



**Joint Advisory and Science and Technical Advisory Committee Meeting  
Ocean County College, John Bartlett Hall, Room 213  
December 16th, 2014, 9:00 am**

**Attending Advisory Committee Members:** Stan Hales (BBP Co-Chair), Tim Dillingham (ALS Co-Chair), Alyssa Arcaya (USEPA-R2), Barbara Spinweber (USEPA-R2), Lisa Auermuller (JCNERR), Ron Baker (USGS), Clint Lehman (RCTB), Rick Bushnell (RCTB), Dave McKeon (OC Dept. of Planning), Charles Caruso (PPA), Karen Greene (NOAA), Britta Wenzel (SBB), Steven Yergeau (RCE), Will Ruocco (BTMUA), Ed Wengrowski (NJ Pinelands Comm.), Angela Andersen (LBIF), Chelsea Simpkins (MTANJ – On the Phone), Tony McDonald (Monmouth Univ. – On the Phone) Lynette Lurig (NJDEP).

**Attending STAC Members:** Jim Vasslides (BBP), Tim Dillingham (ALS), Alyce Hreha (Sovereign Consulting), Matt Csik (OC Health Dept), Charles Caruso (PPA), Rob Tunstead (USDA-NRCS), Lisa Auermuller (JCNERR), Barbara Spinweber (USEPA-R2), Rod Ritchie (AKRF), Patrick Burritt (NJ Pinelands Comm.), Cara Muscio (COA), Mike Kennish (Rutgers), Ron Baker (USGS), Steve Mars (USFWS), Jim Nickels (Monmouth Univ.), Jason Kelsey (SBB), Clint Lehman (RCTB), Rick Bushnell (RCTB), Steven Yergeau (RCE), Tom Belton (NJDEP-OS), Dorina Frizzera (NJDEP-OS), Will Ruocco (BTMUA).

**Guests:** Maciej Maslonka (OCPD), Jenny Jimenez (OCPD), Rebecca Ziefle (OCPD), Evan Sherer (NJDEP), Don Frederickson (SBB), Sheri Shifren (NJDEP), Heather Jensen (ACOE), Jason Miller (ACOE), Steve Long (ACOE), Mariah Abellera (ACOE), Susan Taylor (Abt Associates, Maciej Maslonka (OC Dept. of Planning), Jenny Jimenez (OC Dept. of Planning), Rebecca Ziefle (OC Dept. of Planning), GraceAnne Taylor (WMA 13), Wes Dalzell (ReClam the Bay), Metthea Yepsen (The Nature Conservancy – On the Phone), Paul Jivoff (Rider Univ. – On the Phone), Evan Scherer (NJDEP Coastal Mngmnt.).

**Barnegat Bay Partnership Staff:** Betsy Hyle, Martha Maxwell-Doyle, Mary Judge, Karen Walzer, Erin Reilly.

**Welcome and introductions – S. Hales**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM and introductions were made.

**Review of draft Joint AC-STAC agenda and minutes of September 16<sup>th</sup> Joint AC-CEC Meeting and June 10<sup>th</sup> STAC meeting – S. Hales**

There were no additions to the agenda. A motion to approve the minutes of the June 10<sup>th</sup> STAC meeting was made by Tim Dillingham. The motion was seconded by Rod Ritchie and approved unanimously by all STAC members.

A motion to approve the minutes from the joint AC-CEC meeting of September 16, 2014 was made by Charles Caruso. The motion was seconded by Alyssa Arcaya and approved unanimously by all Advisory Committee members, with Karen Greene abstaining.

**Director's Update (2015-16 Workplan Development CCMP Update, Program Evaluation/Site Visit, Bi-annual EPA-ANEP meeting): S Hales**

The BBP's budget for next year should remain the same as last year. If any members have workplan tasks, they were requested to review last year's Work Plan; if there are new action items which need funding, please speak to BBP staff asap. The EPA guidance is mostly identical, but 1) all NEPs are being asked to initiate a CCMP update; the formal revision process must begin in Sept. 2015 and be completed by 2020. Some funding is available from the EPA and a work group will be formed. Partners are asked to look carefully at how climate change responses/mitigation affects our goals and objectives as a partnership; 2) in the next three months the BBP needs to submit materials for a program evaluation; a site visit will take place in late summer. The guidance will be specific as to climate change initiatives.

**Action: Dr. Hales will distribute copies of the EPA guidance later this week.**

An announcement was made that Marilyn Katz is retiring; Michael Craghan is her replacement.

The EPA/ANEP bi-annual national conference is scheduled for March 2015. Dr. Hales was made chair of ANEP for a two-year term.

**Presentation: "Beneficial use of dredged material to restore wetlands for coastal flood mitigation (Daniel Barone, Richard Stockton College-Coastal Research Center).**

Objective: Provide overview of recent analysis conducted by RSC.

This study analyzed the impact of intertidal marsh "edge restoration" on reducing coastal storm wave and surge impacts to adjacent communities. It also determined the amount of dredged material available in state navigation channels that could be beneficially used for potential marsh restoration efforts.

