

Monthly Estuary Implementation Committee (EIC) Call  
Thursday, January 7<sup>th</sup> 10:00am – 12:00pm

**Call Participants:** Kathy Klein, PDE; Emily Baumbach, PDE; Kelly Somers, EPAR3; Chad Pindar, DRBC; Kimberly Cole, DNREC; Danielle Kreeger, PDE; Rhonda Manning; Kelly Anderson, PWD; Jay Springer, NJDEP; Megan Mackey, EPAR3; Elizabeth Butler, EPAR2, Catherine Magliocchetti, EPAR3; Irene Purdy, EPAR2

## 1. Discuss topics for DELEP Steering Committee Summit Panel

- D. Kreeger provided Science & Environmental Summit updates:
  - So far, about 70 people have registered already for the Summit
  - We are completely full in terms of oral presentations and we have lots of poster abstracts
  - Day 2 will include DRBC's special sessions on climate change
  - Kelsey Leonard (representing the Shinnecock Indian Nation as the Tribal Co-Lead on the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body of the U.S. National Ocean Council) agreed to be a keynote speaker
  - Kathy will be leading special 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Panel with Steering Committee members on March 3rd Wednesday
  - The panel will be followed by a DEIJ-related panel as well as youth and next generation discussions
  - We will still have regular sessions, including water quality and quantity, living resources, a special oyster panel
  - Only about half the number of presentations we usually have, and our budget for this is well under half what we normally have allocated for costs
  - We're hoping the upside of online is we can attract people who normally can't travel and can't afford the usual price
  - Asking for STAC, EIC and Board to help with introducing speakers and moderating some of the Summit sessions in addition to PDE staff helping out
  - Going to use Zoom webinar hosted by Sched since we've heard positive feedback about it
  - Sarah Bouboulis at PDE is the main coordinator for the Summit
  - All presentations will be recorded and only paid registrants will have access to the content after the meeting
  - There will be open source posting of content following the summit
  - The Summit is a service we provide on behalf of the Estuary Program to our watershed and beyond
- Kathy Klein: We had a goal of \$15,000 in sponsorship and we are up to about \$25,000 now
  - Registration is still open: <https://www.delawareestuary.org/news-and-events/delaware-estuary-science-and-environmental-summit/>
- K. Klein: We've heard back from Steve Tambini and Javier Laureano for participating in the Steering Committee panel at the Summit
  - Some questions we thought of asking the Steering Committee were:
    - What have been the biggest challenges and/or accomplishments over the last 25 years
    - What is the role that DELEP can play looking ahead at future challenges?
- Rhonda Manning: Did PADEP put in for sponsorship yet? Not sure if anyone has reached out to Coastal Programs yet

- K. Klein: Yes, Coastal Program has been talking to Elizabeth here at PDE so it's in the works
- R. Manning: No one can go since we are in a spending freeze
  - With the sponsorship, we should be able to send a few people
- D. Kreeger: Day 1 of the Summit will kick off with the plenary speaker, Day 2 will focus on climate change, and Day 3 we wanted to look back on previous accomplishments and then look ahead and flow into young professionals and young voices to close out the meeting
- D. Kreeger: Another thought for the Steering Committee is how will we fund all of this work?
  - There's a huge amount of items in the CCMP with huge price tags
- Kelly Anderson: That's a great idea - all of the big-ticket items in CCMP are around infrastructure investments that need to be made
  - The money is going to have to come from somewhere
  - As a utility, we look to the federal government and state agencies, so it would be great to hear perspective about funding opportunities for infrastructure investments
  - Climate change will have to be factored into this as well
- Kim Cole (via Zoom chat): What are common misconceptions people have about the Estuary? How can we combat these misconceptions and communicate more effectively? Opportunities with the new administration to further advance work in the estuary
- Jay Springer: We've had reorganizations around climate change and serious conversations about how we going to pay to implement the changes needed and we don't really have the answers to that yet
- Cathy Magliocchetti: Since the second day is devoted to climate change, do you see the Steering Committee panel discussion following up on climate change concepts talked about on day 2?
- D. Kreeger: I would think that Steering Committee or EIC members could use information to weave into their comments, but I don't think we should try to control that directly to into the questions for the panel
  - The climate forum will be a mix of speakers from the climate change committee
    - Any abstracts submitted that picked climate change were provided to DRBC to choose for their climate forum
- K. Klein: I'm sure climate change will come up during the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary panel, but this session is more about thinking about how far we've come, where we are going in the future, and how to pay to get this work done
  - I think these are three good challenge questions for this panel
  - As soon as we find out which agencies can participate, this will help us to figure out the format for the session
- C. Magliocchetti: -From EPAR3, Cathy Libertz is tentatively scheduled from EPA for the Steering Committee panel
  - After talking to Megan about this more, we think one of the programs that PDE has promoted over the last year is community outreach and environmental justice (EJ), so that might be a good area for the Steering Committee to talk about as well looking into the future
  - PDE has made strides in bringing EJ into the fold and the audience might be interested in that
- K. Klein: Maybe rather than under the lens of PDE, but of DELEP with the CCMP Commitment to Diversity and EJ, the panelists could discuss how we are working to make that part of the fabric of everything we do
- Chad Pindar: In the CCMP, there are certain champions for different initiatives

