



LAKE CHAMPLAIN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

APRIL 11TH -12TH, 2023

(IN PERSON/HYBRID VIA TELECONFERENCE)

LOCATION: GOLDEN ARROW RESORT LAKE PLACID, NY

ATTENDANCE:

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Joe Zalewski (Meeting Chair, NYS DEC), Nathalie Provost (Quebec MELCCFP), Julie Moore (VTANR), Walt Lender (Chair, NY CAC), Pierre Leduc (Chair, Quebec CAC), Mark Naud (Chair, VT CAC), Bruce Lawson for Buzz Hoerr (Chair, E&O Committee), John Krueger (Chair, HAPAC), Neil Kamman (Chair, TAC), Mel Cote (EPA R1), Leslie Morlock (NPS), Jennifer Curran (USACE), Brad Young (USFWS), Anne Jefferson (Lake Champlain Sea Grant), Travis Thomason (NRCS VT), Steve Garceau (MELCCFP), Laura DiPietro for Alyson Eastman (VT AAFM), Laura Trieschmann (VT ACCD), Craig DiGiammarino (VTRANS), Antony Tseng (EPA R2 for Rick Balla)

STAFF: LCBP: Eric Howe, Jim Brangan, Colleen Hickey, Ryan Mitchell, Elizabeth Lee, Meg Modley Gilbertson, Matthew Vaughan, Lauren Jenness, Mae Kate Campbell, Corrie Miller, Kerry Crowningshield, Logan Devaney, Erik Reardon, Erin Vennie-Vollrath (LCBP NYS DEC – Lake Champlain Coordinator), Katie Darr, Myra Lawyer, Sarita Croce (NEIWPCC), MaryJo Feuerbach (EPA R1), Bryan Dore (EPA R1), Michele Fafette (EPA R2), Daniel Trembley (Quebec MELCC), Sarah Coleman (LCBP VT ANR Lake Champlain Coordinator)

GUESTS: Rebecca Ellis (Sen. Welch's Office), Thomas Renner (Cong. Balint's Office), Greg McClinchey (GLFC)

Joe Zalewski (NYS DEC) chaired this meeting.

MEETING BEGINS

10:00 AM

INTRODUCTIONS

Joe Zalewski led the group in a round of introductions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

ACTION ITEM: APPROVE MEETING SUMMARY FROM DECEMBER 14, 2022 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

- **Motion By:** Neil Kamman
- **Second by:** Julie Moore
- **Discussion on the motion:** none
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** Joe Zalewski

PUBLIC COMMENT

10:20 AM

None.

BRIEF UPDATES

10:30 AM

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATES:

- **Rebecca Ellis (Sen. Welch's office):** Rebecca noted that Congress is in midst of budget building. Senators Welch and Sanders sent letters to the chairs of the appropriations committee asking for robust funding for Lake Champlain. In that request, they asked for LCBP to be funded at \$35,000,000; the Heritage Partnership Program at \$30,693,600; Lake Champlain Sea Lamprey Control at \$858,900; Great Lakes Fishery Commission at \$50,000,000 (includes \$10,000,000 for the Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog basins, \$500,000 for the Lake Memphremagog fishery, and \$1,000,000 to address grass carp in the Great Lakes); and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Aquatic Plant Control Laboratory at \$10,000,000.



**LAKE CHAMPLAIN STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY
APRIL 11-12, 2023**

- **Thomas Renner (Cong. Balint's office):** Thomas noted that Rep. Balint joined the Environmental Coalition in the House and is committed to supporting Senator Sanders and Welch's requests when they come to the House. He invited LCBP to inform him of any further requests as the appropriation requests have not officially been made yet.
- Neil Kamman asked Rebecca to clarify that the amount of funding suggested for Heritage projects was \$30.6M. Rebecca noted yes, however she explained it is distributed over all heritage programs nationally.

**INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION
(RYAN MITCHELL, COLLEEN HICKEY)
PRESENTATION**

10:45 AM

- Ryan introduced the [Meet the Scientist](#) video series. The first video presented Brendan Wiltse with Adirondack Watershed Institute (previously Ausable River Association) and discussed salt loads on Mirror Lake in Lake Placid, NY. Ryan Shared another video titled "Studying Behavioral Ecology" that presented Dr. Ellen Marsden and her research on lake trout in Lake Champlain. Laura asked if the videos were Closed captioned. Ryan shared they were not yet but planned to add them. Neil then asked if Matt from LCBP was featured, and Ryan noted that he was not at this time, but would be later in the summer. Eric commented that pre-pandemic, LCBP was offering content at movie theaters around the basin prior to the start of the movie, and asked if these new videos were too long to fill this niche. Ryan responded that the videographer prepared 30-second versions of clips of videos done in the past and believed that theaters may allow two of them to be presented together for a full minute in theaters. Neil followed by asking how many videos were in the series, to which Ryan responded five but three were being launched to begin with. He added that Chris Sabick (LCMM), Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, and Mindy Morales were also featured in the video series. Joe stated the work was a job well-done and shared he hoped it would help inspire future environmental leaders.
- Colleen then shared a recap of recent and future LCBP Education and Outreach Events.
 - World Water Day in Plattsburgh, NY on March 22, 2023 – Twenty partnering watershed groups including Ausable River Association, Paul Smith's College, Lake Champlain Sea Grant, and others worked along private sector groups and the mall to celebrate world water day, allowing visitors to engage with interactive and non-interactive exhibits. Ryan provided slides of the event. Colleen noted that some groups were tracking visitation, one of those being Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District who engaged with 225 people in just 4 hours. The Basin program had three different exhibits averaging 130-140 people at each table throughout the event. The Malone Telegram attended to pick up press on the event. Elizabeth Lee and Stephanie Larkin partnered with schools, including Plattsburgh Middle School, to present projects from students while building the teacher core. Lake Champlain Maritime Museum brought their large basin map to bring to the mall to allow kids and other visitors to interact with it. Lauren chaired the 'Raise the Blade' exhibit with Vic Putman (CAC) who brought his grandson, while Katie shared a fish origami project with Tom Metz. Danielle Garneau, a SUNY Plattsburgh researcher, discussed microplastics in Lake Champlain. There was also a local artist present from Stafford Middle School. LCBP partnered with Regal Cinemas to host a screening of Jordan Rowell's No Other Lake, an independent film supported through and LCBP grant. Colleen added that beginning in May, the film would be airing on Vermont Public television. The film engaged viewers who were able to identify new sections of Lake Champlain, thus building an understanding of issues threatening and impacting different lake segments.
 - Stephanie Larkin is working with Lake Champlain Sea Grant, Paul Smith's College (PSC)UVM, and SUNY Plattsburgh to engage students in the Upward Bound program in NY. The program is being tweaked to engage first generation students attending college who come from BIPOC or disadvantaged communities. Students will explore different programs at PSC, SUNY Plattsburgh, and UVM, and will also bring students to the Ausable Chasm, Poke-

O-Moonshine trail, UVM waterfront, and visit the Rubenstein Lab. Students will also explore workforce development at the LCBP office.

- Clean Water Youth Summit – The summit was funded 2 years ago for \$32,000 but was on hold until now due to the pandemic. Research and activity for the summit will be hosted May 31, 2023, at Main Street Landing, and as many as 250 students are expected to attend. Matt will talk about climate change. Jordan Rowell is slated to talk about the merger of science and art to get messages out to the public. St. Albans Tech program will be casting off the Burlington waterfront. Boat science research will be showcased on the R/V Marcelle. Everything being learned on the lake is being taught to the kindergarten class. Fish bookmarks will be printed for 2nd graders.
- Colleen followed by saying LCBP was very happy with the audiences and outreach that would be achieved through the summit and the “Meet the Scientist” series. Bruce added that he was excited about progress and doing that the LCBP team has been doing their best to communicate well with constituent groups in the watershed. Pierre commented that the No Other Lake film should be shown at the NY film festival, to which Colleen noted it would be shown at Columbia University.

DISCUSSION

FFY23 LCBP BUDGET PRESENTATION (ERIC HOWE)

11:15 AM

Eric provided an overview of LCBP structure, function, and budget (presentation available [here](#)). The presentation included a summary of FY22 projects featured in the [annual report](#), FY23 appropriations, key functions, new proposed tasks, and the proposed budget.