Mr. Barone's full report is on the "Studies and Reports" section of the BBP website. He will send out the datasets upon request.

**Presentation: "ACOE SAGE program and Barnegat Bay shoreline analysis." Heather Jensen, US Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District.**

Objective: Make BBP partners aware of the ACOE SAGE program, ongoing ACOE projects in Barnegat Bay, and look for potential avenues of collaboration.

A Systems Approach to Geomorphic Engineering (SAGE) pilot project is beginning in Barnegat Bay and the ACOE would like input and feedback. The ACOE is “building a community of practice” and wants to help create and facilitate regional plans. They’re also working on a financial plan to leverage financial resources. San Francisco Bay, NYC, Puget Sound, and Barnegat Bay all have pilot projects.

For the Barnegat Bay pilot project, coordination with various groups identified a potential for a bay-wide shoreline analysis to help identify the areas of greatest loss and prioritize future restoration (part of a “regional plan.”). This will include citizen monitoring of marshes and shorelines.

An overview was given of work completed to date. A request was made that the group present their data in a way that local decision-makers can use in order to make restoration decisions. A suggestion was made to form a workgroup to continue this discussion and to share the data sources. More data is needed about the current surface elevation of our marshes. A comment was made that we need to learn what the implementation of SAGE is going to look like and a determination as to whether all partners are in agreement about where we are as a group in order to implement SAGE projects. More discussion is needed.

**Action: A meeting will be set in early January or mid-January – The Forsythe Refuge (as the largest wetland owner in the watershed) needs to be a partner in this conversation. Dr. Hales will get something out before the holiday season to get all the relevant partners into the room.**

Ms. Jensen will take care of coordinating all of the data and then come up with a way to continue the conversation to determine where ACOE can help. USGS data will be coming out in March. There is no specific timeline for the ACOE, but seeing this data will be helpful. They’re looking at this as a partnership and want to see who’s interested in working on this and providing feedback. This is the ACOE’s way of participating in regional planning. All the pieces should be put together (lessons learned, monitoring, implementation, applying science to the project, etc.) so that as we move regionally, we can apply all the available information and not put something into action that didn’t work somewhere else.

**NEIWPCC Update: B. Spinweber, EPA Project Manager**

Objective: Update on the project report, reviews, release date, and next steps.

NEIWPCC conducted a peer review of the report on nutrient management in the Barnegat Bay. Researchers received a copy of this on Friday afternoon and it will be posted at 3:00 PM today. Overall, reviewers were very complimentary, especially as to data compilation. Data limitations

in the bay were a challenge, but in general it was a positive review and the USGS and Rutgers did a good job on the project.

Dr. Kennish (Rutgers) made some statements and objections about the process and requested that partners read the science reviews, especially the conclusions and recommendations of what Rutgers proposes (which he believes are important and achievable, including a TMDL). Dr. Baker (USGS) thanked Dr. Kennish for his work compiling new data, especially on seagrass. He commented that there is a lot of value in this report that has yet to be fully explored (Rick Lathrop turf grass work and runoff from the developed landscape and its contribution to nutrient loading).

Mr. Dillingham provided some feedback on the process, including the NGO communities' disappointment in the tenor of the comments. They felt the purpose of this partnership (BBP) is to bring in the stakeholders to the science process and they felt that wasn't happening in this case.

### **STAC Update: J. Vasslides**

#### **Shellfish Working Group recommendation document**

Objective: Review recommendations from SWG & determine STAC/AC actions.

The recommendation document dealing with hard clam and oyster restoration in the bay is complete and has been distributed. The emphasis is on hard clams because oyster restoration and rehabilitation is a tricky issue in the bay given the current conditions; therefore, with the funding available hard clams are the low-hanging fruit. Oyster recommendations were made for the mid- and long-term timeframes. The next step is for the STAC to determine how to use the information. The STAC's intent when forming the working group was to pass the recommendations to the Advisory Committee as a planning document for moving forward on shellfish restoration and rehabilitation. The Advisory Committee may want to consider passing the information on to the state management council and state regional council (which also has a shellfish working group). The STAC has to vote to accept the recommendations and then send it to the Advisory Committee, which would then submit it to the Policy Committee and others, as requested. A motion to accept the recommendation document was made by Mr. Nickels. The motion was seconded by Ms. Spinweber and was passed unanimously with Mr. Dillingham abstaining until he has a chance to review it more thoroughly.

### **2015 BBP GFO (Grant Funding Opportunity)**

Objective: Review scope & schedule for upcoming GFO.

The focus of the GFO will be on shellfish restoration and will be sent out by tomorrow afternoon. The pre-proposals will be due January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015, and by the end of January, a small working group will meet to determine which proposals go on to full proposals (which will be due the first week in March). Proposers will present to the STAC and the STAC will then make a recommendation to the Advisory Committee, which will decide whether or not to accept the STAC recommendation. There will be a little over \$50,000 available for one or two projects.

### **Pathogen working group – S. Shifren/M. Csik**

Objective: Update members on activities of pathogen working group.

