

**Lake Champlain Basin Program**  
**Draft Agenda - Executive Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, June 7, 2018 9:30 AM – 3:00 PM**  
**LCBP Office, Gordon Center House, Grand Isle, VT**

**9:30 Arrival and Networking**

**10:00 AM Meeting Convenes** – *Chair: Kari Dolan (VT ANR representative)*

- **Introductions** around the room, conference call participants
- **Attendance:**  
Executive Committee members: Kari Dolan (Chair, for Emily Boedecker), John Kreuger (HAPAC Chair), MaryJo Feuerbach (EPA R1), Dan Dutcher (VTRANS), Buzz Hoerr (E&O Chair) **Phone:** Mario Paula (EPA R2 for Rick Balla), Christina Marts (NPS); Pierre Leduc, VT CAC, Laura DiPietro, VAAFM,  
Staff: LCBP: Eric Howe, Matthew Vaughan, Ellen Kujawa, Ryan Mitchell; Jane Ceraso (NEIWPCC); Bethany Sargent (VT DEC Coordinator), Fred Dunlap (NYS DEC Coordinator)
- **Public Comments - none**

**ACTION ITEM:** Approve Meeting Minutes from March 15, 2018. Motion to Approve by John K. Second by Buzz H. all in favor.

- **Partner Updates:**
  - Jurisdictional:
  - NY – Bob reported that NYS DEC deployed boat launch stewards at over 200 locations around the State. This effort included 5-year, \$5 million contract to the Adirondack Watershed Institute, which includes stewards at 9 locations on Lake Champlain, and 7 containing decontamination stations in the area. NYS DOT is constructing a new welcome center on I-87, just south of Glens Falls and will contain a boat inspection and decontamination station. Final drafts of HAB Action plans are in review 12 systems across New York, including Lake Champlain and Lake George. The NYS superfund site clean up is underway on Lake Flower in Saranac Lake from a former manufactured gas plant. This project will remove 22,000 yards of material and should be complete this fall. A salt study across the Adirondacks has determined that residential wells along State highway corridors have substantially higher chloride concentrations than other road networks in the area; NYS DOT uses pure salt for deicing, which may be part of the cause.
  - QC- no update provided.
  - VT – Kari Dolan reported that VT DEC released the latest list of 303d impaired waters in Vermont and has released the latest stormwater calculator for municipalities to evaluate stormwater control practices to implement for phosphorus reductions and to address flow restoration. VT DEC has initiated conversations with NY about tracking of BMPs across the Champlain watershed. Vermont DEC staff presented at the NEIWPCC NPS conference in Glens Falls, NY on the state-wide BMP tracking database, and NYS DEC was very interested in this tool. Additional updates are provided in the supporting materials for this meeting. VT DEC also is updating the Lake Carmi action plan.
  - Federal partners – group met in late April, Eric reviewed the need from VT NRCS backlog of projects due to the lack of engineering staff at NRCS. Matt Cosby, USACE, reviewed the USACE Silver Jackets program.

