



Lake Champlain Executive Committee

Meeting Summary

October 7, 2025 9:30AM – 12:30PM
(Via Microsoft Teams)

ATTENDANCE:

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Bryan Dore (Chair, EPA R1), Pete LaFlamme for Julie Moore (VTANR), Yuan Zeng for Joe Zalewski (NYS DEC), Karina Dailey (Chair, VT CAC), Buzz Hoerr (Chair, E&O Committee), Susan Evans McClure (Chair, HAPAC), Brian Steinmuller (NYS Dept. Ag & Markets), Laura DiPietro (VT AAFM for Alyson Eastman), Daniel Tremblay (MELCCFP), Antony Tseng (EPA R2), Karyn Hanson (NYSDEC), Evan Nelson (USACE), Sarah Coleman for Neil Kamman (TAC Chair, VT ANR)

STAFF: LCBP-NEIWPCC: Eric Howe, Mae Kate Campbell, Kerry Crowningshield, Lauren Jenness, Meg Modley Gilbertson, Matthew Vaughan, Sonya Vogel, Erin Vennie-Vollrath (LCBP NY Coordinator NYS DEC), Sarita Croce (NEIWPCC), Jim Brangan, Beth Whitmore-Stolar (NEIWPCC/LCBP/NYS DEC), Anna Vold, Emma Dannenberg, Emma Janson, Ali Jackson; Theresa Vander Woude (EPA R1)

GUESTS: Misty Sinsigalli (Commissioner, VT DEC), Jezra Beaulieu (VTDEC)

MEETING BEGINS

9:45 AM

INTRODUCTIONS: Bryan Dore, EPA, will Chair this meeting.

Bryan began the meeting with a round of introductions. He also shared that the meeting was being recorded for notetaking purposes. The meeting may be distributed upon specific request, but any discussion in Executive Session would be redacted.

Approval of Summary of previous meeting

ACTION ITEM: Approve Meeting Summary from **September 26, 2025** Executive Committee Meeting

- Motion By: Buzz Hoerr
- Second by: Evan Nelson
- Discussion on the motion: None
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: Karina Dailey

PUBLIC COMMENT

9:55 AM

- No members of the public were present.

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATES

10:00 AM

- No congressional members were present or shared updates ahead of the meeting.

Funding Discussions

Brief overview of the process for re-allocation of LCBP funds - Eric Howe

- Eric reviewed the process of reallocating LCBP funds. A reallocation happens when a new priority needs to be addressed before the annual April Steering Committee budget meeting, or when an awarded project requires additional funding to be successfully completed. As the NEIWPCC Program Director for the LCBP/CVNHP, Eric typically makes decisions for projects requesting budget adjustments that are less than about \$15,000. Both requests on today's agenda are for funds that are greater than that threshold. When reallocation is approved, staff update the funding for the relevant agreement workplan and then send it to EPA for their records.

Re-allocation of IIJA funds to support Water Chestnut management in 2026 – Meg Modley

Background: The Steering Committee initially reviewed this matter in September but ran out of time due to the significant funding amount involved. The Steering Committee delegated approval authority to the Executive Committee for final decision.

Funding Request Overview

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has maintained an aquatic plant control program for Lake Champlain since 2005, receiving approximately \$500,000 annually through Congressional support. These funds have been used for water chestnut management programs, including mechanical and hand harvesting operations on both the New York and Vermont sides of the lake.
- A funding gap has emerged for the 2026 field season. The request seeks one-year gap funding to be allocated to Vermont for program management, emphasizing the critical need to prevent water chestnut population rebound during any missed field season. Current expenditures include \$350,000 for mechanical harvesting, \$60,000 for hand harvesting, and additional funds for Aquatic Invasive Species Technicians to support contracted hand harvesting crews.

Key Discussion Points

- Funding Mechanism: A competitive grants RFP will be released soon, and IIJA funding can be provided through a new agreement.
- State Support: Pete Laflamme (VT DEC) emphasized the importance of preventing population rebound and requested support for this one-time stopgap funding measure, while expressing hope for continued USACE funding in future years.
- Congressional Considerations: Questions were raised regarding potential Congressional notification requirements. Without a confirmed FY26 budget, concerns were noted about potential impacts on future funding if Congress becomes aware of the reallocation. The Congressional delegation remains engaged and will be informed that the reallocation addresses an urgent need while potentially affecting regular programming.

