

**Lake Champlain Basin Program**  
**Meeting Summary - Executive Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday, February 13, 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)*

- **Participants:**
  - **Executive Committee members:** Emily Boedecker (VT ANR; Chair), Dan Dutcher (VTRANS), Bob Stegemann (NYS DEC), Buzz Hoerr (E&O Cmte Chair), Mike Winslow (TAC Chair), Phone: MaryJo Feuerbach (EPA R1), Pierre Leduc (QC CAC), Lori Fisher (VT CAC), John Krueger (HAPAC Chair), Mario Paula (EPA R2), Sara Hart (NYS OPRHP), Caitlin Lecker (NYS Economic Development), Martin Mimeault (QC MDDELCC)
  - **Staff:** Eric Howe, Colleen Hickey, Meg Modley, Ryan Mitchell, Fred Dunlap, Jim Brangan, Matt Vaughan, Ellen Kujawa, Bethany Sargent, Jane Ceraso
  
- **Public Comments – None provided.**
- The group adjusted the agenda to move Executive Session to 1:15 PM to allow Laura DiPietro from VAAFMM to participate.

**ACTION ITEM:** Approve Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2018  
Buzz, Martin. All in favor.

- **Partner Updates:**
  - Jurisdictional:
    - NY – NYSDEC approved Boreas lands for Wilderness classification. Combined with existing areas, this acquisition creates approximately 250,000 acres of wilderness lands. This is now one of the largest wilderness land areas in the country. Additional adjacent lands in wild forest, which allows for additional uses. Unit management plan in development. Governor Cuomo announced a HAB initiative, which is now well into the planning stages. Lake Champlain and Lake George have been selected as two of the twelve sites. NYSDEC staff will be developing staff. RRAMP contract has been awarded to CWICNY for backroads water quality improvement projects. Will culminate in a legislative tour showcasing these projects.
    - QC – Martin reported on a proposal submitted to OURANOS from research staff at University of Québec in Montreal, looking at HABs in the Pike River system; this builds off bad blooms in this area in 2015. Award decision should be made in the next couple of months. Martin has been working with people in MDDELCC on the Rock River assessment study; they will be working with Matt Vaughan on the development of the RFP this spring.
    - VT - Clean Water Investment Report – there has been a lot of discussion about how to demonstrate that State water quality funds are going out the door for implementation. This Investment Report demonstrates where and how much funding has been spent on water quality projects by watershed, or county. There are a lot of regulations that came out of the VT Act 64. There is now a municipal roads permit, there is a 3-acre stormwater permit in development, and other permits in development that will address

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**Note** – this agenda is a DRAFT. If you have suggestions regarding content, please communicate them to Eric Howe at [ehowe@lcbp.org](mailto:ehowe@lcbp.org).

water quality. Lake Carmi update: consultants have explored treatment options for this lake and watershed. They are looking at a lakewide treatment of \$1.5 million, which would be for circulation improvement within the lake, and would require that all of the watershed loading issues be addressed as much as possible. This would be an upfront investment with a \$15,000 operating cost. Emily reported that Julie Moore is heading a group looking at fairness of cost-sharing of WQ projects around the State, with respect to private business and farms. Funding needs to be found through creative approaches, likely through private bonding and support, less public investment.