DISCUSSION

- Neil Kamman asked if the intent of the Disadvantaged Communities Liaison program is to bring on new LCBP staff or issue grants to other organizations, noting it is a large investment. Eric Howe clarified that this would be a grant program targeted at supporting staff at other organizations. Some of the funds may be used to support things like translation services and other aspects of including disadvantaged communities in this work. If the Steering Committee is interested in supporting this in this year's budget, he would not propose it again next year unless we can see it's already a strong success.
- Julie Moore asked what role the liaisons will play. Vermont is in budget adjustments to include \$3M to Regional Planning Commissions to support communities pursuing state and federal funding. In addition to helping to access funding, would the liaison serve in a project management capacity to see the work is implemented? Eric confirmed the vision for the liaisons to serve in a grant/project management role to reduce the burden on disadvantaged communities. They would help write proposals and help administer the projects.
- Julie Moore asked if these resources would be positioned with RPCs or conservation districts. Eric confirmed that RPCs and the New York equivalent- counties and natural resource conservation districts would be eligible. LCBP is also interested in other groups that we don't typically work with, like the Association of Africans living in Vermont (AALV) or other similar groups around the basin. Julie asked if the expectation is that an organization like AALV would refocus their priorities to clean water issues as opposed to their normal work. Eric clarified that would be up to the organization. They could reprioritize a staff person in this space or hire someone new to engage in this new space.
- Antony Tseng asked if the translation services under the disadvantaged community liaison grant would be for LCBP and if a contract would be more appropriate than a grant. Eric clarified that LCBP would use contracts for LCBP's translation work as needed. Mae Kate added that it will be made clear to organizations that apply to the liaison grant can use funding for services that support interactions with disadvantaged communities, like translation services.
- Julie Moore asked how the Steering Committee felt about the \$750,000 budget for the task, noting it is a large commitment for a pilot project. Eric noted that if this is something the Steering Committee wants to support, we will have time in the coming months to develop this idea and work with the Executive Committee to flesh out the program more. Ideally this would go out the new slate of RFPs in August or September, but it is not tied to a field season. We could hold onto

those funds for 8 months- 1 year. If the Steering Committee isn't comfortable at that point, the funds can be redirected to other work or the \$750,000 commitment could be cut back.

- Neil Kamman suggested first describing the general intent of the project and putting out a request for information to allow organizations and people in the environmental justice space to inform how we might structure this. Julie Moore was supportive of this idea.
- Sarah Coleman asked if organizations could partner with other project implementers to help build capacity and relationships over time. Eric confirmed that building relationships with LCBP and other groups and communities would be part of the program.
- Bryan Dore shared that EPA is launching a similar program, [Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers Program](#). It may make sense to push the start of the liaison program until after the centers launch as there may be opportunities to partner.
- Mark Naud asked if the program would apply to all four goals, not just water quality. Eric confirmed it would apply to all programmatic OFA goals.
- Neil Kamman asked about the flexibility of these dollars and noted the possible need to cushion for a budget decline if LCBP's appropriation decreases. Eric noted that holding onto the liaison program and public access program funds would provide a \$1M buffer until we know what the FY24 appropriations look like in mid-late December.
- Steve Garceau commented on some of the access and disadvantaged community needs in Quebec, particularly related to fishing. Eric noted that GLFC funds may be able to support work like this in Quebec in future years.
- Travis Thomason commented on the increase in funding across other federal and state entities. Partners should work together and coordinate who is investing where so partners are not in competition.

LUNCH BREAK

12:15 PM

FFY23 LCBP BUDGET PRESENTATION (CONTINUED)

1:30 PM

CLEAN WATER & HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS BUDGET (NEIL KAMMAN, TAC CHAIR, AND LCBP TECHNICAL TEAM)

FY22 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS & FY23 CORE PROJECTS (LCBP TECHNICAL TEAM)

LCBP Staff reviewed Clean Water and Healthy Ecosystems Budget Highlights from fiscal year 2022 via [PowerPoint presentation](#). Roughly \$12 million in ongoing work of the LCBP budget went to these two goals. LCBP Staff then reviewed proposed fiscal year 2023 core projects.

- Mel Cote asked about the timeframe of the summary projects. Matt Vaughan responded that the work was funded between fiscal years 2018-2021.
- Neil Kamman asked about how LCBP engaged with communities for the New American Community Fishing Workshop series. Mae Kate Campbell responded that staff worked with the Cultural Brokers group stood up by the UVM Health Network.

Erik Reardon discussed AIS outreach work he has completed along the Champlain Canal to address the threat of Round goby via PowerPoint presentation.

Myra Lawyer reviewed her NY Agronomy work over the past 10 years via PowerPoint presentation.

FY23 LINE ITEM PROJECTS (VT DEC, NY DEC, LCBP STAFF)

Sarah Coleman and Erin Vennie-Vollrath reviewed [proposed FY2023 State line-item projects](#) via PowerPoint presentation.

- Project #1: Mel Cote asked how NY State plans to incentivize meeting municipal and rural road standards that are not required? Erin Vennie-Vollrath responded that Soil and Water Conservation Districts are out in the larger landscape and talking with municipalities. They have a database they work through and provide feedback and practice recommendations. They also help

with project implementation. Sarah Coleman added that on the Vermont side, Road Erosion Inventories are focused on private road networks. VT is adapting Municipal Road General Permit system to private roads.

- Project #3: Mark Naud asked how much of the work will focus on direct riparian relation to the Lake? The description says the focus is on fine clay soils of Addison county. Sarah Coleman responded that the project is a bit more technical in nature and focused on capacity building for technical assistance providers. The information gained via the project would transfer across the landscape. Hydrologic connection is implied, but it's a comprehensive approach. There is also an economic benefit – technical analysis will identify where we need to uphold criteria to do appropriate onsite treatment and adjust designs so they aren't as costly.
- Eric Howe clarified that the USGS project listed within the presentation is no longer under consideration for this year's budget.

