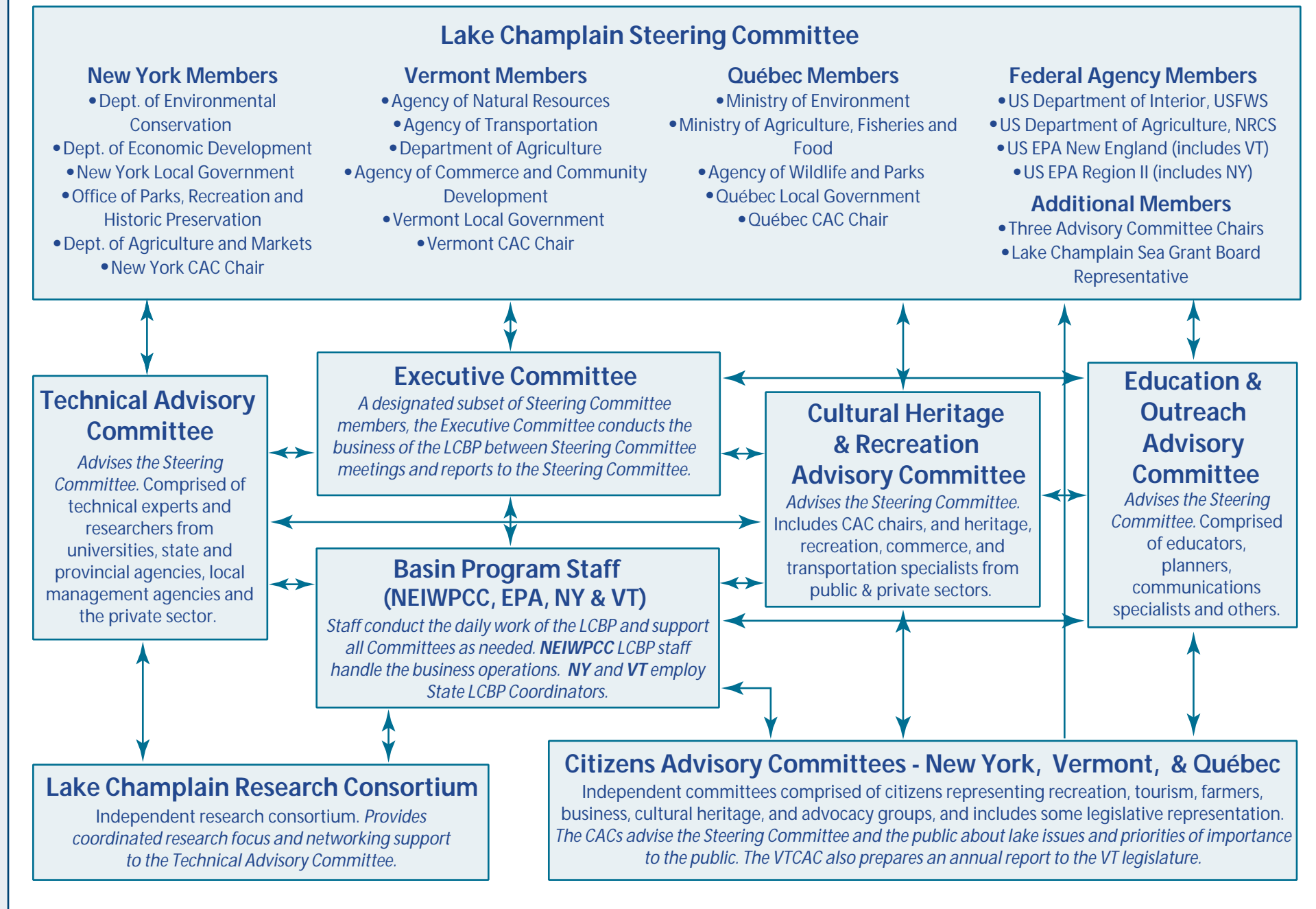
The states of New York and Vermont and the province of Québec should consider maintaining the following partners on the Steering Committee to ensure a diversity of perspectives:

Four New York State agency representatives appointed by the Governor: New York should consider NYSDEC; NYS Department of Economic Development; NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets; and NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation to be selected by the State;

Four Vermont State agency representatives appointed by the Governor: Vermont should consider VTANR; VT Department of Agriculture, Food, and Markets; the VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development; and the VT Agency of Transportation, to be selected by the State;

Four Québec representatives appointed by the Premier: Québec should consider three provincial representatives from the Ministry of Environment; the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food; and Wildlife and Parks, and a fourth representative to be selected by the Province from provincial agencies;

Figure 11. Lake Champlain Basin Program Operating Structure



Three local government representatives, one each from New York, Vermont, and Québec. Local governments should nominate representatives and the governors/premier select from that list.

