

## Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Attendees:** Kelly Anderson (PWD), Haley Burns (PDE), Kim Cole (DNREC), Kathy Klein (PDE), Danielle Kreeger (PDE), Lynette Lurig (NJDEP); Megan Mackey (EPA3), Catherine Magliocchetti (EPA3), Rachael Phillos (DNREC), Chad Pindar (DRBC), Irene Purdy (EPA2), Sue Weaver (PADEP), Will Whalon (PWD)

### Welcome and Introductions

- The meeting began with brief introductions, as Will Whalon from Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) joined for the first time. Kelly Anderson announced that she will be passing on her EIC position to Will, since her role at PWD has been evolving in a way that necessitates handing some things over to other people. While she is leaving the EIC she will still be involved with the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary (PDE) and the Delaware Estuary Program (DELEP). Will was once an intern at PDE and has been working at PWD for over 10 years; he is looking forward to catching up with folks and getting involved with the EIC.

### BIL Work Plan

- The draft Years 1 & 2 BIL Work Plan was sent out for Steering Committee (SC) review several weeks ago. Last week Kathy Klein sent out a requested change, which only entailed moving some money around between existing projects. Kathy said that we are only waiting to hear back from two organizations, and that just one partner requested minor changes to what was sent (including rearranging the work plan layout and adding some information related to projects that touch on environmental justice). Once we have received approval from all partners, PDE will pull everything together to finalize the final work plan and have that submitted by the end of September. Once the work plan is submitted to EPA and required documentation obtained, we can begin to think about a strategy and engage more partners in plans for years 3-5.

### CCMP Tracking Update

- Last year the EIC developed a subcommittee to assess the tracking process that was implemented several years ago with the revised CCMP. Megan Mackey said that this work group has now met three times, as planned, and has discussed matters like the purpose of CCMP tracking, what DELEP has done compared to what other NEPs have done, and possible challenges and opportunities for tracking moving forward. On the next EIC call we will review in more detail some of the conversations that came out of this process, as well as recommendations and proposed next steps.

### November Steering Committee Meeting

- Kathy acknowledged that there is a desire for the SC meetings to be more than just a report-out and to get the members more engaged. This is a goal for PDE's board meetings as well, but it can be difficult, especially virtually. In addition to discussing BIL year three and beyond at the November 1 SC meeting, Kathy suggested that, since there is a disconnect between the folks at PDE and the SC, we could create some type of opportunity for the SC to get to know PDE's staff and the work they are doing to implement the CCMP. She asked the EIC for their thoughts and any other ideas for items to cover during the meeting.
  - Irene Purdy liked the idea of staff providing something like a one minute introduction/summary, including any anticipated interaction with BIL projects/initiatives to help extend

- that BIL conversation. She noted that pictures would be beneficial and engaging, and mentioned the importance of stressing time constraints.
- Danielle Kreeger recommended also giving all SC members a minute each to share with the staff what they see as top issues or priorities in the near future, as well as preserving a little time for Q&A so this can be a two-way conversation.
  - The TREB will soon be sent out to the EIC for review, but the final product will not be done in time for the SC meeting. A brief update can probably be provided at that time.
  - Irene suggested highlighting the effort to create a cohort of leaders from underserved communities within the Urban Waters cities and the allocation of funding to sponsor their Summit attendance.
  - Cathy Magliocchetti noted that, in the age of engaging virtually, tools like polls and bubble clouds can be used to collect sentiments from a group and may boost engagement.
  - If anyone thinks of any other items for the SC meeting let Kathy or Haley know. At the next EIC meeting we will firm up the SC agenda and send out briefing packets soon after.

### **DELEP Agreement Update**

- The EIC spent much of last year creating the new DELEP agreement, and everyone, including PA, agreed that it was satisfactory. Then when it came time to sign it, everyone signed except for PA, who eventually said that they could not sign in that format, it would need to be a Letter of Understanding (LOU). Given the questions that the proposed LOU raised, such as to whom to address the letter, who it would be from, whose letterhead is on it, etc., it was determined that legal representatives from each partner agencies should meet to work out these issues. Because the holdup was in PA, PADEP was going to coordinate and lead this meeting. Staffing changes at PADEP contributed to a delay in this coordination.
- Sue Weaver said that PA's general counsel will be out of office for the foreseeable future, but that regional counsel will now be involved at some level. She said that because of the PA governor's race in November and an administration change in January, she is not sure how efficiently we could get comment or involvement from their attorneys. Sue expressed concerns about whether she or PA's regional counsel would have the capacity to coordinate this call and said that she would have to speak with her supervisor about what the timeline might look like. She will get back to the EIC with what she is able to find out.