- EPA R1: MaryJo Feuerbach reported that Alex Dunn, EPA Region 1 Administrator, was pleased to meet the LCBP Staff at the Resource Room last week. The new staff position is nearly refilled for MaryJo's old job as EPA R1 Lake Champlain Coordinator. MaryJo is working through new awards for VT, NEIWPC/LCBP. MaryJo also is involved in EPA's Nutrient Challenge, at the National level. Goal is to pull experts of various backgrounds into a room to discuss what new innovative technology we should be promoting to move the dial forward. This will happen on June 19 at Woods Hole. Marli Rupe from VT ANR will be participating as one of the experts.
- EPA R2: Mario Paula gave kudos to MaryJo for doing 2 jobs over the past several months. Mario is reviewing the NY FY18 application. EPA also has had a long-term relationship with Paul Smith's College to do boat launch steward work through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in the western portion of the Adirondacks. Also funding NYS Parks to do boat launch steward work, which includes a few stewards in the Lake Champlain Basin.
- Christina Marts, NPS: NPS Rivers and Trails Technical Assistance program is accepting applications for communities looking for assistance with trails and greenways planning. NPS Maritime Program \$2.6 million in grants awarded this year. LCMM received a grant to train SCUBA divers to serve as advocates to protect underwater resources. NPS enjoyed hosting the NEIWPC commissioners for the NEIWPC Executive Committee in early May. Christina was able to share some information with the Commissioners about the Heritage Area Programs.
- NEIWPC – Jane reported that NEIWPC received a large grant from NYS from the NYS Infrastructure Act to work on upgrading WWTFs in the Catskills to better protect the NYS drinking water reservoirs. Also received a grant to hire 20 new staff members in NY over the next few years to update source water protection plans across the State. This effort could overlap with HAB and non-point source phosphorus work in the Champlain watershed. Will include monitoring for nine new cyanotoxins as part of new federal rules in the Safe Drinking Water Act. Sampling will likely begin in 2019.
- Advisory:
  - NY CAC – Fred Dunlap reported that the NY CAC is organizing a water chestnut harvest in the South Lake for July. Heard presentations on brownfields work in the region.
  - QC CAC – Pierre Leduc reported that MDDELCC held a retirement party for Martin Mimeault in Saint Lambert, QC at the end of May. OBVBM Boat stewards are starting today on Missisquoi Bay, with LCBP funding. Completing riparian zone characterization is almost complete on the Quebec portion of the Missisquoi Watershed. Assessments are being conducted to assess potential use of dams as barriers to prevent invasion of Asian carp across the Saint Lawrence River watershed. Continuing to work on the IJC study for the Flood mitigation and water quality references. Continuing pesticide tracking in the Pike River. Analysis will look at potential emerging contaminants. June 16 will be the annual meeting for OBVBM in Saint Armand. There will be several presentations on OBVBM projects and programs, including work with farmers and pesticides.
  - VT CAC – VT CAC did not meet in May; hoping to coordinate a public presentation on the new State of the Lake report. Assembling agenda for annual retreat in July or

August to develop potential topics to discuss in upcoming year, and priorities for the 2019 Action Plan.

- E&O – Buzz Hoerr and Colleen Hickey reported that the E&O Committee met yesterday. Discussed 2018 funding, and progress on the Healthy Soils project and campaign. Brainstormed potential partners and distribution outlets to contact for promoting the new State of the Lake report. Discussed the potential for a SOL rack card. Corey Aydlett, VT DEC AmeriCorps program presented the concept for the High School Champlain Stewardship certification program. Also had an in-depth conversation about the Artist in Residence program that was supported in the FY18 budget. Suggestion was to not do this as a single artist, single issue program. Might be better to have 3 artists, one from each jurisdiction who travel into the field with each other, such as on the Lois McClure. Colleen commented that the Raise the Blade campaign is moving forward, with support from Lake Champlain Sea Grant. Buzz encouraged everyone to read Dan Egan’s book, *Death and Life of the Great Lakes*. Dan Egan was one of the keynote speakers at the Lake Champlain Research Conference last January.
  - HAPAC – John Kreuger encouraged people to read *Rabble at Arms* by Kenneth Roberts. Art Cohn is still working on the *Spitfire* restoration project; John is hopeful that there will be a meeting to discuss this project late this fall. John proposed an Executive Committee meeting in October timed to meet with the Lois McClure stop in Burlington in October, and to have the Spitfire meeting. Another reason to have this meeting would be to review the 2018 CVNHP heritage grant awards. Timing the grant awards this way would give us an opportunity to highlight the new grants during the 2018 Summit. The Interpretive Theme of 2020 for the CVNHP should be to celebrate the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution to give women the right to vote. The HAPAC could use this anniversary to focus this Making of Nations theme on civics and the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. Eric will try to schedule the next Executive Committee meeting between October 9-12.
  - Motion to approve the focus for the Making of Nations theme to focus on celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment by Buzz Hoerr, second by Dan Dutcher. All in favor.
  - Motion to schedule an Executive Committee meeting between October 9<sup>th</sup> and 12 timed to coordinate with the return of the Lois McClure in Burlington. Buzz moved, second by Dan Dutcher. No further discussion. All in favor.
  - TAC – Matt reported for TAC as Bill Ardren and Mike Winslow were not able to attend. See supporting meeting materials to this Meeting Summary for TAC for updates.
- **Legislative Updates – Eric reported that Senate Appropriations staff were here touring last week and that the Senate would be marking up the interior bill next week. Eric also noted the press event with Senator Leahy to announce FY18 funding levels for Lake Champlain.**
  - **LCBP Updates**
    - Eric reported that Martin Mimeault retired at the end of May. We are still waiting for official notification from the Quebec MDDELCC regarding Martin’s replacement as the Quebec Lake Champlain Coordinator.
    - LCBP has been very busy ramping up for the State of the Lake release and other summer programs; today’s meeting is the 3<sup>rd</sup> committee meeting here in 2 days

