

Attendees:

Don Benczkowski	PA DEP, Interstate Waters Office (IWO)
Randall Brown	PA DEP, Southeast Regional Staff
J. Samantha Burton	PA DEP, IWO
Kevin Hess	PA DEP, IWO
Kristin Koroncai	PA DEP, IWO
Jacob Moore	PA DEP, Northwest Regional Staff
Jim Peifer	PA DEP, IWO
Joseph Sieber	PA DEP, IWO
Matt Walderon	PA DEP, IWO
Marjorie Hughes	PA DEP, Citizens Advisory Council (CAC)
Monica Adams	PA DEP, CAC
Sean Gimbel	PA DEP, Policy Office
Tom Ford	PA Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
Christopher Gray	Office of the Governor
Shayne Hoachlander	PA Game Commission (PGC)
John Van Zant	PA Public Utilities Commission (PUC)
Julia Donahue	Erie County Department of Planning (ECDP)
Amy Miller	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Call to order: A bi-annual meeting of the Coastal Zone Advisory Committee was held in the 10th Floor Conference Room in the Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania on the 5th of June, 2013. The meeting convened at 9:35 AM, with Mr. Don Benczkowski presiding.

Mr. Benczkowski welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

Mr. Benczkowski reviewed the By-Laws of the CZAC and Pennsylvania Coastal Zone Management Program Executive Order 1980-20, which were included in the meeting handouts. Section 3a. (composition of CZAC) and 3b (Functions of the Committee) of the EO were read to the group. It was suggested that the group reviews these documents after the meeting. DEP would like to continue and increase involvement of CZAC networked agencies as partners. Mr. Benczkowski asked the representatives in attendance to notify DEP of future agenda items or discussion topics.

Approval of minutes: Amy Miller made a clarification to page 5-6 of the January 16, 2013 meeting minutes. In response to Andy Zemba's question, there is no distinction of native versus nonnative vegetation in new 50 ft. stream buffer bill prohibitions. A motion to approve the January 2013 minutes was made by Tom Ford, and seconded by Shayne Hoachlander. **Motion carried.**

Coastal Resource Management Program Updates:

2013 Coastal Zone Grant Fiscal Update by Mr. Benczkowski: A Powerpoint was presented to the group comparing annual 2007 to 2012 Coastal Zone grant awards between the Lake Erie (LECZ) and Delaware Estuary (DECZ) coastal zones. NOAA has confirmed \$1.477 million will be made available through the FFY2013 grant. This has been a significant drop since 2007. The federal funding formula for 306 and 309 grants was summarized and factors, including shoreline extents and populations were compared between the two coastal zones. In general, funding between the coastal zones has been relatively equal for the past several years.

DEP submitted an official application for FFY2013 grants into NOAA's online CAMMP system in May. We are awaiting a response.

Mr. Benczkowski briefly discussed the departure of Sabrina Stanwood, previous CRM grant manager, in February. The position is being filled and existing program staff have assisted as needed.

2014 Coastal Zone Grant Application Materials Revision by Samantha Burton: CRM, Julia Donahue, and Ms. Miller have recently collaborated on a revision of the FFY2014 Coastal Zone Grant Application Instruction Guide and online eGrants supplemental forms. A first draft has been completed and was provided to CZAC for review. The new guide is more user friendly and provides a more structured approach for grant applicants. One significant change was the inclusion of new section 312 focus areas, where grants that address habitat connectivity in both coastal zones, tidal wetland creation in the DECZ, or public access along tidal streams in the DECZ, may receive a higher score. Two additional changes were made to accommodate new NOAA requirements for GIS data sharing and subcontract budgets. Ms. Burton asked for CZAC comments by Wednesday, June 12. After this date, the grant application will be reviewed internally and posted prior to the grant application period.

The 2014 Coastal Zone grant round will open on August 19, 2013 and close on October 21, 2013.

CRM briefly described the new section 312 focus areas in more detail for the benefit of the group. These priorities were presented at previous meetings. Matt Walderon described habitat connectivity, which looks to develop, maintain, and protect wildlife corridors that facilitate ecosystem connectivity, mitigate fragmentation, and improve biodiversity. Ms. Miller stated that there is a new habitat connectivity plan developed by New Jersey DEP's endangered species program. Ms. Burton addressed shoreline access as added mileage of publically accessible waterfront along the Delaware River and its tidal tributaries. Kevin Hess stated that the wetland metric seeks to increase tidal acreage constructed outside of the permitting process. This is related to a continuing question of maximum coastal zone funding amounts, where the soft cap of \$50,000 can discourage projects that will further these 312 priorities.