- Federal partners
  - MaryJo reported that EPA R1 is looking forward releasing the second report card on the VT TMDL Implementation.
- Advisory Committees:
  - NY CAC – April 21 is World Fish Migration Day. Next meeting is scheduled for February 26. Representatives from Lake Placid Land Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Society will be talking about land conservation at the upcoming NY CAC meeting.
  - QC CAC – Pierre mentioned the networking opportunities that came up from the Research Conference. There was a session at the conference from folks at a University in Québec who are interested in ecosystem services. The QC CAC has had a meeting, with a second one planned, with two researchers from this group to discuss environmental improvements and highlight what has worked, what has not, and is developing recommendations to give to the government for consideration. They also are modeling the watershed to predict the results of BMPs on water quality. Planning follow up meetings with people from that group of researchers. Also working closely with the IJC, particularly for the new water quality reference for Missisquoi Bay and Lake Memphremagog. OBVBM is working on a work plan for this effort now. Will include organizing technical workshops and serving as technical advisors for this effort over the next two years.
  - VT CAC – Lori reported that the VT CAC 2018 action plan has been developed, and was presented to the VT Legislature, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Senate Pro Tem last week at the State House. The group is looking at their current membership, and will be recommending membership renewals in the next few weeks.
  - E&O – Buzz reported that LCBP E&O staff were at the VT Farm Show, and fielded a lot of questions about combined sewer overflows. Emily responded that CSOs are built into the infrastructure of our municipalities, and there are active conversations with these communities about identifying ways to address these issues, but there is not a short-term solution. CBEI will be holding an ethnography workshop, Ausable Chasm tour. The LCBP Video series moves forward. The Love the Lake Series kicks off this week, with Martin Mimeault, discussing surfing experiences on the Lake. Mike Winslow also will be fielding questions about the lake later in the month.
  - HAPAC – HAPAC had a very productive meeting last week. The *Spitfire* project is on hold for now, per request from the Principal Investigator, Art Cohn. Art is still in preliminary discussions with key stakeholders, and has communicated to Eric Howe that LCBP/CVNHP support for this project is not necessary at this time. The HAPAC suggested that we set aside funds for this project regardless, and if the funds are not needed, they the Steering Committee can re-prioritize at a later date. HAPAC is interested in following suit with the pre-proposal budget development process that was

used for the Technical budget development process this year. They will be discussing this process in more detail at a future meeting. A call for pre-proposals will be released that focuses on the interpretive theme of the year.

- TAC – TAC met last week via phone conference. TAC reviewed some of the State of the Lake graphics, and appointed a subcommittee to look at the tributary loading graphics.
- **Legislative Updates - from Tom Berry and George Twigg:**
  - **FY18 budget:** Last week a two-year budget agreement was passed into law. This legislation very broadly sets spending levels across all government agencies and programs. The levels that were established exceed the “sequestration” levels set in the 2011 budget agreement, and are good for those, who agree that solid functional budgets are important across domestic programs. Tom and George were hopeful that this would make it much easier to write the FY19 spending bills.
  - The earlier success in the House and particularly Senate appropriations processes sets up the LCBP budget to be in a good place, but there is still a bit of detail to be finalized there. That said, having an overall number as good as what we are seeing for the federal budget as a whole bodes well. And yes, the Trump budget recommendation out today will be alarming once the details become clear, but we did go through this fire drill last year and the end result was little congressional interest in following his budget blueprint.
  - **FY19 budget:** The President’s budget for FY19 was released yesterday. In the EPA budget, the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay programs were reduced by 90%; all other geographic area programs eliminated, including Lake Champlain. This is consistent with the President’s budget for FY18 as well.
- **LCBP Updates –**
  - The 2018 LCBP boat launch steward job posting is now advertised for summer positions; NY will have stewards at DEC launches at South Bay, Westport, and Peru. These are all sites that also have decontamination sites. LCBP will be augmenting these and other sites in NY. There also will be two portable decontamination sites on the Vermont side of the lake that will be operated by LCBP staff. Two stewards in Québec as well. We expect to advertise an internship opportunity for the Education and Outreach program within the next month.
  - USACE Champlain Canal Barrier Feasibility Study – project is moving forward. We will be hosting a National AIS leadership team here in September, and this will be an opportunity
  - Staff have been very busy with initiation of new grant awards – this group will be making the last of those grant award decisions later today. They team also has been very busy working on the State of the Lake report and the 2017 LCBP Annual Report. We expect to have the Summary of the annual report done by the end of this month.
  - Eric and Jim Brangan will be headed to Washington DC February 28-March 1 to meet with staff from our Lake Champlain congressional delegation and possibly the Senate appropriations committee, as well as people from the National Park Service and the International Joint Commission.
  - IJC update: Flood resilience and mitigation study is moving forward. There will likely be some time on the April Steering Committee agenda for an in-depth review from the project leads, and opportunity to provide guidance & feedback on mitigation models to be considered. Eric Howe is now serving as the acting Public Advisory Committee US Co-chair, through June or July of this year.

- FTP site for meeting materials. How did this work? Not well. Staff will keep looking for alternatives to make documents available in advance of meetings.
- We are looking into “satellite” office space for staff who are either located in the Burlington area or who frequently have meetings in the Burlington area and need a place to work in-between meetings. Costs are expected to be on the order of \$500-750/month (up to \$9,000 per year). More information to be provided at the next Executive Committee meeting.

