



Lake Champlain Executive Committee

APPROVED Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2026 9:30AM – 1:00PM

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

ATTENDANCE:

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Bryan Dore (Chair, EPA R1), Daniel Tremblay for Stefanos Bitzakidis (Quebec MELCCFP), Emily Bird for Julie Moore (VTANR), Kris Alberga for Joe Zalewski (Chair, NYS DEC), Walt Lender (Chair, NY CAC), Neil Kamman (Chair, TAC), Antony Tseng (EPA R2), Evan Nelson (USACE), Stephen Hunt (Empire State Development)

STAFF: Maya Dehner (USACE), Sarita Croce (NEIWPCC), LCBP: Eric Howe, Mae Kate Campbell, Lauren Jenness, Corrie Miller, Ryan Mitchell, Meg Modley Gilbertson, Matthew Vaughan, Sonya Vogel, Erin Vennie-Vollrath (LCBP NY Coordinator NYS DEC), Jim Brangan, Beth Whitmore-Stolar (NEIWPCC/LCBP), Anna Vold, Emma Dannenberg, Emma Janson, Ali Jackson

GUESTS: Janelle Hangen (GLFC), Trevor Cole (Town of Plattsburgh), Heidi Britch-Valenta (Village of Swanton), John Merrifield (VTDEC), Lisa Baron (USACE), Bill Sheets (Swanton Village Manager), Jason Star (Swanton Wastewater Department Supervisor)

Arrival, Teleconference and webinar open, networking

9:15 AM

MEETING BEGINS

9:30 AM

INTRODUCTIONS: Bryan Dore, EPA Region 1, will chair the meeting. Bryan led a round of introductions and reminded the group that today's meeting will be recorded to augment note-taking.

Approval of Summary of previous meeting

ACTION ITEM: Approve Meeting Minutes from February 12, 2026, Executive Committee Meeting

- Motion By: Neil Kamman
- Second by: Emily Bird
- Discussion on the motion: none
- Vote: all in favor
- Abstentions: none

PUBLIC COMMENT

9:40 AM

- None

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATES

9:45 AM

- None

Section 542 Water Resources Development Act Project Review and Approval

Meg introduced the discussion by explaining that the Lake Champlain Watershed Environmental Assistance Program operates under the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 and supports critical restoration projects through assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She noted that annual listening sessions help identify potential projects and highlighted a recent change to the program's management plan reducing required local match contributions from 35% to 10% for qualifying projects. Both projects under consideration meet the new criteria. She emphasized that successful proposals often combine planning and implementation and make use of Army Corps technical expertise. TAC had already reviewed the projects and provided recommendations to the Executive Committee, which would issue a Record of Decision to the Corps District.

Town of Plattsburgh – Former Plattsburgh Air Force Base Infrastructure

Trevor from the Town of Plattsburgh presented a proposal addressing major stormwater and infrastructure failures associated with the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base. Severe rain events have caused sinkholes threatening utilities, rail infrastructure, and electrical systems while also allowing polluted stormwater to discharge directly into Lake Champlain. Much of the infrastructure has reportedly been deteriorating for decades.

The request focuses on conducting a detailed assessment of infrastructure conditions, including CCTV inspection of underground systems, to support future replacement planning and implementation. The project aligns with *Opportunities for Action* goals by aiming to reduce sediment and nutrient loading, expand greenspace, restore ecosystems, and protect cultural resources.

Neil noted TAC's strong support for the proposal, describing it as an obvious candidate for funding, while encouraging simultaneous consideration of implementation planning. He also acknowledged the long-term infrastructure burden left to the Town following the military base closure.

Village of Swanton – Wastewater Treatment Facility Lagoon Dredging

Heidi from the Village of Swanton introduced Village Manager Bill Sheets and Wastewater Treatment Facility Supervisor Jason Star, who presented a proposal to dredge sludge lagoons at the Village's wastewater treatment facility. The facility serves approximately 1,500 residents and is currently undergoing an \$8.5 million upgrade. Built in 1952, the system's large lagoons now require dredging and long-term maintenance planning that exceeds local financial capacity.