- Long-term Sustainability: Multiple participants questioned whether this would truly be one-time funding. Future funding depends on Congressional decisions and remains outside local control, though Vermont and New York delegations have demonstrated strong support and awareness of the issue.
- Impact on Grant Programs: The reallocation would redirect funds from the competitive AIS management grant program. However, new IJA funding will support a new round of grants, resulting in no significant negative effects to the AIS Management grant program in the near future.

Adirondack Mountain Club - Award adjustment to address increased project costs – Mae Kate Campbell

The Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK Mountain Club) has submitted a request for an award adjustment to their FY23 Section 120 grant. The original award of \$140,000 requires an additional \$50,000 to address increased project costs.

Project Description

- The funded project aims to update the septic system serving the High Peaks Visitor Center. The project has experienced an increase in projected implementation costs, and construction must be completed within a limited timeframe window.

Funding Details

- The requested additional \$50,000 would cover the cost gap and ensure successful project completion. Detailed budget information is available in confidential documentation and can be discussed in Executive Session if necessary.

The funding will be used specifically for:

- Construction materials required for the septic system upgrade
- Implementation costs for the new construction

The grantee is also exploring options to redirect existing funds to help support the project and address the funding shortfall.

ACTION ITEM: Approve an award adjustment of \$50,000 to accommodate increased project costs for the Adirondack Mountain Club project as presented and discussed

- Motion By: Karina Daily
- Second by: Pete Laflamme
- Discussion on the motion: None
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

ACTION ITEM: Approve re-allocation of \$500,000 of IJA AIS Management Funds from the AIS Management competitive grant program to Vermont DEC to support the 2026 water chestnut management program as presented and discussed.

- Motion By: Buzz Hoerr
- Second by: Susan Evans McClure
- Discussion on the motion: None
- Vote: All in favor

- Abstentions: none

Re-allocation of Community Liaison Program Funding to the Public Waterfront Access Improvement program

The Steering Committee allocated funds in both FY23 and FY24 to support the Community Liaison program, which were used to support several projects from the FY23 funding cycle. In addition, one of the awarded project recipients has opted to cancel their grant, freeing up \$120,000. Combined with available FY24 funding, a total of \$520,000 is now available for re-allocation.

Proposed Re-allocation

- The Public Access Improvement Program experienced over-subscription, receiving more qualified applications than available funding could support. The recommendation is to redirect the \$520,000 in available funds to support additional projects within this over-subscribed program.
- The Committee agreed to wait until they reviewed the Public Access grants prior to making a decision to re-allocate these funds.

Executive Session to Discuss Grant Awards.

ACTION ITEM: Motion to enter into Executive Session

- Motion By: Buzz Hoerr
- Second by: Karina Dailey
- Discussion on the motion: None
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

10:30AM

CVNHP Conservation & Community Interpretive Theme grants (FY2024 NPS)
Public Waterfront Access Improvement Projects (FY2024 Section 120 funds)
Unified Stormwater Marketing Consultant (FY2024 Section 120)

Exit Executive Session

ACTION ITEM: Approve the Record of Decision for CVNHP Conservation & Community Interpretive Theme grants as presented and discussed during Executive Session.

- Motion By: Susan Evans McClure
- Second by: Pete LaFlamme
- Discussion on the motion:
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

ACTION ITEM: Approve the Record of Decision for Public Waterfront Access Improvement Projects and reallocation of a portion of un-obligated funds from the Community Liaison grant program to support additional Public Waterfront Access projects recommended by the review committee.

- Motion By: Buzz Hoerr
- Second by: Susan Evans McClure
- Discussion on the motion: None
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

ACTION ITEM: Approve the Record of Decision for a Unified Stormwater Marketing Consultant as presented and discussed during Executive Session.

- Motion By: Karina Dailey
- Second by: Susan Evans McClure
- Discussion on the motion: None
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

ACTION ITEM: Approve the re-allocation of remaining unobligated Community Liaison funds from the FY23 and FY24 Section 120 agreements to support 2025 Clean Water, Healthy Ecosystems, Thriving Communities, and Informed and Involved Public grants

- Motion By: Karina Dailey
- Second by: Yuan Zeng
- Discussion on the motion: Bryan Dore noted that as project officer on these funds, it is beneficial for him to have this discussion with this group in advance of future requests to re-allocate funds.
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

Eric formally thanked Pete Laflamme for the time and effort he put forth throughout the years in support of LCBP.

ADJOURN

12:30 PM