### **Partner Updates**

- Rachael Phillos said that there are a lot of things happening and new grant opportunities coming up. She congratulated PDE for their success in the recent National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant process. She said that Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve (DNERR) also had a project funded, which will include restoration and reforestation of upland habitat at Blackbird Creek. Rachael also noted that Delaware submitted to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for some BIL opportunities, and will know soon if they will be able to submit full proposals. Rachael provided a DNREC staffing update as well: Kari St. Laurent, a member of the Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), will be moving on to NOAA; her last day with DNREC is Sept 9.
- Cathy M. shared that in November EPA 3 will host a climate summit workshop. A "Save the Date" will be sent out next week. EPA Region 3 will preview their climate adaptation plan and invite partners to talk about their own plans.
- Chad said that he was in a meeting earlier in the morning about the dry conditions in the Basin. Most of the Basin states have issued some kind of drought warning. Commissioners are preparing for some type of action in October, as the trends are not looking good. The salt front is moving up, and is now near the PA/DE state line. Chad also said that DRBC's Water Quality Advisory Committee is working at a fast pace and doing a lot of good work around D.O. He shared the following links in the chat: [Analysis of Attainability Progress Update](#); [Snapshot for Flow and Drought Management in the Delaware River Basin](#) . Kathy also congratulated Chad and DRBC for their Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund grant (DWCF).

- Kathy shared that PDE had submitted four grant proposals to NFWF and that three were funded, one through DRRF and two from the DWCF. PDE is also a partner on two USFWS projects that were funded. Kathy said that the proposal that was not funded was for the hatchery, which is disappointing. NFWF told her that there was not much appetite to fund capital projects.
  - PDE currently has another proposal in for the hatchery with PA Growing Greener, and is working on another with Bartram's for over \$6M through NOAA. It is important to keep seeking money for the hatchery, as we are getting grants for projects for which we will need the hatchery/mussels.
  - Irene asked if Long Island Sound could be a potential partner or recipient of the mussels, since they are a large program with a lot of funding. She offered to help initiate a conversation between PDE and Mark Tedesco at Long Island Sound.
- Kathy reminded everyone that PDE is taking over leadership of the Water Table Project from DVRPC. PDE was invited to submit a proposal to the William Penn Foundation to help fund this, and, as directed by Nate Boon, is requesting \$200K that would be used over a 36 month period. We are hopeful a grant will be approved and, along with additional funding from BIL, the project will continue.
- The Experience the Estuary celebration planning continues. Invitations were sent out via paperless post last week, and next week an e-blast will be sent out to PDE's full email list. Kathy said that they are currently ahead in sponsorship as compared to last year, which is great especially considering some adjustments were made to sponsorship pricing to accommodate the 18% increase in costs at the event venue.
- Planning is also underway for PDE's Science and Environmental Summit. The abstract deadline will be extended by a week, and some sponsorship responses are starting to come in. Yesterday we confirmed Catrin Einhorn from the New York Times as a keynote speaker; she works at the Times' climate desk and is focused on biodiversity. PDE is also working closely with DRBC on the climate forum that will take place at Summit.
- Haley reported that she and Ellie Rothermel are currently inputting information into NEPORT, and she thanked those partners that provided project data. The first deadline is Friday, September 9, and Haley said that they are on track and hope to have many projects submitted before then.

### **Action Items**

- Kathy will reach out to Kelly and Will to set up a time for the DELEP 101/Intro to PDE presentation.
- Once all SC approval is received, PDE will pull finalize the BIL Year 1 & 2 work plan and submit it to EPA by the end of September.
- Kathy will ask staff to hold some time on the day of the SC meeting and provide instructions for preparing their introductions/summaries.
- EIC members will notify Kathy or Haley with any additional SC meeting agenda ideas or requests.
- Sue Weaver will discuss the coordination of DELEP Agreement legal meeting with her supervisor and share a timeline when one is available.
- Irene will assist Kathy and Danielle to start a conversation with Long Island Sound about the hatchery.

### **Upcoming/Important Dates:**

- October monthly EIC meeting: Thursday October 6, 2022, 10am-12pm
- Annual Joint STAC/EIC Meeting: Wednesday, October 19, 2022, 10am-2pm
- [Delaware River Festival](#) (Philadelphia and Camden): Saturday, September 24, 2022
- [Delaware River Festival Chester](#) event: Saturday, October 1, 2022
- [Experience the Estuary Celebration](#): Thursday, October 13, 2022
- Fall DELEP Steering Committee Meeting: Tuesday, November 1, 2pm-4pm
- [Delaware Estuary Science & Environmental Summit](#): January 30-February 1, 2023