Ms. Donahue asked if the new 312 priorities would unequally impact funding amounts between the coastal zones, since two priorities affect the DECZ and only one addresses both regions. Ms. Burton responded that projects for each coastal zone are scored and ranked separately. Historically, grant amounts have been generally evenly distributed and are anticipated to remain so.

Ms. Miller inquired on maximum grant amounts and subsequent project limitations. Mr. Benczkowski stated that we are continuing to consider options for this issue. There are negatives and positives to approaches of fewer, larger versus more, smaller grants. CRM and CZAC should examine this topic more, especially with recent decreases in NOAA funding amounts. Ms. Miller stated that it would be concerning for good projects to not apply due to a soft cap. Joe Sieber discussed the option of piggybacking other grants as match. This is already done in the case with DCNR and is a good approach, but does bring about several issues such as grant cycle timings.

Mr. Hess stated that CRM is intending to increase their focus on tidal wetlands outreach and promote networking and partnerships.

The next local advisory committee meeting will be held in Erie on June 19, 2013. The next DECZ local meeting will be pushed back to September and may include a field visit.

Municipal Reference Document Update by **Mr. Walderon**: The MRD was published as final on March 30. The MRD and its Comment and Response document is available for download from DEP's eLibrary in the IWO folder. Contact Mr. Walderon if you have any questions or comments.

Mr. Benczkowski introduced Jacob Moore. He is a new DEP staff person out of the Tom Ridge Environmental Center in Erie that replaced the vacancy previously held by Mr. Benczkowski himself.

Proposed Lake Erie Boundary Expansion Update by Joe Sieber: In 2011, the Lake Erie Advisory Committee gave a recommendation to DEP to expand the coastal zone to the entire watershed. Currently, three public meetings/listening sessions are scheduled from June 18-19th in different locations throughout the expansion area. If approved, the expansion will expand the

coastal zone area by a factor of seven and result in more and better grants. Mr. Sieber stated the local feedback has been generally positive.

Tom Ford asked why would there be opposition to the boundary expansion. Don stated that while the area in the coastal zone will increase, the grant amount from NOAA will not, and funding will be more competitive as a result.

Shayne Hoachlander inquired about the process that was used to delineate the original boundary. Don stated that features such as railroad tracks and roads were used to select the original area. CRM is now attempting a more watershed-based focus. Mr. Hoachlander described a recent property divided by the coastal zone boundary and a railroad track that was not able to be fully acquired due to this arbitrary dividing line.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Workshop by Mr. Sieber: The Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) hosted this first April workshop in Arlington to begin preparation of a regional Marine Spatial Plan (MSP). MARCO includes New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Pennsylvania is part of the Regional Planning Body, but not MARCO. The group has yet to determine how far up the estuary they will consider part of their MSP area. Issues such as wind energy development, recreation, fishing, and port access are driving this effort.

Marine Spatial Planning Update by Mr. Sieber: Pennsylvania's Lake Erie MSP effort developed from wind energy development interests proposed several years ago. At the time, no plan existed showing where turbines should be located. This effort looks to locate and map the resources of the lake from the low water mark to the international line. Phase I of the MSP planning effort includes identifying stakeholders and gathering information on the lake. Phase II will be a more involved three year effort.

Mr. Hoachlander commented on House Bill 568 which would increase submerged land acreage lease areas not needing legislative approval from 25 to 50 acres.

Mr. Hess provided some additional comments on CRM's MSP, stating that we are currently in our data gathering phase, including sampling on the lake to show what we know and don't know. Migratory bird information remains the most difficult to acquire and will probably not be available in a timely manner. Data created and compiled as part of the effort will be shared with other organizations and potential project developers for use early in their planning efforts. Mr. Hess requested that if any agencies had data they could share, or had a data gathering project they would like propose as part of this effort, that they contact the program.

Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone Permits by Randy Brown: This presentation will be delayed until the authorization for the permit to be discussed is complete. The public comment period is still open.

Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone Update by Amy Miller:

- The Greater Philadelphia Area/Delaware River Watershed was selected to be one of 11 urban waters federal partnerships to coordinate and target federal investments.
- The Philadelphia Trail Master Plan was completed in Spring of 2013. One of its many riparian trails includes the Frankford Creek, which received a \$200,000 EPA grant for 4 sq miles of brownfield remediation. Trail development would enable the Frankford Creek Greenway and connect Tacony Creek Park to the North Delaware. The Penn Street Trail is opening this month and will connect the Central Delaware trail around the Sugarhouse Casino. Bristol Borough, Bucks County received several grants to construct a L-shaped pier and floating docks for 25 boats at the waterfront.
- Chester City, Delaware County's Climate Change Adaptation Study is looking to understand and address vulnerability to coastal storms and sea level rise. They are currently looking to do stream restoration and address potential inundation areas. Next steps would be to look at ecological restoration and where opportunities, such as vacant lands, exist.
- Mr. Benczkowski inquired about Philadelphia's stream buffer ordinance. Ms. Miller replied that trails are allowed within the 50' buffer.

