

**Lake Champlain Basin Program
Technical Advisory Committee meeting
Wednesday, December 5, 2018, 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM**

TAC meeting summary

Attendees: Bernie Pientka, Neil Kamman, Breck Bowden, Fred Dunlap, Kevin Behm, Bridget O'Brien, Jamie Shanley (USGS, phone), Bethany, Laura DiPietro, Bernie Pientka, Angela Shambaugh, Leigh Walrath

Staff: Matthew Vaughan, Meg Modley, Ellen Kujawa, Bethany Sargent (VTDEC)

9:30 AM Updates, announcements, and public comments

- Curt Gervich: The IJC flood study is progressing. Two recent focus groups in St. Albans and Plattsburgh were very informative and we plan to have two more focus groups in February.
- Neil Kamman: The IJC's other project on water quality is also underway. Two advisory groups have been convened to oversee the work of this project; several TAC members serve on the committees.
- Laura DiPietro: VAAF is waiting for approval for new CREP and engineering positions, and hoping to hire for these after the holidays.
- Bernie Pientka: January 29th is Vermont's free fishing day. There will be an ice fishing festival at Knight Point.

Review and approve summary of previous TAC meeting

- James Juras moves to approve the November TAC summary; Curt Gervich seconds.
- Neil notes that the technical discussion with Eric Roy may not have been completely captured in the summary regarding Mallett's Creek; though he does not suggest adding more information.
- All in favor; motion is carried. Abstentions from Breck Bowden and Kevin Behm.

LCBP updates, *LCBP staff*

- The next meeting of the TAC will be on February 6. No TAC meeting in January.
- Several RFPs closed recently, including local grants, enhanced BMP projects, FY19 Request for Pre-Proposals.
- Executive Committee approved the record of decision for the Rock River geomorphic assessment project.
- LCBP will be hiring for a new full-time entry level position to assist with all branches of LCBP.
- Lake Champlain Steering Committee will meet next week in New York.
- We have a subcommittee underway to discuss the budget development process and how best to manage the new TMDL funds.

Update: VTDEC/LCBP RFPs, *Bethany Sargent (VTDEC, LCBP)*

- Bethany provided an update on the TMDL projects. One has been awarded and is now in contract stage; several others are under review or closing soon:

Project	Status	Posted to Vermont Bid Notice System	Proposals Due	Comments
Ag BMP Challenge	Open	10/3/2018	1/4/2019	After additional outreach, deadline extended to 1/4/19. Anticipating draft record of decision in mid-late January and a draft contract in early February.
Technical Assistance, Education and Outreach for Municipal Wastewater Treatment Facilities (WWTF Optimization)	Closed	10/8/2018	11/2/2018	EPA approved extension of timeline through March 2020 as proposed by applicant and confirmed a QAPP would be required. Contacted applicant with clarification and requested they address this QAPP deliverable in an updated proposal, due 12/7/2018.
Developing Public-Private Partnerships (P3) to Meet the Stormwater General Permit for Parcels with ≥3 Impervious Acres (Municipal Stormwater Assessments)	Awarded	10/5/2018	10/26/2018	Finalizing contract.
Wetland Easements and Restoration	Open	10/23/2018	12/14/2018	Additional outreach conducted by Wetlands Program staff.
Using GSI to Mitigate CSOs	Open	10/16/2018 (12/5/2018)	12/12/2018	Five proposals received during initial posting. Reposted 12/5/2018 with updated criteria. Proposals due 12/12/2018.

- Matt: Suggest that we discuss the BMP Challenge RFP with the TAC. This ROD was planned to be reviewed today, but because the deadline was extended we may consider forming a review subcommittee. Bethany adds that this would probably occur during the week of January 21st.
- Neil suggests that Bethany consider simply presenting the ROD to the TAC at their February meeting; Bethany believes that this will delay the award too much.
- Suggested subcommittee members: Neil, James Jutras, Breck (tentative, depending on course schedule), Bridget (if need be), Eric Perkins
- Motion to appoint a subcommittee to approved Ag BMP Challenge ROD: Mark Malchoff; second by Angela Shambaugh. All in favor; motion is carried. No abstentions.