**11:30 AM 2018 State of the Lake – LCBP staff**

- LCBP staff briefly reviewed several of the new graphic interpretations for the upcoming State of the Lake report. The group provided feedback on several of the graphics, which will be considered. Lori Fisher requested that LCBP staff present these draft graphics to the VT CAC for their feedback. Eric will coordinate with Bethany Sargent.

**12:00 PM Networking Lunch**

**1:00 PM Update on Québec-Vermont MOU for Missisquoi Bay (QC/VT staff)**

- Representatives from Québec MDDELCC and Vermont DEC will provide a brief update on the status of the update for their MOU to reduce phosphorus loading to Missisquoi Bay
  - Martin reported that a draft has been developed by technical-level staff for consideration by higher-level staff from Vermont and Québec governments. Initial review is positive, with the hope of signing the agreement in May. The agreement will not have specific numbers that Vermont and Québec will be responsible for meeting; rather, the agreement will identify a target representative of the entire Missisquoi Bay watershed. This agreement also will not have a timeframe to meet the goals. The new agreement will push to maintain the monitoring programs currently in place for the watershed to identify progress toward goals. The agreement also highlights goals identified in Opportunities for Action and a companion plan developed in Québec for their portion of the watershed. Québec has an interagency committee to review the new agreement and develop a plan to move Québec efforts forward.
  - Emily added that VT is very supportive of this effort, and is moving the document up the chain in ANR for review.

**1:15 PM [Executive Session]:** This agenda item was moved up to 1:15 to allow certain members with conflicting schedules later in the day to participate.

**Motion to enter Executive Session by Mike Winslow, Second by Bob Stegemann. All in favor.**

- Grant Award Reviews:
  - Innovative Agriculture Technical Grants –
  - Enhanced BMP Technical Grants
  - Organizational Support Local Grants – Lori Fisher recused herself from this part of the meeting.

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

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Award Decisions for grants
- Alternative and Innovative Phosphorus Agriculture Record of Decision moved to approve as submitted by Mike Winslow, second by Buzz Hoerr. All in favor. No abstentions.

- Organizational Support: Buzz Hoerr moved to approve as submitted, second by Bob Stegemann. All in favor. Lori Fisher abstained.
- Enhanced Implementation Grants: Motion to approve as submitted by Mike Winslow, second by Martin Mimeault. All in favor. No abstentions.
- Bob asked staff to note that in the future, RFPs should include language clarifying that the LCBP reserves the right to adjust project proposals provided the scope of proposed work is not significantly changed.

#### **2:45 PM FY18 LCBP Budget Development: - LCBP staff**

- Update and follow up from budget discussions in January (Key Functions, Heritage, E&O, Technical Core Priorities)
  - Eric quickly reviewed the Key Functions Budget with the group. There have not been any changes made since the last meeting.
  - The HAPAC discussed their budget and noted that they are considering moving into an RFPP process, and use the Regional Stakeholder Groups to introduce this concept this summer, and phase out the RSGs next year. We would likely keep the Québec RSG going. The RSG effort is a great model if we had a larger budget, but it is not worth the effort given the small amount funds that are available.
  - E&O budget: Colleen and Buzz reviewed the prioritized list of E&O projects from the committee. There were no additional comments from the group.
  - The Executive Committee felt that they did not need to go through the SDM exercise with the HAPAC and E&O this year, and felt comfortable with the prioritized lists as presented. It is difficult to make a decision based on the fact that we do not yet know where the budget will land.

**Potential ACTION ITEM:** Recommendation of the LCBP Key Functions and the prioritized lists for the E&O, HAPAC budget priorities to the Lake Champlain Steering Committee for their consideration in April 2018. No action taken, given that the Federal Budget has not yet passed and is on a Continuing Resolution through March 23, 2018.

#### **3:03 PM Adjournment**

##### **Anticipated Outputs for this meeting include:**

1. Approval of meeting summary from January 12, 2017 LCBP Executive Committee meeting
2. Grant Award Decisions: Innovative Agriculture, Enhanced BMP and Organizational Support grants