An update was given on the successful resolution of the Beachwood Beach water quality problems and Cedar Cove Marina derelict houseboats. This project is a model for the ability of multiple agencies to work together to achieve results. Thresholds for beach closures are being lowered as a result of new EPA guidance. This past bathing season showed fewer advisories and closures by the Health Department.

Post-Hurricane Sandy issues were discussed, including infrastructure issues and Seaside Park pump stations. A South Seaside Park dewatering operation undermined existing infrastructure and this has been repaired. Reopening Pine Lake Park in Manchester to bathing does not look feasible at this time. Deerhead Lake in Lacey partnered with the Department of Agriculture for egg addling and their water quality improved over the years.

The Metedeconk Watershed plan was approved last summer. The Lake Carasaljo area is looking at stormwater infrastructure; Brick Plaza is looking at green infrastructure in its large impervious lot; MATES students' project is ongoing re boat traffic impacts on water quality.

### **Soil Health Update/Restoration Standard – S. Hales**

It has been determined by the Department of Agriculture that the soil restoration standard (meant to be implemented with the fertilizer law) is too costly to be implemented and is going to be dropped. A copy of a letter from Douglas Fisher to the 9<sup>th</sup> Legislative District was distributed. The Freehold and Ocean County Soil Conservation Districts are willing to work on a local standard to be proposed for Brick, promote it within the watershed, and then carry it back to the state (along with costs of implementation) as a way of keeping this alive locally. This will be included as part of Metedeconk watershed plan and a cost-benefit analysis of a soil restoration standard should be completed. Dr. Hales proposes pulling together a soil restoration group to work on this. Tim Reilly from USGS will help with this process.

A comment was made that we need state-wide standards, not town-by-town-by-town. The committee was warned to be cautious about advocating that procedure, as it legitimizes the

actions of the State. Similar regulations have been put in place in other watersheds, so this information should be shared with the Secretary of Agriculture.

**Action: Dr. Hales will email the members a reply letter from the 9<sup>th</sup> Legislative District.**

### **Dam Restoration Updates (Cedar and Westecunk Creek projects)**

The dam on the Cedar Creek (west of Route 9) has been removed with funding from the BBP, NJDEP, and USF&W.

The BBP will be entering into a cooperative agreement with the USF&W for removal of the larger Westecunk Creek dam.

### **Spring Science/Outreach Symposium – J. Vasslides**

A suggestion was made for a spring meeting at OCC with a dual track: morning and afternoon science sessions and a separate afternoon track on translating science into outreach. A request was made to form a working group to form the agenda. The BBP will handle logistical support, but it will be a STAC/AC/CEC-driven event. Volunteers for the working group include Charles Caruso, Angela Andersen, Tom Belton, Evan Sherer, Lynette Lurig, Matt Csik, and Louise Wootton. This could be an opportunity to bring legislators to the table.

### **CEC Update: K. Walzer, B. Hyle, A. Andersen, W. Dalzell**

Objective: Update AC re: Public Outreach GFO, festival, other activities.

The CEC GFO (which will be translated into Spanish) will also be issued for \$45,000 (\$1,000 to \$10,000 projects), to follow the same timeline as the STAC GFO. Focus topics are: 1) soil health; and 2) wetlands riparian buffers/living shorelines.

The Barnegat Bay Festival will be held June 7, 2015. The Barnegat Bay Foundation will support the festival again and will hold a fundraising gala the night before; Saturday will be a water event – paddleboard/kayak rally/fundraiser/workshop. The celebration of the life of Pete McLain was videotaped by Jarvis Productions and will be posted on our website. “Aquakids” videos on the Barnegat Bay will also be available on the website.

The Education and Outreach Retreat will be held in March this year and is currently being planned.

An update was given on the wetland/shorelines work. Everything being done on the Barnegat side is being replicated on the Delaware side but uniform, minimum monitoring for post-Sandy assessments is needed. The state was supposed to pick up the monitoring techniques, but doesn't

have the funding. Possible NFWF funding for monitoring was discussed. The Wetland Program Development Fund was to develop these programs, not fund them long-term.

### **Partner Updates**

PPA published a Barnegat Bay Guide to Low-Impact Development a year or so ago. Hard copies are still available and it is posted on the BBP website.

Next January federal and state agencies will review permits in joint review. Refuges will be on the agenda to look at thin-layer placement. Forsythe has some tentative projects, but the logistics of getting the projects on the ground are enormous. FWS is trying to put together an action plan/flow chart. Mr. Mars will give a post-January 15<sup>th</sup> report at the next STAC meeting.

Mr. Bushnell suggested a *Barnegat Bay Beat* article on the work done by Ben Wurst and Conserve Wildlife with the osprey (one of which has been seen in Tobago). *The Secret Life of Clams* is now available on Amazon. Mr. Bushnell is the incoming president of the LBIF and he will be in touch with members for ideas.

EPA R2 will be announcing the permanent hire for Ms. Rollwagen's replacement sometime in mid-spring.

A draft meeting schedule was distributed. Please provide feedback on the schedule, which will be revisited in early January.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 PM.

\* \* \*