

Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program Advisory Committee
September 6, 2023
3:00 – 5:00 PM ET

Agenda (Minutes below)

Location: Remote via Zoom (join information below)

Meeting Goals: Lake Champlain Sea Grant's (LCSG) Program Advisory Committee (PAC) will get LCSG staffing updates and share feedback on its 2024-28 work plan.

Objectives:

The LCSG PAC will:

- Exchange introductions with one another and LCSG staff
- Share feedback on LCSG 24-28 work plan

Activities

- 3:00 PM Welcome and introductions – Kris and Anne
- Staff updates
- 3:15 PM 2024-28 work plan overview – Kris
- 3:30 PM Feedback from PAC members – round robin (Jamboard available for those who prefer to provide written feedback)
- Prompts to help solicit feedback:
- Weaknesses in the work plan related to our strategic plan goals?
 - Feedback related to our ability to achieve intended performance measures?
 - Feedback related to our diversity, equity and inclusion plan goals?
 - Areas of the work plan where further clarification is needed?
 - Activities that may be removed or modified to allow staff greater capacity to address most pressing needs?
 - General feedback?
- 4:50 PM Next steps
- 5:00 PM Adjourn

September 6, 2023 PAC Meeting notes

PAC members in the meeting: Mark Malchoff, Brenda Gail Bergman, Dan Albrecht, Kara Lenorovitz, Jill Arace, Crea Lintilhac, George Burrill, Emily Bird, Erin Vennie-Vollrath, Rebecca Ellis, Dan Lerner,

LCSG staff in the meeting: Anna Marchessault, Ashley Eaton, Aude Lochet, Anne Jefferson, Tim Mihuc, Sarah Noyes, Jill Sarazen, Julianna White, Caroline McKelvey, Kris Stepenuck

- Kris welcomed everyone and facilitated a quick ice breaker using the chat.
- Anne welcomed everyone one and shared staff updates.
- Kris presented a high-level overview of the omnibus proposal.
- Noted that the proposal has 8 goals, two in each of the four focus areas. These were pasted into the chat:

2024-27 omnibus has 8 goals in 4 focus areas

Focus Area: Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development (ELWD)

Goal 1: A diverse and environmentally literate public participates in lifelong formal, non-formal, and informal learning opportunities and implements innovative solutions to improve community well-being in the face of a changing Lake Champlain basin.

Goal 2: A diverse, skilled, and environmentally literate workforce is engaged and able to build prosperous lives and livelihoods in a changing world through traditional and innovative careers.

DEIJA goals which are in the process of being updated. For the sake of this omnibus, we are using our current goals rather than our new ones.

Focus Area: Healthy Coastal Ecosystems (HCE)

Goal 3: Habitat, ecosystems, and the services they provide are protected and/or restored in the Lake Champlain basin.

Goal 4: Land, water, and living resources are managed by applying sound science, tools, and services to sustain resilient ecosystems in the Lake Champlain basin.

Focus Area: Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (SFA)

Goal 5: Domestic fisheries, aquaculture, aquaponics, and other living freshwater resources supply food, jobs, economic, and cultural benefits in the Lake Champlain basin.

Goal 6: Natural resources are sustainably managed to support coastal communities and working waterfronts, including industrial, recreational, subsistence fisheries, aquaculture, and aquaponics in the Lake Champlain basin.

Focus Area: Resilient Communities and Economies (RCE)

Goal 7: Lake Champlain basin communities and economies have resilient capability and the resources to prepare for and adapt to changing environmental conditions, climate change, extreme weather, coastal hazards, economic disruptions, and other threats to community health and well-being.

Goal 8: Aquatic resources are sustained and protected to meet emerging needs of the communities, economies, and ecosystems of the Lake Champlain basin.

- Next Kris shared a summary of our performance measures and metrics

Performance measures

- Products
- # People engaged
- Graduates who get jobs within two years
- Resource managers who use ecosystem-based approaches
- Acres protected, enhanced or restored
- Fishers, seafood processors...

Projects

Administration project: Anne Jefferson and Anna Marchessault

Education and extension projects (6)

1. Cyanobacteria and fishing education outreach, specifically to new American and low-income communities; Kris Stepenuck and Aude Lochet
2. Strengthening Community Resilience project: Aude Lochet, Caroline McKelvey, Sarah Noyes; specifically flood resilience
3. Watershed Alliance Project; Ashley Eaton, Caroline McKelvey, and Tori Herkalo
4. Stormwater Management Project; Jill Sarazen and Michelle, Shawn White. Green Infrastructure and riparian restoration
5. Watershed Health Project; Mark Mitchell; Lay Lakes Monitoring Program, Kris Stepenuck; Road salt and boater education
6. Workforce Development Project: Sea Grant Scholars program, Vermont Real Estate Professionals, DEIJA Professional Development Trainings, Aquaculture trainings

Research Project: research RFP, partnered fellowships RFP

2024 Funded Projects

- Redacted. These cannot be revealed publicly until funding is awarded.