Three CAC chairs or designees (see below).

One chair or designee from each of the Advisory Committees: TAC, CHRAC and E&O (see below).

One Sea Grant Board representative.

Three US federal agency representatives.

The US Department of Agriculture, the US Environmental Protection Agency New England Region and Region II, and the US Department of the Interior should be represented in these positions.

Modifying the membership of the present Steering Committee to include additional key players as needed will help to ensure that decisions concerning the management of Lake Champlain Basin resources are made through a consensus-based, collaborative process.

Steering Committee Charge

The charge of the Steering Committee includes:

a) Facilitate communication and coordination among key partners working to implement the Plan.

b) Monitor and evaluate progress against Plan benchmarks and communicate that information by periodically producing an annual implementation status report, and other education and outreach tools.

c) Secure and direct Lake Champlain Basin Program funding.

d) Charge the Executive and Advisory Committees with tasks as needed.

e) Reassess and update Plan recommendations every five years based on changing environmental conditions, management programs, and public input.

f) Develop an annual budget to ensure Plan implementation.

g) Negotiate partnerships and commitments among agencies and groups.

h) Seek consistency in regulatory programs and standards, such as those concerning wetlands and toxic substances (consistency does not predetermine that standards will be more restrictive or less restrictive than present standards); and develop reciprocal information programs such as the emergency spill response joint procedure between New York, Vermont, and Québec.

i) Provide technical and financial assistance to local communities and organizations.

j) Assist with the coordination of cultural heritage and recreational resource enhancement programs associated with the Lake and the Basin.

k) Make adjustments in the composition of the Steering Committee as needed to achieve the goals of the Plan.



Members of the Missisquoi Bay Corporation, compliments the Lake Champlain Steering Committee, tour a water quality project on Wallbridge Stream with the Regional Director of Monteregie.

To increase its effectiveness, the Steering Committee has assigned eleven of its members to comprise an **Executive Committee** to meet six to eight times per year between Steering Committee meetings. The Executive Committee is comprised of Steering Committee representatives of the NYSDEC, VTANR, QC MENV, USEPA New England, USEPA Region II, and the chairs of the six advisory committees (VTCAC, NYCAC, Québec CAC, TAC, CHRAC, and E&O). These eleven members comprise the voting membership of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee chair rotates biannually among three key implementing agencies: VTANR, NYSDEC, and the USEPA. Because it meets more frequently than the Steering Committee, the Executive Committee provides leadership continuity through the year by representing the Steering Committee between meetings and interpreting the intent of the Steering Committee to the staff. The Executive Committee chair reports back to the Steering Committee at regular Steering Committee meetings.

Cost estimate: To be determined through an annual budget development process

Potential funding sources: State and federal appropriations, in-kind participation, public/private partnerships, grants from other funding sources, such as Sea Grant

Timeframe: Ongoing

Benchmarks: Financial and implementation commitments from LCBP partners identified for priority actions; production of annual progress report; preparation of annual budget; achievement of coordinated and consistent policies and programs; six to twelve Steering Committee or Executive Committee meetings per year at times convenient for members

2) Continue the Present Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs) and Ensure that Various Stakeholders Are Represented

The New York, Vermont, and Québec CACs should continue in their present roles as liaisons to the public. As positions become available on the CACs, the states and Québec should strive to ensure that representatives from environmental groups, agriculture, business/industry, sports and recreation, and local government be included. Stakeholder groups should nominate representatives, and the persons/agencies in each state and Québec who have the authority to appoint CAC representatives should select from that list. All members of the CACs should serve two-to- three year appointments. The CACs should elect their chair, who will serve as a voting member of the Steering and Executive Committees. The role of the CACs include:

a) Advise the Steering Committee about public concerns.

b) Inform and involve the public in issues concerning the Lake and the Basin.

c) Link the Steering Committee to state legislative bodies and groups implementing the Plan at the local level.

d) Provide a regular forum for interest groups and local governments to discuss the issues facing the Lake and the Basin.

e) Provide recommendations to the Steering Committee about the reassessment of Plan recommendations.

f) Advise and encourage agencies that accept responsibility for implementing Plan recommendations to follow through with their commitments, for example, by presenting an annual report of recommendations to the legislature.

g) Participate in review panels for LCBP grant programs.

h) Host public meetings for information exchange regarding plan implementation.