FY22 TMDL PROJECTS (VT DEC)

Sarah Coleman shared an overview of TMDL projects in progress and [requests for 2023 TMDL funding](#) via PowerPoint presentation.

- Sarah clarified that VTDEC is working with VT Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Wetland acquisition projects.
- Neil Kamman and Julie Moore clarified that the State is co-funding the Green Schools Initiative with ARPA dollars.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: REVIEW OF FY23 RESEARCH PROPOSALS FOR CLEAN WATER AND HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS (NEIL KAMMAN, MATT VAUGHAN)

ACTION ITEM: MOTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

- **Motion By:** Neil Kamman
- **Second by:** Julie Moore
- **Discussion on the motion:** None
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** None.

Anne Jefferson recused herself due to conflict of interest.

EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION.

INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION

3:00 PM

AIS FUNDING IN THE LAKE CHAMPLAIN BASIN (MEG MODLEY GILBERTSON, OLIVER PIERSON)

- Meg Modley Gilbertson: Meg stated that AIS management in Vermont & NY requested from EPA and CAC to study AIS prevention for Vermont and NY portions of the watershed. This would cover FY22 within the watershed. Meg's presentation can be found [here](#).
- Oliver Pierson: Oliver shared the AIS Prevention Program Funding [presentation](#) that reviewed staffing needs, budgetary pressures, and challenges.
- Erin Vennie-Vollrath: Erin spoke to AIS Prevention in the NY portion of the watershed in her [presentation](#). She noted that 7 full time staff as well as additional staff working on AIS through partnerships for regional invasive species management (PRISMs). The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) is a major funding source for AIS and other projects; funding is derived from real estate transfer taxes. She added that Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) is the PRISM that works with The Nature Conservancy in the Adirondacks and the capital region PRISM covers the Mohawk region. Mark asked if PRISMs are funded separately, to which Erin responded that they are part of the \$17,000,000 and are funded through 5-year contracts. She added that another 5 years of funding had been secured for the Lake Champlain Water Chestnut



Harvesting Program, totaling \$375,000. Meg commented that it is very valuable work that engages local residents and that it is a fantastic partnership with great value for investment. Joe noted that EPF funding doesn't include staff time. Meg added that funding for this in the basin is approximately \$3-\$4,000,000 annually. Erin commented that EPF funds go to spread prevention, early detection, rapid response (DEC) management of hydrilla and water chestnut harvesting. There are a limited number of grant programs that other organizations can apply to, the last of which was done was 2016 with \$6,500,000 funding 14 projects.

- Mark further inquired about the water chestnut harvesters. Meg commented that there were 3 machines that operate on both sides of the lake, and they are moved with a transporter and off-loader. The key issues stem from hauling and transporting harvested water chestnuts.
- Meg ended her presentation with a message from Brad, sharing that he completed the eDNA project and findings were negative for Round Goby!

COMMENTS:

- NONE

JURISDICTIONAL UPDATES

4:15 PM

- **Joe Zalewski (NYS DEC):** Directed to written update.
- **Julie Moore (VTDEC):** Directed to written update.
- **Nathalie Provost (QC MELCCFP):** The Quebec budget will include support to maintain involvement with the Binational Missisquoi Bay Phosphorus Reduction Task Force and to support OBVBM in the development of a protection plan, more details to follow at the June meeting.
- **Bryan Dore (EPA):** Since the 2016 TMDL was completed, annual report cards have been issued. Last week, an interim report card for Basin 3 and a final report card for Basins 2 and 4 were released, they have all demonstrated excellent progress. The framework and regulatory assistance programs are in place to achieve phosphorus reduction goals. The Equity Strategy for the EPA Geographic Programs was submitted. The Strategy outlines how programs will achieve roughly 40% of BIL funds to benefit disadvantaged communities, the 40% is cumulative across all geographic programs.
- **Eric Howe (LCBP):** Directed to written updates. LCBP is now officially the Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin Program, an updated logo reflecting the name change is under development. The reauthorization came with an increase in authorized appropriations to \$35M and extended the program to 2027. Eric recognized LCBP retirees and welcomed new staff. Kathy Jarvis served as office manager for 30 years and Cynthia Norman worked in the Resource Room for 20 years. Kerry Crowningshield has refilled Kathy's position and Logan Devaney is the new grants manager. Cynthia's position was refilled by Phil Brett. The Steering Committee has two new members, Anne Jefferson started as the new director of Lake Champlain Sea Grant in January and Leslie Morlock, Superintendent of Saratoga National Battlefield, is replacing the Superintendent of Marsh Billings Rockefeller as the National Park Service liaison role.
- **Jennifer Curran (USACE):** Finalized and distributed USACE's classification of disadvantaged communities using EPA guidance.
- **Brad Young (USFWS):** Andrew Milliken has decided to turn his detail into a permanent position with the USFWS Science Support Team which works on regional and national climate change initiatives. Brad will be the designated representative to LCBP until a replacement for Andrew is selected. Scott Frost at the White River National Fish Hatchery is retiring. The Habitat Team is at the beginning of the field season, with lots of projects for wetland restoration and work with the Vermont Ag Water Quality Partnership. Laurie Early is continuing to work with Vermont Fish and Wildlife to figure out how to support better salmon survival in the Winooski River. For the first time in 30 years, salmon and lake trout met their sea lamprey wounding targets. Sea lamprey trapping has begun with traps around the basin in several different territories. There are 2-5 lampricide treatments in New York and 2 in Vermont planned for this fall. On May 11th, there will be an event to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Morpion Barrier in Notre-Dame-de-Stanbridge in Québec.