Communications Project: Anna Marchessault

- Multiple media sources of outreach; reporting; website, newsletter, and more

Comments from PAC on 24-28 work plan

- Comments can also be placed in Google spreadsheet until Sept. 25.
- **Road Salt** is an issue! Kris is working on it and will call on RPCs soon to help advertise for a hopefully late October event.

- Dan Albrecht: Road salt workshop for municipal officers and businesses? Next event, pls know that RPCs are willing to help.
- Kris: Will also translate custodian road salt best practice videos into multiple languages due to support from LCBP.
- NY Adirondack Park Salt Assessment and Recommendations came out yesterday
- Challenging for PAC members to read the full proposal. Is there an executive summary?
- **Action item:** Kris will create an executive summary and send to all ASAP; “details” sections are the most easy to review to get sense of what LCSG is proposing to do
- Suggestion from Crea: Collaborate with legislature on water bills, e.g., reduce salt, aquatic nuisance, etc. and set priorities. Participate in committees. Be educators for bills relevant to our work. Track those as well.
- Kris agreed it may be an opportunity, though as Sea Grant staff we have to be careful about crossing the line between informing and advocating—Kris
 - **Action item:** Kris to check with Joshua Brown about if we can intentionally interact with Legislative bodies. Learn what they do and how we can share our expertise with them.
- Jill Arace: Broaden audience for DEIJA plan. Working on that with DEIJA team and will share with PAC in winter
- **Action item:** Share DEIJA plan with PAC in Feb 2024 or aux environs
- Brenda Gail: Educate state and local gov’ts about opportunities such as Inflation Reduction Act. How do we learn about these opps ourselves? See Brookings Institute. BG will follow up with Kris.
- Also IRA and FEMA monies – opps to get the word out about these.
- Small towns that don’t have capacity to manage grants
- Dan A: Sources of information: the RPCs and VT League of Cites and Towns are regularly pushing info to towns about ARPA, BIL, and IRA monies, FEMA monies, etc.
- Ashley: There has been some synergistic conversations about this in relation to Green Schools and leveraged funds
- This is the first time aquaculture-related goals are included in our strategic plan and that aquaculture will be included to be covered partially through our base omnibus funds. In the Lake Champlain basin aquaculture is sometimes carried out in indoor circulating systems, but often it is in outdoor aquaculture ponds (growing fish for yard ponds). In the basin, the field is still very small. There are <10 current aquaculturists in the area now.
- Erin VV: LEAP vs Lake Wise. Lake Wise is State of VT focused on educating residents on shoreline about the importance of native vegetation on shoreline. LEAP is workforce development and a way to get youth engaged in Lake Wise program
- Emily Bird: Emergent VT DEC priorities.
 - Organizational capacity is a real need for DEC-key interventions needed to support clean water work.
 - Block grant program is launching soon from DEC, training needs and other funding.
 - Lakewise and Streamwise programs are coordinated - Streamwise was built from the Lakewise program framework.
 - VT passed EJ law last year, but there is work still going into defining this. And we’re thinking of Justice 40. VT DEC is now thinking about how to meet our goals.

- **Opportunity:** Community engagement is one of five buckets of engagement in this law. Opportunity for engagement / partnership on this. As state defines EJ, we will partner with external organizations on grant, and training and capacity building will be needed, including Coordination with communities? Merging of EJ and capacity building?
- Dan Albrecht: Potential for redundancy in programming, esp around floodplains and work with municipalities.
 - **Action item:** Get input from partners earlier on in the planning process.
 - Sarah Noyes, Flood Resilience Educator, is prioritizing RPCs that have been impacted by flooding and received FEMA money. She will figure out how to communicate with the broader RPCs; work with RPCs to make sure people are getting the best information and minimize confusion
 - Dan: RPCs have recently reviewed their plans and made recommendations on floodplain. Not enough RPC staff to assist all 250 municipalities...try to coordinate better to be sure helping where needed and RPCs aren't already. Helping keep people from getting confused.
 - Crea: Are RPCs or Sarah working on CSOs (WWTF overflows)? RPCs hasn't done much with this. Helped Burlington with recent flood event. Some serious issues with WWTPs.
- **Action item:** PD for staff about VT EJ law. What are communities actually feeling and needing? Need to find that out as part of that law. Also federal funding tied to Justice 40 initiative.
- **Action item:** Facilitation training for all new staff.

Other updates

- **Next meeting:** PAC member terms. Need input on how to replace PAC members – organic departure like now or term limits to define a small number who would cycle that in a year departure to create a replacement cycle that not all in or all out system.
- Site reviews next winter (2024-25)!! Will call on PAC to share with site review teams.
- Anne: On the omnibus work plan we are preparing now, our F&A has gone from 25.7% to 53%, so our direct rates have increased significantly. We made arrangements with RSEN to support non-federal costs share, and are working with UVM Extension to maintain our staff and research levels in this omnibus.
- Where could we contract (shrink) if need be?
- No particular ideas for new PAC members (though Kris has a list of people to invite this fall for terms that begin in the winter,
- Federal approps are happening in January, crunch time is now LCSG is AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION, National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2008 (Public Law No: 110-394)