

**Peconic Estuary Program
Management Committee Meeting
Summary
September 11, 2014**

1. Welcome and Introductions (**Seth Ausubel**, *US EPA Region 2*)
2. Discussion and Approval, July Management Committee Meeting Summary (**Seth Ausubel**): July Meeting Summary Approved
3. Short and Long-term Budget Planning Updates:

Suffolk County Short Term Funding Request: Alison Branco presented a PEP funding request to the County Executive. It had a very positive reception. This request was linked closely to the current Suffolk County water quality initiative. There will be a follow-up meeting for the Suffolk County Watershed Management Plan and PEP initiatives will be included in a chapter of this plan. If PEP initiatives are funded through this plan, funds would be made available in 2016 calendar year. PEP would be required to take on tasks from this plan. MC asks to be allowed to have input and to review the draft chapter that includes PEP. Suffolk County states that they are recruiting interested parties to help write this plan. Finished product expected by December 31, 2014.

ACTION → In support of the Suffolk County Watershed Management Plan, and considering the EPA requirement to update the PEP CCMP, a preliminary list of essential tasks and updates for the CCMP will be produced by **OCT 10th** for Management Committee review. Local government committee should also review.

ACTION → In response to a request by local government, the Management Committee meeting days will be changed to the 2nd Wednesday of March, June, September and December. Send out notice.

NYSDEC Short Term Funding Request: Dawn McReynolds presented a PEP funding request to Kathy Moser, Executive Director of Natural Resources. A request was made to increase the allotment of Oceans and Great Lakes funds to include projects for PEP, such as funding the 2 USGS monitoring stations. Any funds given to PEP will be for implementation only and most likely be executed through an existing MOU, such as with Stony Brook or USGS. This funding will be linked to the draft Ocean Action Plan. There will be an integration of actions plans.

Long-Term Sustainable Funding Plan and Workgroup: Sheri Jewhurst discussed the current status of the workgroup. Since short budget requests were made, and longer term solutions will be political, a workgroup was not convened but the core staff of PEP remains ready to support all efforts to gain funding.

ACTION → Management Committee requests that a memo from the Chairperson, Seth Ausubel, be sent to Suffolk County outlining the PEP strategy and links to their water quality initiative. An action plan should be dispersed. An invitation to Management Committee meetings should be included, with the change of day. Also, information on the upcoming Harmful Algal Bloom work should be included. A working title could be “Actions Now and for the Future.”

Budget Projections & Planning for 2015 Budget: Alison Branco presented a draft generalized budget. PEP is planning for a budget of \$540,000. A new essential task will be the commencement of CCMP update. If no new funding is provided by the county or the state, PEP will have to cut basic program items (monitoring, education) in order to provide funds toward the CCMP effort. If new funding is found, PEP must choose the priority actions to fund.

4. Program Office Updates (**Alison Branco**, *PEP Program Director*)
 - IMA update
 - Scallop restoration projects to be presented at the TAC meeting
 - Suffolk County is closing out 2 federal grants (2007, 2008)
 - Suffolk County match: new boat for water quality monitoring program is being purchased and ¼% projects.
 - Several RFP’s being prepared.
 - Assistance on several county initiatives including Wastewater RFP (Scoping Phase), Agricultural Stewardship Strategy (PEP is in Appendix H), the Farm Bill/RCPP proposal and HAB project.
 - A Day in the Life of the Peconic Estuary is scheduled for October 1, 2014.
 - IBM Smart Cities Study will be incorporated into the Suffolk County Comprehensive Plan. Calls for a more holistic management of water.
 - Septic demonstration project in the ground by March. It will be an alternative on-site individual household system

5. Habitat Restoration and Stormwater Updates (**Julie Nace**, *PEP NYS DEC Coordinator*):
 - Nitrogen workgroup
 - Eelgrass survey update – Flights complete, currently doing photo-interpretation and ground truthing.
 - Invasive species management plan for PEP: Focus on freshwater plant species.
 - Met with LISS about residential fertilizer usage – will work together in the future on this topic and with their CAC.

- NEPORT data entered for FFY 2014
6. 2015 Outreach Contract Update (**Emily Bird**, *PEP NEIWPC Coordinator*): RFP for Education and Outreach was released. There were two responses. The review team submitted comments and those are currently being compiled.
 7. CAC Update (**Kevin McDonald**, *CAC Chair*): There was a successful CAC meeting with a nitrogen reduction theme and meaningful discussion. There will be a meeting with Scotts Fertilizer company. The Nature Conservancy is conducting a poll on water quality, results will be shared.

Outreach Update (**Aaron Virgin**, *Outreach Coordinator*):

- Follow-up CAC meeting scheduled for Sept 30th/Oct 7th on the North Fork
 - Would like to have a joint CAC meeting with LISS
 - Montauk Beach Clean-up
 - Attending town meetings in Riverhead and Southold.
 - Summer newsletter sent to 1200 contacts (now including GFEE contacts)
 - Bayscaping brochure being updated and translated into Spanish.
 - Homeowner Rebate program has 11 applicants. Should consider wider geographical area.
 - Planting on Shelter Island
 - A Day in the Life of the Peconic Estuary – expect 1000 participants.
 - Golf Course Greening event not feasible, GFEE will produce a toolkit for golf courses summarizing BMP's.
 - Toast the Coast in September with local vineyards, breweries and restaurants.
8. TAC update (**Matt Sclafani**, *PEP TAC Chair*): PEP hosted a well attended joint meeting of the TAC and NRSC in August. There was a very interesting presentation by Cathy Wigand, EPA, and her studies on the effects of nitrogen on wetlands. Next meeting will be on November 19th. The next meeting for the nitrogen workgroup is being scheduled so the members can assess various nitrogen load models.

Adjourn