- **Sarita Croce (NEIWPCC):** Directed to written updates. Encouraged everyone to look at the 6PPD emerging contaminant presentation by the Washington State Department of Ecology.
- Written updates submitted by Committee members may be viewed at [this link](#).

DAY 1 ADJOURN

4:30 PM

DAY 2 MEETING BEGINS

9:00 AM

INTRODUCTIONS

New participants were introduced.

Tim Mihuc, SUNY Plattsburgh, Corrie Miller, LCBP, Dave Minkhoff, USFWS, Jacob Fetterman, Trout Unlimited, Tom Lincoln, NYSDEC

Before any presentations, Antony commented that he had some comments about the TAC research proposals that were not articulated in the last Executive Committee Meeting. He asked how the comments should be submitted. Neil asked if the comments were substantive and could change decision-making, to which Antony affirmed possibly. Joe stated that that meeting should last until 3:00pm, so he hoped to address any concerns later in the session.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND LCBP UPDATES

9:05 AM

- **Mark Naud (VTCAC):** Mark mentioned that included in written updates, one issue is that all 3 CACs want QC and VT to include updates on the Joint Task Force. He noted that the plan is to use the June SC meeting to update this.
- **Pierre Leduc (QCCAC):** Pierre shared that erosion reduction targeted 6 more brooks, making a total of 100 so far. He hoped to cover the full basin. He added that there were two cohorts (groups of farmers working on soil health and P reduction, reflectively) and two major projects with LCBP funding.
- **Walt Lender (NYCAC):** Walt shared that Katie did a great writeup for the meeting and the CAC had a great presence at the World Water Day event in Plattsburgh. The NYCAC added a couple of new members that would expand engagement with other groups. He reiterated the importance of having support from colleagues from VT and QC for more public engagement. Inviting people to the meeting on April 24th. Mark followed, thanking the Steering Committee for supporting Katie's position. He added that it is a structure and system that works well, lets the VTCAC remain connected while the VT coordinator can focus on other priorities. Katie has been fantastic at uniting the voices of the CACs. Pierre and Walt agreed. Pierre added that he wanted to thank Eric and the LCBP for inviting QC colleagues to the VAWQP meeting, noting it was fantastic to make connections with people working on ag issues in VT and to see how the partnership works. He hoped to do something similar in QC. Pierre added that this work is needed in other basins.
- **Neil Kamman (TAC):** Neil directed the SC to see the written update and reference discussion from yesterday.
- **Colleen Hickey (E&O AC):** Colleen directed the SC to see the written update. She added that the Resource Room just had their 500,000th visitor. Visitors were received by mostly three full time staff, including Cynthia who retired recently after 20 years. She said it is a great partnership with ECHO and staff with Leahy has been instrumental in this. She also said LCBP pays nothing for the space that is utilized by all.
- **John Krueger (HAPAC):** John directed the Committee to the written update. He called special attention to the Spitfire in the packet, sharing that more information would follow in the afternoon session.
- Written updates submitted by Committee members may be viewed at [this link](#).



INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION

9:30 AM

LOWER SARANAC RIVER AOP PRESENTATION (CORRIE MILLER, DR. TIM MIHUC, TOM LINCOLN, DAVID MINKHOFF, JACOB FETTERMAN) PRESENTATION

Corrie Miller, LCBP, thanked members and presenters for attending. She said the aim of the program was to inform the Steering Committee about current efforts to improve fish passage and river restoration happening in the Saranac River in NY. Dr. Tim Mihuc (in person) from SUNY would present first. Tom Lincoln NYSDEC would then talk about the fish ladder and Imperial Dam. David Minkhoff and Jacob Fetterman would then discuss further about the Imperial Dam.