10:00 AM Workplan review: Implementation of whole farm nutrient management to reduce phosphorus loading and improve farm viability in the Lake Champlain Basin, *Heather Darby (UVM Extension)*

- Heather Darby presented the draft workplan for the new whole farm nutrient management project. This is important but challenging project as one of the goals is to address overfeeding of imported feed. This would ultimately reduce phosphorus imports

into the Lake Champlain Basin, but it is an idea that will be difficult to convince farmers to implement.

- James Jutras: Are you considering the farms that grow their own grain, or only the farms that import feed?
 - Heather: At the moment, the priority is farms that import feed.
- Neil: Is there a relationship between the grain producers and milk co-ops?
 - Heather: No.
- James: Is part of your message to farmers that being judicious with phosphorus also saves them money? Throwing fertilizer where you don't need it is akin to throwing money on the ground.
 - Heather: Yes, this is part of the message.
- Mark Malchoff: What's a typical protein for a feed?
 - Heather: It depends quite a lot. Probably about 16% on average.
- Kevin Behm: It sounds like there's no requirement for feed testing?
 - Heather: Most farmers rely on their grain salesperson to test their feed for them, and never see these results. The grain also is not tested for every load that is shipped out.
- Kevin Behm: Can you track the change you're looking at in a two-year project?
 - Heather: No - this is just the start of a longer effort. We're hoping that people will be interested in continuing this type of work after the conclusion of this grant.
- Leigh: How much work will it take for another farm (not one of the five in the project) to implement this kind of nutrient management plan?
 - Heather: We're guessing that at least a handful of the study farms will see dramatic improvements during the nutrient management process. If word gets around, and other farmers will be interested too.
 - Leigh: How does the information here get back to the farmers?
 - Heather: Lots of outreach by UVM Extension, plus word of mouth farmer-to-farmer, conferences and other collaborative meetings, etc.
- Fred Dunlap: It seems to me that this type of nutrient management is a no-brainer. Why has it taken so long to take off?
 - Heather: There's substantial progress in New York as a result of Cornell's efforts, especially with regard to Nitrogen.
 - Mark: What's happening in the Finger Lakes and the NYC watershed?
 - Heather: Similar work – agronomists, animal scientists, farmers, etc. are all making strides, and we hope to bring those pieces together.
- Laura: Are you looking to do any metrics of success that can be shown to farmers?
 - Heather: Yes – the Cornell benchmark system we're planning to use will be useful for talking with farmers. We're collecting monthly manure and feed samples to analyze.
- Breck: Have the five farms agreed to this level of detail being made publicly available?
 - Heather: We won't show farmers' names, but we do plan to show benchmarks and how they've changed. Not every single detail of the farm will be available, but farmers are willing to share some information.
 - What about something like reported P versus actual P?
 - Heather: We'll be setting benchmarks based on our own collected data, not the reported information from a feed company.
 - Breck: Do you envision policy changes based on this project? Required feed testing, or some kind of nutrient cap-and-trade program?
 - Neil: There's a discussion of policy changes underway at the moment. The data collected as part of this program may help to inform such policy.

- Laura: VAAFM has contracted with Stone Environmental to convene a nutrient management commission, which may discuss potential policy changes.
- Motion to approve the workplan as written (depending on whether a QAPP is necessary; if a QAPP is deemed necessary then it will be added to the workplan; if a QAPP is not deemed necessary then more information on methods should be added to the workplan) by Angela; Laura seconds. All in favor; motion is carried. Breck Bowden abstains.

11:00 AM Conflict of interest review

- TAC members discussed the projects with which they had perceived or actual conflicts of interest. They identified the projects by ID number so that this summary will maintain applicants' confidentiality.
- Andrew, Mindy, and Kip have direct COIs that preclude them from participating.
- Mark Malchoff: 20, 13
- Curt: 13
- Breck: 26, 15, 5
- Bernie: 12, 23, 10
- Fred: 2, 9, 11, 14, 24
- Jamie: 15, 26, 5
- James Jutras: 17
- Motion to enter executive session by Breck Bowden; Angela seconds. All in favor; motion is carried. No abstentions.

11:05 AM Executive session: FY19 Technical pre-proposal review

12:15 PM Lunch

1:00 PM Executive session: FY19 Technical pre-proposal review (continued)

- The TAC reviewed and ranked FY19 pre-proposals to form a recommendation for Lake Champlain Steering Committee consideration. Successful applicants will receive a solicitation to submit full technical proposal. Full proposals will be reviewed at the March TAC meeting.

3:30 PM Adjourn