

**Peconic Estuary Program
Management Committee Meeting Summary
January 14, 2015**

SCCC Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center
20 E. Main St., Riverhead, NY



1. Welcome and Introductions (**Seth Ausubel**, *EPA Region 2*)
2. Discussion and Approval, September Meeting Summary (**Seth Ausubel**) – APPROVED
3. Highlights from RAE/ANEP Meeting in Washington, DC (**Alison Branco**, *PEP Program Director*)

EPA will no longer require a complete CCMP update by 2018 but PEP believes there is a real need for this. In the short term, PEP will complete an “Actions Now” document as a preliminary step in this process.

4. 2015 Action Plan Development (a.k.a. CCMP update, Actions Now document) (**Seth Ausubel**, **Alison Branco**)

The CCMP working group has completed a draft of the Nitrogen section. This portion will be presented to the Mayors and Supervisors meeting on February 11, 2015. The document will also include strategies and discussion sections, as well as actions. Weekly work sessions will continue until draft document is finished (Tuesdays at 10AM for 3 hours).

This document, along with a letter from Seth Ausubel, will be distributed to the East End Mayors and Supervisors group.

ACTION: Complete Actions Now document

5. FY 2015 Preliminary Budget (**Alison Branco**, **Sheri Jewhurst**, *EPA Region 2*)

Long term funding strategies are still being developed but “bridge funding” has been secured with a \$125,000 contribution from Suffolk County for two years, and pledged funding of the USGS monitoring and one other project by NYSDEC.

The management committee decided now is the time to hire a Program Coordinator for Suffolk County since we have two years of bridge funding and this position could be used to help secure long term funding.

ACTION: Create working budget for next meeting

6. Program Office Updates (**Alison Branco**)

- Barry Paul (Suffolk County Management Committee representative) has been re-assigned as County Treasurer,
- 2007 and 2008 Grants are being closed out but some county match projects have not been completed (there was discussion about using in-king services),
- Suffolk County WQPRP will be announced within days,
- Backlog of PEP RFP's from 2011-2014,
- Suffolk County Comprehensive Water Resource Plan is complete with Alison's contribution, and
- Suffolk County Agricultural Stewardship Plan needs to be updated and made "funding friendly."

ACTION: Continue work on all the above actionable items.

7. Habitat Restoration and Stormwater Updates (**Julie Nace**, *PEP NYS DEC Coordinator*)

- Eelgrass mapping project nearing completion,
- Indian Island Wetland Restoration project moving forward,
- Alewife volunteer training and mapping project in progress,
- Backlog of RFP's (bio-optical model, subwatershed implementation, habitat restoration, habitat restoration designs, nitrogen modeling, Climate Ready Estuaries and Critical Land Protection Strategy Update),
- Implementation Progress Report for Habitat Restoration Plan is complete. Habitat Restoration Plan is scheduled for an update in 2015,
- Environmental Indicators Report is in progress,
- Invasive Species Management Plan is almost complete,
- Peconic Inter Municipal Agreement position has been announced, final signing of agreement in progress and invoices have been sent to the members,
- Outreach and Education contract has had a fantastic start and is working out well, and
- Questions to the MC:
 - Expand the Homeowner Rebate program to all residents in the estuary boundary?
 - Upper Mills fish passage is stalled – what happens to the NEP funds that expire in Sept 2015?

ACTION: Continue work on all the above actionable items.

8. CAC Update (**Kevin McDonald**, *CAC Chair*, **Sherryll Jones**, *PEP Outreach Coordinator*)

Kevin McDonald reports that there have been no recent CAC meetings. Polling shows increase in concern and increased support for water quality issues. This information will be made available at the next meeting, as well as potential strategies to address these issues.

ACTION: Make poll information available and create strategies

Cornell Cooperative Extension (Sherryll Jones) reported on the work done since the contract was issued in December 2014.

- CAC meeting planned for January 31,
- Planning meetings have occurred,
- Would like to link the CCE SPAT program with the Homeowner Rebate program,
- New social media campaigns (Ask an Expert Monday, Fun Fact Fridays),
- Classroom/School programs: A Day in the Life of the Peconic Estuary Program, Growing up Green, MLK Day of Service,
- January newsletter,
- Assistant has been hired (Christie Pfoertner),
- Penguin Plunge for IHeart Estuaries,
- Radio and TV spots,
- Pesticide and fertilizer reduction efforts underway, and
- Many spring events planned.

ACTION: Continue active work on contract with CAC meetings, outreach events, and monthly staff meeting

9. TAC Update (**Matt Sclafani**, *PEP TAC Chair*)

Matt Sclafani reports that Joe Costa, Director of Buzzards Bay NEP, presented to both the TAC and Nitrogen Workgroup. Highlights included his 30-second TMDL that indicated PEP needs a 40% reduction in nitrogen loading. Valiela model was discussed and that it is critical to have accurate inputs into the model.

ACTION: The Nature Conservancy will present NLM model to Nitrogen Workgroup

10. New Business

Suffolk County updated the group on recent wetland restoration projects and workshops