Tim Mihuc: Information from his presentation was derived from a meeting that occurred at SUNY Plattsburgh in fall 2022 in response to community interest in the impoundment history of the Saranac River. Tim presented via [Powerpoint](#).

Tom Lincoln: Imperial Mills Dam – Tom presented a [Powerpoint](#) entitled “Salmon Ladder and Dam Rehabilitation Project,” detailing the need to improve dam safety while balancing fish passage, particularly restoration of the salmon run, in the Saranac River.

Jacob Fetterman: Jacob presented his [Powerpoint](#) entitled “Lower Saranac AOP Restoration,” in conjunction with Dave Minkhoff, sharing more details of the Treadwell Mills/Lower Saranac Hydro dams and Imperial Mills dam, most notably sharing that improving fish. Dave added that the scope of the project can be expanded to remove additional structures due to added LCBP funding. New planned fishway at Imperial Mills meant that fish passage was imminent up to Indian Rapids and could help fund spillway removal.

DISCUSSION

Corrie thanked the presenters and opened the discussion for Q&A:

- Neil said he was curious to hear Tim’s opinion about the FERC application at Imperial Dam. Tim shared that the request was dated from late 2021 to change the navigable designation back to non-navigable. The turbines are 98 years old and the request was to restart their use. Joe added that he had not seen the application be perfected and moved forward. Mark stated that for Imperial Mills, the Fish and Wildlife Service would have some input on FERC relicensing and DEC expressing their concerns.
- Mark then asked about Indian Rapids dam, wondering when its removed, if the public platform would become public access? David shared that the intent is to remove all structures and that there is currently public access at the site.
- Eric asked if the intent at Imperial Dam is to install a fish ladder with sea lamprey barrier, as that is currently the barrier for fish passage on the Saranac River. Brad said yes, that is the case. Tom stated that they looked at other fish ladders for species/river structures, and that because salmon have been observed using that specific type of ladder, that is what they went with for this project as well. David added that current literature review suggests 80% success for this type of design for this species is reasonable.
- Meg added that it is important to think about other AIS that may take advantage of dam removal in addition to just sea lamprey. Tom followed by saying that with Imperial, downstream movement of AIS could also be an issue as there is going to be a lip downstream of the dam to generate pools for a “soft” landing. Brad asked if the ladder would be operated year-round. Tom responded the intent is to run it late summer through fall, but it could operate whenever. Brad followed saying that could benefit preventing the spread of sea lamprey and other AIS if that is the case.
- Matt commented that there is a lot of interest in the project and asked the group to speak about planned outreach efforts. Tom agreed, saying there were lots of opinions with community members with different camps of priorities, so the best compromise, short of dam removal, has been creating a multifaceted approach that was settled upon. Dave shared his appreciation for all partners and excitement for this project and others to come. Tim ended the discussion by saying

that 85 fish were caught last year and about the same this year, so there are a lot of fish that will potentially migrate upstream in the future as a result of the efforts.

FFY23 LCBP BUDGET PRESENTATION (CONTINUED)

10:40 AM

EDUCATION & OUTREACH (BRUCE LAWSON, COLLEEN HICKEY)

- Bruce Lawson introduced himself and introduced the Education and Outreach presentation, which covered staff and partner-driven initiatives, project highlights, core projects, and line-item projects.
- Colleen provided an overview of the Informed and Involved Public *Opportunities for Action* goal and discussed target outreach audiences and behavior change objectives. Colleen, Lauren, Ryan, and Katie presented on staff work and grant program highlights.
- Colleen, Ryan, Lauren, and Sarah reviewed the Education and Outreach line-item requests.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: REVIEW OF EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROPOSALS (COLLEEN HICKEY)

ACTION ITEM: MOTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

- **Motion By:** Julie Moore
- **Second by:** Nathalie Provost
- **Discussion on the motion:** none
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** Anne Jefferson recused herself due to a conflict of interest

EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION.

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP BUDGET (JIM BRANGAN, LCBP, AND JOHN KRUEGER, HAPAC CHAIR)