- The 2018 State of the Lake release will be held here at LCBP on June 15. Please join us!
- The IJC water quality monitoring project is now under way and should be wrapped up by September 2019. Major deliverables from this project will be a literature review of water quality monitoring and implementation projects in Missisquoi Bay, with recommendations for initiatives to address cyanobacteria blooms in this watershed.
- We will need to schedule another Executive Committee meeting for late August/early September to review TAC committee nominations.

**11:00 AM FY18 Budget review, *Eric Howe***

- Eric reviewed the outcomes of the FY18 budget process, including changes from the FY18 budget that was approved by the Steering Committee in April. Eric noted that the Executive Committee should consider a formal vote to support funding of the NY Agronomy program and the suite of new projects proposed by VT ANR to for the EPA TMDL funding.
- Kari Dolan, VT DEC, reviewed the suite of projects proposed by VT for the TMDL implementation funds:
  - Saint Albans Public-Private Partnership Stormwater project. This project is based off a successful program in Maine, in which private and public sector groups were able to work together to improve stormwater runoff from both landowners at a reduced cost. This project would be executed by NEIWPC/LCBP.
  - CSO/GSI stormwater project – goal is to identify projects that can reduce CSOs using green stormwater infrastructure.
  - Municipal Stormwater Assessments – concept is built off the VT Developed lands permit and will work with targeted municipalities to assess stormwater infrastructure systems.
  - WWTF Optimization – program will provide technical assistance to WWTF operators to identify ways to optimize the operation of the facilities to reduce phosphorus loading.
  - Expanding the RCPP wetland restoration project - This is a USDA initiative to implement BMPs in the agricultural sector. This one will focus on ways to increase wetland restoration to reduce nutrient loading, but also to reduce flooding.
  - Phosphorus BMP Challenge – this program will serve as an insurance program for farmers who implement BMPs to reduce phosphorus loading and may see production reduced. This program would offset those losses.
  - CREP/NRCS agriculture engineering. This program would provide engineering support staff to NRCS to relieve the backlog of projects that could be implemented with available funds. Farm agronomic practices – this program would increase implementation of BMPs on farms.
- MaryJo suggested that the Steering Committee should discuss this process for the FY19 and future budgets.

**Potential ACTION ITEM:** Approval of the final FY18 LCBP budget, on behalf of the Lake Champlain Steering Committee, including the VT proposed tasks for the TMDL implementation funds and support for the NY agronomist position in the FY18 budget. Motion

to approve as presented by Buzz Hoerr. second by John K. No further discussion. All in favor.