Cost estimate: To be determined through an annual budget development process

Potential funding sources: State and federal appropriations, in-kind participation, public/private partnerships

Timeframe: Ongoing

Benchmarks: Assistance to the Steering Committee in production of annual report; provision of annual recommendations concerning the Lake to the Steering Committee and legislative bodies; inclusion of representatives from environmental groups, agriculture, business/industry, sports and recreation, local governments on the CACs; meetings of joint Citizens Advisory Committees each year

3) Continue the Technical Advisory Committee

The Steering Committee should appoint and retain a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of professionals from academia, natural resource management agencies, and other appropriate sectors as it deems appropriate. The TAC members serve at the discretion of the Steering Committee. The chair of the TAC, appointed by the Steering Committee, serves as a voting member of the Steering and Executive Committees. The role of the TAC includes the following:

a) Present the Steering Committee with technically sound information to be used in the decision-making process.

b) Advise the Steering Committee about emerging issues with management implications, the necessary research or actions to address those issues, and related technical funding priorities.

c) Determine the technical merits of LCBP-funded scientific studies and projects.

d) Facilitate project implementation and evaluate final products and reports of those projects as needed.

e) Interpret the results of monitoring programs and other technical information to help determine success or redirection of projects.

Organizations and partnerships established independently of the LCBP to address technical issues in the Basin will continue to function in their own right, but may also provide input to the TAC. These organizations include the Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Management Cooperative, the Lake Champlain Research Consortium, Sea Grant, and several taskforces and workgroups.

Cost estimate: To be determined through an annual budget development process

Potential funding sources: State and federal appropriations, in-kind participation, public/private partnerships

Timeframe: 2002-ongoing

Benchmarks: Assistance to the Steering Committee in production of annual status report; development of recommendations to the Steering Committee on annual workplan for research, monitoring, and technical assistance to implement projects; monthly meetings of TAC as needed

4) Continue the Cultural Heritage and Recreation Advisory Committee

The Steering Committee should appoint and retain a Cultural Heritage and Recreation Advisory Committee (CHRAC) composed of professionals from local government, management agencies, and other appropriate sectors. The CHRAC members serve at the discretion of the Steering Committee. The chair of the CHRAC, appointed by the Steering Committee, serves as a voting member of the Steering and Executive Committees. The role of the CHRAC includes the following:

a) Present the Steering Committee with sound information concerning cultural heritage and recreational initiatives to be used in the decision-making process.

b) Advise the Steering Committee about emerging issues with management implications and the necessary research or actions to address those issues.

c) Advise the Steering Committee regarding opportunities for transboundary partnerships and cooperative projects both within the Basin and adjacent areas.

d) Determine technical merit of LCBP-funded cultural heritage and recreation studies and projects.

e) Interpret the results of cultural heritage and recreation programs to help determine success or redirection of projects.

Organizations and partnerships established independently of the LCBP to address cultural heritage and recreational issues in the Basin will continue to function in their own right, but may also provide input to the CHRAC. These organizations include the regional marketing organizations and chambers of commerce, scenic byways programs, cultural heritage tourism initiatives, and councils on the arts in both states.

Cost estimate: To be determined through an annual budget development process

Potential funding sources: State and federal appropriations, in-kind participation, public/private partnerships

Timeframe: 2002-ongoing

Benchmarks: Assistance to the Steering Committee in production of periodic status reports; recommendations to the Steering Committee on annual workplan for cultural heritage and recreational resource programs

5) Continue the Education and Outreach Advisory Committee

The Steering Committee should appoint and retain an E&O Advisory Committee comprised of professionals from educational institutions in the Basin and with representation from the CACs and other appropriate sectors. The E&O members serve at the discretion of the Steering Committee. The chair of the E&O Committee, appointed by the Steering Committee, serves as a voting member of the Steering and Executive Committees. The role of the E&O Committee includes the following:

- a) *Present the Steering Committee with sound education and outreach information to be used in the decision-making process.*
- b) *Advise the Steering Committee about potential outreach methods to achieve needed communication with stakeholders regarding emerging public information issues and recommend actions to address those issues.*
- c) *Guide and facilitate aspects of implementation projects to inform and involve the public.*
- d) *Interpret the results of information and outreach programs to help determine success or redirection of projects.*

Cost estimate: To be determined through an annual budget development process

Potential funding sources: State and federal appropriations, in-kind participation, public/private partnerships

Timeframe: 2001-ongoing

Benchmark: Assistance to the Steering Committee in production of periodic status reports; recommendations to the Steering Committee on annual workplan for education and outreach programs



Outreach tools, such as this poster, inform the public about nonpoint sources of phosphorus from urban/suburban development.