

**January 18, 2023 Meeting of the  
Coastal Zone Advisory Committee**

The regular meeting of the Coastal Zone Advisory Committee (CZAC) was called to order at 9:30 a.m. This meeting was held in hybrid format, offered in person in room 105 of the RCSOB and virtually via Microsoft Teams.

**The following committee representatives were in attendance:**

Casey Hanson	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)
Justin McKeel	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)
Sean Gimbel	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC)
James Spatz	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
Darin Clark	Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC)

**The following agency representatives (non-CZAC members) were present:**

Susan Weaver	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Coastal Resources Management Program (CRMP)
Randy Brown	DEP, CRMP Southeast Regional Staff
Stacey Box	DEP, CRMP
J. Samantha Burton	DEP, CRMP
Joe Sieber	DEP, CRMP
Shelby Clark	DEP, CRMP Northwest Regional Staff
Joy Fronzoli	Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development (ECDPCD)
Amy Verbofsky	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)
Tom Hughes	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)
Diana Olinger	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

**Introductions:**

Stacey Box began the meeting at 9:30 a.m., welcomed attendees, then led the introductions.

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### **Review and Approval of Minutes:**

Stacey Box asked for approval of minutes from the previous CZAC meeting of June 15, 2022. There were no comments or requested changes, but minutes could not be approved due to lack of a quorum.

### **Coastal Resources Management Grant Program Update:**

Stacey Box reported that the 2022 coastal grants were announced to the public by DEP press release on December 21, 2022.

The Federal Fiscal Year 2023 grant applications included twelve applications from the Delaware Estuary region and six from the Lake Erie region. The Coastal Resources Management Program (CRMP) applied to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for additional funding from the new Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) but were not selected for award. During 2023, the CRMP will again work to build a successful application for this new funding stream.

Stacey noted that NOAA is offering capacity-building funding, and in response the CRMP will be hiring a new staff person to work with the program.

### **Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone Update:**

Amy Verbofsky (DVRPC) presented updates of trails development and new funding. Notable projects in the Delaware Estuary include the Cobbs Creek connector to the Heinz refuge area (.3-mile connector), the groundbreaking for Phase III of the K&T Trail, and the Chester City Bike Rodeo. DVRPC continues to build the regional trails network. As part of a recent gap analysis, DVRPC analyzed 252 unbuilt trail segments and ranked and prioritized these segments. This effort will support the planning and decision-making for future project awards. Relatedly, over \$900 million was awarded to projects in the coastal area and as a result, there is much progress anticipated on this effort over the next few years. Finally, Delaware County has over \$10 million dedicated for its county greenways and trails projects.

There are several large Philadelphia waterfront developments underway, including the Penns Landing/300 North Columbus Boulevard project, the Bellwether District, the WSFS Bank Sportsplex expansion, the Philadelphia Navy yard and the renovation of Piers 38, 39 and 40. Tom Hughes (PEMA) commented to notify all parties that PEMA may have monitoring requirements in relation to these projects, and PEMA approval may be required depending on project type.

### **Lake Erie Coastal Zone Update:**

Joy Fronzoli (ECDPCD) shared Erie County news and project updates, including a report that recent severe weather events were quite damaging to the Erie area. At the same time, efforts continue along the Bayfront and Harborplace, and the Erie Western Port Authority has completed its master plan and now has eight pending contracts along the Bayfront area. Joy

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highlighted the development status of the Sassafras Street Extension, the McDannell Run streambank stabilization project and the ongoing tasks of the Erie County Parks, Trails and Recreation Plan of 2020. Joy added that the Port Authority has not named its new director yet.

### **Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Climate Action Plan**

Sean Gimble, PFBC, reported on the PFBC's new Climate Action Plan. Sean highlighted the reasons for why the plan was developed, the plan development process, its contents and intent and highlights pertaining to Pennsylvania's coastal zones.

Sean led the PFBC effort in preparing the plan, stating that the PFBC in identifying strategies for enhancing climate change adaptation and resiliency to protect, conserve and enhance PA's aquatic resources and support boaters and anglers. As noted by Sean, the plan impacts every part of the PFBC as well as many other agencies. The committee was riveted to the discussion and its applicability to our shared resources.

The Climate Action plan development was driven by the goal of addressing climate change effects on the Commonwealth's aquatic species and aquatic-based recreational activities. Based on current scientific sources, statewide climate change impacts include warmer air and water temperatures; increased precipitation; and intermittency of precipitation events contributing to increased drought frequency. The PFBC anticipates adverse effects to both coastal zones. For example, in southeast Pennsylvania, rising sea levels in the Delaware River Estuary are anticipated. High lake levels on the Erie County coastline is another challenge.

The PFBC considers the plan to be an "adaptation" plan. As part of this effort, the plan identifies eight goals, 18 strategies and 125 recommended actions. This plan was made with considerations to overlap with four other related agency climate plans. The detailed, closely coordinated work included overlap with DEP, National Fish and Wildlife Plants Strategy, DCNR and the PGC Wildlife Action Plan. Sean characterized the PFBC plan as having a focus on managing or "changing change" and be driven by sound science to best manage the effects of climate change. The completed plan can be found at:  
[www.fishandboat.com/Resource/Documents/CAP\\_Final.pdf](http://www.fishandboat.com/Resource/Documents/CAP_Final.pdf)

### **Agency Updates:**

Sean Gimble, PFBC, provided updates on different projects underway or completed in both coastal zones. During 2022, the PFBC entered into an easement agreement on 9000 linear feet of Erie County's Twenty-mile Creek. Sean also noted that while an invasive carp species was suspected to have moved into Lake Erie, the PFBC reported that the species was not yet confirmed.

James Spatz (PennDOT) reported on activities and related environmental review documents underway for multiple transportation project rehabilitation efforts near the Philadelphia Naval Yard and the Interstate 95 work located around the Betsy Ross bridge area.

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Casey Hanson (PHMC) shared the State Historic Preservation Office hired a new project reviewer for the western Pennsylvania region.

Darin Clark (PGC) reported on habitat work at State Gamelands 314 near the western Erie County shoreline. Recently, the PGC has completed clear cuts to improve forest habitat and worked to control invasive plant species including multiflora rose, phragmites, witch hazel and mile-a-minute weed.

Cynthia Dunlap (DCNR) was not in attendance but asked to share information about the Community Conservation Partnerships fall supplemental round 28.6 which was announced on January 11 and 12, 2023. DCNR received 376 applications totaling \$153.7 million in requested funds and were able to fund 98 projects totaling \$41.6 million from American Rescue Plan Act monies. Round 29 of funding opened on January 17 and is set to close on April 5.

### **Public Comment:**

There were no public comments.

### **Other Business:**

Stacey Box reported that during September 2022, the coastal program hosted a successful Great Lakes Regional Meeting of state coastal managers and staff and NOAA partners. One important event occurring during the meeting was the ceremonial signing of the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study which is an agreement between the US Army Corps of Engineers and all Great Lakes states.

### **Adjournment:**

Stacey thanked everyone for attending and the meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.