11:30 AM

- Jim Brangan (LCBP): [Presented](#) FY22 project highlights. He noted the overall goal of programming is to create a stronger link between the people and the resources and offered the example of Mirror Lake, its issue with high salt levels, and how outreach has facilitated its stewardship. Through the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, LCBP made a mark helping people understand the impacts of the legislature on their lives and communities.
- John Krueger (HAPAC Chair): John provided an update on the significance of the Gunboat Spitfire. He shared the history of the invasion of Canada and history of the Spitfire. He noted the vessel was found in 1997 while surveying for zebra mussels and shared the potential harm that quagga mussels and diver interference could have on the the shipwreck. Jim then presented 3D modeling of the Spitfire on the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum's website. He noted that efforts are underway to protect the site and collect artifacts to display in an accessible way.
- Katie Darr (LCBP): Katie provided an update on the Champlain-Adirondack Biosphere Network and the NY and VT Lake Champlain Citizens Advisory Committees (see program updates for [VT](#) and [NY](#)).
- Jim commented that there are many different ways to make the Champlain Valley a better place and the Artist-in-Residence (AiR) program has been crucial for bringing artists and scientists together to reach a new audience of students and citizens. Artists connected with scientists to learn about issues in the basin and their artwork served as an alternate form of outreach to the public. In its second year, the AiR program will work with two artists/teachers working with students at 4 different schools to teach about the watersheds they live in through arts. They will use approaches such as developing trails and carving woodblocks to aid in things such as interpretation of the Mad River Valley.



Clemmons Family Farm and Adirondack North Country Association received funding through this program for 2023, and Adelard will participate for Quebec.

- Jim then discussed the FY23 CVNHP Core projects:
 - Wayside Exhibit Program– continues to be huge success. Over 375 exhibits are in rotation currently.
 - CVNHP Summit – Very popular. Next summit is Fall 2023 at the Basin Harbor Club.
 - Julie asked if the funding would be focused on new wayside exhibits, or would it be just focusing on older ones? Are there any efforts to refresh them.
 - Jim – a survey was done in 2020 to assess the condition of the existing exhibits and many were repaired, however this is an ongoing effort. So funding is directed toward new and existing materials. Laura added that the Wayside Exhibit program serves as a model throughout the state and beyond.
 - Champlain Adirondack Biosphere Network Funding
 - Outreach and Sustainability Funding
 - Western New England Greenway Funding – continuation from last year's funding. Working with Upper Housatonic National Heritage Area in Massachusetts to create a contiguous green route between Manhattan and Montreal.
- Jim noted CVNHP received 61 pre-proposals in response to the RFP totaling well over \$1,000,000, which was a record. The review team requested that 33 go to full proposal; \$385,671 is obligated for these CVNHP projects utilizing funding from NPS and GLFC combined.
- Joseph proposed breaking for lunch now and entering the Executive Session upon our return.

LUNCH BREAK

12:30 PM

EXECUTIVE SESSION: REVIEW OF CVNHP PROPOSALS (LAUREN JENNESS)

ACTION ITEM: MOTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

- **Motion By:** Neil Kamman
- **Second by:** Julie Moore
- **Discussion on the motion:** none
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** None.

Jim Brangan and Katie Darr recused themselves due to a conflict of interest.

EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION.

FFY23 LCBP BUDGET DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL DISCUSSION, FINAL ADJUSTMENTS (ERIC HOWE)

1:15 PM

- Eric [presented](#) the proposed budget for review and discussion. He recapped that there were many moving parts during the meeting, which included the following:
 - reducing the Disadvantaged Communities Liaison Grants (DCLG) line item from \$750K to \$700K; Both the DCGL and Improving Public Access lines will be

- developed and Basin Program staff will continue to develop and discuss these programs and discuss with the Steering Committee at a future meeting.
- Heritage Tasks line item - \$464,200 funding about 18-20 projects including \$250K in park service plus additional funds from GLFC.
 - Neil asked for the bottom-line dollar amount going to the CVNHP grants. Eric replied \$464,272 was going for the heritage area
- Clean water grants: adjustment sets aside \$1,500,000 for small, large, and clean water planning grants.
- Research tasks were reviewed yesterday, and they include the flag with Middlebury College. Any reduction in the budget will roll back into the grants program for next year
- Healthy ecosystem grants: set aside \$950,000 for this category. AIS grants are over \$400,000 (more than double in previous years)
- Research grants: An additional \$50,000 in funding is set to go to one applicant (as discussed) with caveat that the project area expand. The rest of the proposals will be funded as presented.
- Thriving communities: \$500,000 was set aside for Organizational Support grants plus line items for the state.
- Informed and Involved Public: \$520,000 was set aside for small grants and educator support
- All other line items were as requested
- Eric noted that all of the discussion that occurred earlier in the meeting during the Executive Session amounted to funding 23 projects a total of \$1,000,0000
- Julie Moore asked if they could present an amendment reflecting some of the discussion during yesterday's meeting regarding AIS. She suggested the following:
 - Obligating \$150,000 in funding for a position to build capacity for the State of Vermont. It would involve no more than a 3-year commitment and direct the focus on education and outreach efforts and ensuring the state has the technological knowledge and resources to be successful. After the 3-year period, a new position in the state should be established.
- Mel shared a similar sentiment that this position is needed in Vermont; the position is addressed in NY through Erik Reardon's position. Mark commented that based on what he saw at the CAC to improve efforts, he was unsure if a funded position would accomplish the tasks. Meg echoed that the VT program lacked capacity and funding a position like this would be a start to get them back up to par. Jennifer stated she agreed there is a lack in capacity to get the work done currently and that a position is needed. Neil asked funding this new position could be accomplished. Eric shared that it would be a new line-item \$150,000 and Julie and Eric will determine if it was an EPA to VT position or if it was an EPA to NEIWPCC to VT position. Sarah Coleman could support it. Meg asked where the funding was coming from. Eric noted it would be derived from the Invasive Species and the Healthy Ecosystems grant budgets.
- Joe asked for further discussion to which there was none.
- A motion was then proposed to add \$150,000 in support to support an AIS position for work in Vermont.