### 11:45 AM FY19 Budget Priorities, LCBP staff

- Eric briefly reviewed the Request for Pre-Proposals from the FY18 process.
- Technical Budget priorities for the Fall 2018 (FFY19) Request for Pre-Proposals
  - Matt reviewed the priorities identified in the FY18 call for proposals. Matt noted that projects supported in the FY18 Budget did not reflect priorities identified in the call for proposals. For the FY19 suite of priorities, TAC recommended keeping the list of priorities broad:
    - 1. Innovative pilot or demonstration projects that reduce nutrient loading to Lake Champlain.
    - 2. Research or implementation projects that use LCBP-funded or other publicly available datasets to create outputs leading to improved water quality in the Lake Champlain Basin.
    - 3. Projects that fill knowledge gaps or improve diversity of native aquatic and riparian species in the Lake Champlain Basin
    - (New in FY19) 4. Projects that research or control sources of contaminants in the Lake Champlain Basin; in particular phosphorus contributions from groundwater, emerging contaminants, and de-icing agents and their effects.
  - MaryJo asked if there could be a priority on projects that address a pollutant in multiple jurisdictions (e.g. VT, NY, and QC) as it is important to encourage research, innovation, implementation across the entire basin and it would be nice to be able to score projects higher that are basin-wide in scale. Kari asked how we track the co-benefits that some BMPs provide, such as riparian buffers. Is there a way to give credit to practices that offer co-benefits to the primary reason we support the project. For example, “Projects that identify, quantify, and implement benefits of BMPs. Optimize implementation of BMPs for pollution reduction goals.” Kari described the TMDL Blueprint tool that allows managers to look at different GIS layers to identify co-benefits toward protection of certain riparian areas. The tool, while very useful, needs some additional information to optimize for phosphorus reduction.
  - Dan pitched the idea of finding ways to support projects that improve water quality impacts from agriculture and are economically sustainable. Laura commented that the VT State legislature directed VAAFMM to do this via a [Nutrient Management Commission](#). A committee has been developed, and their recent first meeting was very productive. There are other initiatives that are going on this year that may also help with this concept. For example, there is a group looking at the carrying capacity of animals on land (e.g. the Dairy Supply Management Working Group). Laura noted that over the next year there may be topics more specific to an RFP that may help this concept move to the next level. Pierre commented that there are groups in Quebec looking at agro-forestry and the benefits of these approaches to agriculture. MaryJo is particularly interested in this concept as well. Kari asked about debt forgiveness for farmers. Quebec people want to see more effort on implementation, and less on research. We need funding to implement the programs on the farms.
  - Matt asked for clarification on what should be presented and discussed by the Steering Committee. Laura’s comments on agriculture priorities should be

recognized. Kari offered that we need to identify barriers to people who want to implement projects but are not able to, and find ways to move them past these barriers.

- Heritage Budget priorities for the Fall 2018 (FFY19) Request for Pre-Proposals –
  - The Steering Committee approved the HAPAC transition to a pre-proposal process in April, for the FY19 budget. The HAPAC will develop this RFP over the summer for Steering Committee consideration in September.

## **12:15 PM LUNCH – tour of current LCBP office space in the Gordon Center House**

### **1:00 PM LCBP Office relocation, *Eric Howe***

- Questions for conversation:
  - Goal(s) of move:
    - Increase space capacity for staff
    - Increase LCBP visibility to public?
  - What will make the move successful for LCBP and for our partners
  - What are potential “non-negotiables” for the move?
  - What will LCBP look like after the move?
- Kari noted that the move if done well could magnify the LCBP and go a long way toward increasing awareness and stakeholder engagement.
- There are several options to consider for this relocation, such as:
  - Option 1: Maximize needs for staff on day-to-day basis.
  - Option 2: Separate Option 1 from “meeting” needs.
- The group brainstormed some criteria to consider for the relocation:
  - There is a separate conference room need from staff need.
  - Consider at least one option where small conferences could be located
  - Videoconferencing capacity, or high quality audio
  - Access to highway corridors
  - Cost – itemize costs.
  - Location – Burlington and northward. But need to consider walkability and bikeability for staff and local partners meeting with LCBP. Look into future public transportation plans from CCRPC.
  - Gauge of level of interest from other Federal partners regarding shared space – short- and long-term opportunities.
  - Parking should be easy, accessible, and ideally free.
  - Develop strategic vision for LCBP in terms of staff, space needs. Accommodate more interns, graduate students, joint positions (e.g. shared position with Lake Champlain Sea Grant).
  - Description or itemization of what will change if LCBP moves from current space to other locations, e.g. duplication of resources.
  - Opportunity to pair LCBP with a historic location that already draws people to the location.
  - Increase opportunities for outreach events. Increase capacity for current outreach programs.