Project benefits include improving wastewater treatment performance, reducing contamination risks to beaches and shorelines, protecting drinking water supplies, and improving phosphorus and contaminant removal before treated water enters the Missisquoi River and Missisquoi Bay. The Village also plans public outreach through open houses and online communications during the project.

Neil noted TAC's earlier discussion about balancing deferred maintenance concerns with capital investment needs, but emphasized that the scale and age of the lagoons make action necessary. He also observed that these are among the largest lagoon systems in Vermont.

Funding and Agency Support

Evan explained that existing appropriations are sufficient to support the planning work for the Town of Plattsburgh project. However, additional Environmental Infrastructure funding would likely be needed to support the Swanton project. While federal funding conditions remain uncertain, he said past performance suggests those additional funds could likely be secured.

Meg added that the congressional delegations have encouraged development of a strong project pipeline demonstrating clear need under this funding opportunity.

Emily Bird expressed strong support for the Swanton project, especially given the Village's ongoing investment in facility upgrades and existing state revolving fund support, noting the combined investments could have significant impact.

The discussion concluded with Neil asking whether the Plattsburgh proposal would include engineering and planning for infrastructure beneath airport runways. Trevor clarified that Clinton County owns the airport, but the interconnected infrastructure systems affect both the airport and Town systems, making the problems and solutions shared responsibilities.

ACTION ITEM: Approve the Town of Plattsburgh Stormwater Project for WRDA Section 542 USACE assistance program

- Motion By: Antony Tseng
- Second by: Neil Kamman
- Discussion on the motion: none
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

ACTION ITEM: Approve the Village of Swanton WWTF Upgrade Project for WRDA Section 542 USACE assistance program

- Motion By: Emily Bird
- Second by: Antony Tseng
- Discussion on the motion: NA
- Vote: All in favor

- Abstentions: NA

The Committee will move into Executive Session to consider FY2026 budget proposals, IIJA FY2025 grant awards, and Advisory Committee membership nominations.

ACTION ITEM: Motion to enter into Executive Session

- Motion By: Neil Kamman
- Second by: Antony Tseng
- Discussion on the motion: NA
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: NA

EXECUTIVE SESSION

10:45 AM

Exit Executive Session.

Open Session:

ACTION ITEM: Advance the Education and Outreach – Large record of decision as discussed to the Lake Champlain Steering Committee for consideration in the FY2026 LCBP/CVNHP Budget

- Motion by: Neil Kamman
- Second by: Emily Bird
- Discussion on the motion: None
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: **None**

ACTION ITEM: Approve the IIJA Tree Nursery Round 3 grant awards as discussed, with considerations on funding availability

- Motion by: Neil Kamman
- Second by: Antony Tseng
- Discussion on the motion: none
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: **None**

ACTION ITEM: Approve the Aquatic Organism Passage Restoration grant awards as presented in the ROD.

- Motion by: Kris Alberga
- Second by: Neil Kamman
- Discussion on the motion: None

- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

ACTION ITEM: Nominate candidates to the Heritage Area Partnership Advisory Committee for Lake Champlain Steering Committee appointment

- Motion by: Emily Bird
- Second by: Kristofer Alberga
- Discussion on the motion: Neil requested a resume for one candidate prior to Steering Committee consideration of these nominees
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions:

ADJOURN

12:30 PM

Outputs for this meeting include:

1. Approval of Meeting Summary from February 12, 2026 meeting
2. Grant Award decisions
 - Education and Outreach – Large (FY2026 EPA Section 120, GLFC)
 - IIJA Tree Nursery Round 3 (FY2025 IIJA)
 - Aquatic Organism Passage Restoration Projects (FY2025 IIJA)
 - WRDA Section 542 Project approvals
3. Advisory Committee nominees for appointment by the Lake Champlain Steering Committee