Lake Erie Coastal Zone Update by Ms. Donahue:

- Ms. Donahue provided a status update of extended 2011 Coastal Zone funded projects:
 - Raccoon Creek Park Implementation – An extension to construct a pavilion has been granted through September 30, 2013. Bids came in too high and the Township decided to downsize the restroom and re-bid. Anticipated start date is June 1.
 - Lake Sturgeon Habitat and Population Study – Phase II – Project looks to assess habitat, provide genetic population determination, increase awareness by determining spawning ground potential and distribution of posters and watch cards. A time extension was granted through September 20, 2013.
 - The Building sustainable communities grant provides environmental education programming and training with a focus on stormwater management, landscaping, and open space preservation. A 6-month extension was granted.
 - Erie-Western PA Port Authority received two grants this round. Funds from the public access repair project were transferred to the launch ramp repair grant due to budgeting issues. A time extension was granted until July 2013.
- Ms. Donahue provided a status update of 2011 Coastal Zone funded projects:
 - Investigate and Research Environmental Health Problems is a two-week summer school for kids interested in the environmental field.
 - A County-wide stream study has been funded that will educate teachers and students on watershed, pollution, water chemistry, and macroinvertebrates.
 - The Renewing Our Great Lakes project will provide students and educators science-based experiential learning, training, and field activities focused on stormwater management and land restoration.
 - The City Comprehensive Plan will inventory existing plans and complete a gap analysis. A consultant will be selected mid-June.
 - The Lampe Marina project is currently on hold until matching funds are in place. It will replace floating docs, a courtesy dock, and floating gas docks.

- Creating Coastal Zone Stewards project distributes 6,000 newspapers with environmental content to area schools and promotes CRM and the International Coastal Cleanup.
- Ms. Donahue reviewed some of the recent happenings in Erie:
 - A greenway will be constructed on the GAF site starting in September 2013. It will be coordinated with other earthwork activity and completion of a sheet pile seawall.
 - The Erie County Greenways Program has been launched using Act 13 funding. The new annual grant program will fund acquisition, planning, and construction of greenways, recreational trails, parks, community beautification, and open space preservation. The first expedited grant ground closed on Tuesday with 26 applications were received. Mr. Hess inquired on how this new program lines up with the Northwest Greenway's Plan. Ms. Donahue stated that projects in these plans will probably receive more consideration. Maximum grant funding is \$50,000 with a 1:2 match.
 - The Tall Ships Erie 2013 event will run from September 5th to the 8th.
 - The Great Lakes Beach Glass Festival was recently held with 7,000 in attendance and included a lecture by DEP and a booth by PA Sea Grant.
 - Celebrate Erie will run from August 15th-18th and include a Chalkwalk, in which PA CRM may consider participating.
 - This year's International Coastal Cleanup will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2013 from 9 AM to noon.

Agency Updates:

Tom Ford from DCNR stated that their grant round opened in January and closed in April. Priorities for this year's grants included trails, waters and rivers, and land conservation. Their grants link up well with the Coastal Zone Management grants.

Mr. Hoachlander from PGC referenced the Bradley acquisition that was discussed previously. He is picking up Galerucella beetles to release on the Bradley property on Friday morning for purple loosestrife biological control.

John Van Zant from PUC introduced himself to the group and provided an overview of the mission of PUC. Mr. Van Zant previously worked in the Source Water Protection Program at DEP.

Christopher Gray introduced himself to the group and provided an overview of the groups he works with.

Marjorie Hughes stated that CAC can provide an update at future meetings.

2014 Proposed Meetings, Other Business

Mr. Benczkowski announced the 2014 CZAC meeting schedule, which will both be held at 9:30 AM in RCSOB, 10th floor conference room on January 15, 2014 and June 4, 2014.

Ms. Burton stated that NOAA is anticipating to soon announce a solicitation for 2014 Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP). This grant supports state and local governments to purchase coastal land with ecological, conservation, recreational, historical, or aesthetic values. States can submit up to three applications for grants with a maximum anticipated award amount of \$500,000. The solicitation is expected to be announced sometime in June with proposals due in September.

Mr. Benczkowski thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 AM.