- Pierre commented that OBVBM moved a few years ago; they opted to move staff to one location, and simply rent spaces when need to host larger meetings.
- Dan suggested that there should be a working budget to inform the search
- Options for telecommuting

**Potential ACTION ITEM:** Buzz moved that Eric work with NEIWPC to investigate potential immediate implementation of a telecommuting policy. In the meantime, determine whether there is still a need for satellite space options with a telecommute policy. Third, investigate long-term office needs with federal partners. John K. offered the second on the motion. No further discussion. All in favor.

## **2:00 PM LCBP Agronomy Support, Eric Howe**

- LCBP has received several requests in recent budget cycles to fund agronomist positions or programs. The Lake Champlain Steering Committee asked the Executive Committee to discuss whether LCBP should provide support for these programs in advance of the FY19 budget discussions.
- Eric pitched two options for the Steering Committee to consider:
  - 1. Move the NY Agronomist into the LCBP Key Functions part of the budget if there continues to be annual interest to support this work
  - 2. Convey whether the Steering Committee will support these types of projects in the future.
- Buzz voiced concerns about these recurring projects and programs in our budget annually.
- Pierre commented that the OBVBM proposal was proposing to work that would be done by agronomists, but would not become a NEIWPC/LCBP agronomist program. OBVBM includes an engineer, an agronomist, and other elements needed to get projects done.
- Kari commented that VT benefitted from the LCBP support for this program, and the watershed groups and UVM Extension were able to pick this program up when LCBP funding support ended, and the Vermont Clean Water Fund also was able to augment this funding.
- John commented that NY has more resources than Vermont, and ought to be able to put together the funds to support this position in their budget if this were important to them. Kari commented that NYS has to distribute their funds across the Great Lakes watershed, Chesapeake watershed, Hudson River watershed, and Champlain. MaryJo reviewed the handout provided for the NY agronomy program and noted that some of the tangible deliverables are light.
- Buzz was concerned that the LCBP support for the NY agronomy program will never end.
- Mario commented that it is a difficult discussion, but he would continue to support this program.
- MaryJo agreed that this task should not be in a competitive process as it has been; if the Steering Committee wants to support this project, then it should be moved into the core projects. Alternatively, another option would be to make the same amount of funding available for agronomy projects in NY. Matt added that there were similar implementation projects, and the TAC lumped them all together and pushed these to the Steering Committee to decide.
- MaryJo asked if these funds could be moved to a competitive process for NY groups to apply for. There aren't very many organizations in NY that would apply for this type of work, beyond Cornell Extension, and possibly the SWCDs.

- Eric will talk with Bob about the outcome of this conversation. Options for Steering Committee are to:
  - 1. Move NY Agronomy position into Core Functions.
  - 2. Eliminate support for this work and allow for groups to apply for this work through competitive process in the RFPP.
  - 3. Develop task to issue as funding for NY agronomic practices via a competitive process.

### **3:00 PM Advisory Committee Nominations -**

**Potential ACTION ITEM** – Buzz Hoerr moved to Enter into Executive Session to discuss advisory committee nominee applications for TAC. John K. offered the second. All in favor.

- **[Executive Session]**
- **Exit Executive Session.**

**ACTION ITEM:** Dan D. moved to approve one nomination for TAC membership for the Steering Committee to consider. MaryJo F. offered the second. All in favor.

### **3:07 PM Adjourn**

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

1. Approval of meeting summary from March 15, 2018 LCBP Executive Committee meeting
2. Approval of final FY18 LCBP budget, on behalf of the Lake Champlain Steering Committee
3. Authorization to the LCBP/CVNHP Director to explore LCBP office relocation options
4. Committee nominations for LCBP Technical Advisory Committee