ACTION ITEM: Motion to add \$150,000 to the budget to support a dedicated AIS education and outreach position in Vermont.

- **Motion by:** Julie Moore
- **Second by:** Mark Naud
- **Discussion on the motion:** none
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** Neil due to a conflict of interest

ACTION ITEM: APPROVE FFY2023 LCBP/CVNHP Budget as discussed

- **Motion by:** Neil Kamman
- **Second by:** John Krueger
- **Discussion on the motion:** none
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** Anne Jefferson due to a conflict of interest in previous sessions

DEI STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW AND APPROVAL (MAE KATE CAMPBELL)

1:45 PM

Mae Kate Campbell reviewed LCBP's DEI Strategic Plan (presentation and plan available [here](#)) and provided DEI updates related to the second public comment period for the interim disadvantaged community definition, translation of cyanobacteria, E.coli, and mercury in fish tissue videos, and the four fishing workshops for New American and low-income community members planned for this summer.

DISCUSSION

- Julie Moore asked if the map of grants previously awarded to disadvantaged communities has been developed. Mae Kate shared that they looked at the distribution of previous EPA funding and found we had a little under 40% of funding going towards communities that meet the disadvantaged communities definition. Julie suggested removing the word "more" from action 2.1 so it reads "adopt a definition of 'disadvantaged community' to identify communities with LCBP desires to benefit equitably from its grant programs." as to not dismiss the good work we've already done.
- Anne Jefferson asked if disadvantaged community members would be compensated for providing trainings. Mae Kate confirmed they would be compensated.
- Brad Young shared learning from federal trainings that using words like disadvantaged and underserved is discouraged because it established an "us vs them" mentality with an associated stigma. Mae Kate noted that there is an [FAQ on LCBP's DEI webpage](#) which explains we are using this particular term to be consistent with EPA's guidance. Mel Cote added that many underserved communities don't necessarily feel they are disadvantaged. That particular phrase is in the Justice40 policy, but we can choose how we want to speak when working directly with these groups. Mae Kate confirmed that in our official documents, RFPs, and Strategic Plan, we use "disadvantaged communities" to remain consistent, but we have clarified in our documents that applicants are welcome to use a different term and we may not use the term "disadvantaged" in our outreach with communities.
- Colleen Hickey clarified that action 4.5 will not be exclusive to Resource Room staff.
- Neil Kamman asked about the committee LCBP has worked with. Mae Kate shared the Health Disparities and Cultural Competencies Group is the group we have been working with on the fishing workshops. Neil Kamman suggested reaching out to see if the Health in All Policies group is still operational and suggested getting the plan and the definition in front of them.
- Joe Zalewski asked if this plan is a living document that can be revisited by the Steering Committee. Mae Kate confirmed this is a living document that is intended to be a 3-year plan we can revisit and change as needed.
- Daniel Tremblay asked if there will be additional points awarded to a project if it meets the disadvantaged communities definition criteria, noting that those criteria do not exist for Quebec. Mae Kate confirmed that additional points will be awarded for projects that meet the criteria. Currently, this definition is applicable to RFPs that are only eligible for work in the US. LCBP does not anticipate launching an RFP eligible for work in Canada until August. LCBP will work with Quebec partners to figure out a way to work on this for projects in Canada.
- Neil Kamman asked if the fishing workshops have demonstrated that obtaining a fishing license is a barrier. Mae Kate and Meg Modley confirmed it is a barrier and the demand for licenses by these communities is there. Anne Jefferson shared that Sea Grant is developing their budget and will include funds for licenses.

ACTION ITEM: APPROVE LCBP DEI STRATEGIC PLAN AS PROPOSED

- **Motion By:** Neil Kamman



**LAKE CHAMPLAIN STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY
APRIL 11-12, 2023**

- **Second by:** Mark Naud
- **Discussion on the motion:** None
- **Vote:** All in favor
- **Abstentions:** None

ADJOURN

3:00 PM