- I'm wondering if we are in a position to identify some of the things that do not yet have a champion how we can identify leads on areas that are not making progress
  - Could ask the question, if there was additional funding for what we can't do now, what would we do with it?
- J. Springer: Can help give the Steering Committee the opportunity to discuss what those priorities would be and then help DELEP to pursue those activities
  - Bruce Friedman has the panel on this calendar
- K. Klein: How far out does the Steering Committee need these questions?
- EIC members requesting as soon as possible and will need to have questions at least one month before the event at the latest
- K. Klein: I will get back to the Steering Committee and EIC about final challenge questions for the panel and about how many registrants partners get with the sponsorship and Steering Committee registration for the panel

## 2. DELEP Agreement discussion and next steps

- K. Klein: We wanted to talk about some next steps on the DELEP Agreement to have something for them to review and then approve during the fall Steering Committee meeting
  - Who on the EIC now was involved in the last DELEP Agreement update and what did that process look like?
- I. Purdy: I worked with Megan to spearhead the last one
  - We had a form that we would send out to folks with questions that came up during the meeting
  - People put their responses in the notes and added it to the draft document
  - The group was copied in the email to see all the changes
  - It was a very iterative and transparent process
- J. Springer: There was some herding of cats since there were so many levels within the entities that wanted to review the Agreement, including the Governor's Office
  - The process should go a little smoother this time around since this is a more recent document
- I. Purdy: We have changes in administration so we will need to have briefings on why we are asking people to sign off on a document with a nonprofit
  - We did have some conference calls to run through the document during the last Agreement, but the update should be easier this time
- J. Springer: We could just use Sharepoint or One Drive to help pass it back and forth
  - Having one site where it is might make the process go faster too
- Megan Mackey: It was the additional portions of the process that took the most time where new information was added since the Steering Committee had to review those new sections closely
  - This is something we've already agreed to in the past now so it should be smoother this time without any major changes
- K. Klein: Would EPA be willing to take the lead on steering this agreement again?
- Group agrees that Irene and Megan to take the lead on DELEP Agreement again with Emily at PDE to help facilitate the process
  - Can look at utilizing the Sharepoint site again for reviewing and editing documents
- K. Anderson (via Zoom chat): Who is the Deputy Regional Administrator for EPA R3?
  - Kelly Somers: Diana Esher

### 3. Discuss possible ways for re-engagement of stakeholders and the general public in the Estuary (CCMP Tracking, involvement, etc.)

- K. Klein: One of the biggest changes in this watershed from back when I was the Director for the first time was that there wasn't as much competition for funding.
  - Everyone feels very stretched these days with so many plans, programs
  - We used to have the Public Participation Implementation Team (PPIT)
  - The focus of PDE for first 7 years was really on education and outreach
  - We also had a great mini-grant program where we gave out money to organizations for projects
  - Some of the other NEPs have a lot more funding than just the NEP funding and have been able to engage a lot of other partners to be actively involved on committees
  - We could probably hire a fulltime person just to stay on top of everything that's going on in the Estuary for reporting, but it's not just realistic for us to do that
- Elizabeth Butler: Having Emily at PDE also serving as the Urban Waters Ambassador along with those efforts, it might be good to work with the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary Program's Outreach Coordinator, Liz Balladares
  - They've had a lot of sessions focused on equity, diversity, and engagement and ways to get more people involved
  - link to the recorded sessions from the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary's conference - Reflecting Our Community: <https://www.hudsonriver.org/article/reflecting-our-community>
- K. Klein: We've formed an internal team at PDE to take a deeper dive to look at DEI and are thinking that instead of using money to hire a consultant to do conduct another DEI training, we could use some of the money to work with some organizations working in this space
  - There are so many organizations that have worked with communities and have lessons learned
  - We could use the money to invite a targeted number of organizations to do presentations for us and pay them for the presentations
  - This might be a way to help start building some more relationships
- J. Springer: I remember back when we had the PPIT and a robust mini grants program, we were able to engage with really diverse groups
- M. Mackey – Going back to CCMP tracking, to see what we've received from reporting and from whom and if we feel like it's truly showing progress on implementation, that might help us to target who we need more information from and give us a sense of where to target those types of opportunities
- C. Pindar: One additional thought on where we think funding is coming from and for reporting on grants and say what actions in the CCMP the project covers wouldn't take too much
  - Maybe something in the revised agreement could be that the partners make a commitment to this
  - Maybe we want to include something like this in the 2022 workplan too
- M. Mackey: Do folks know why PDE chose not to continue with the small grants program?
- K. Klein: I think the cost was increasing to manage the program and reallocate the distribution of the funds
- D. Kreeger: Our staff was growing and other grants were coming in to grow other program areas at the time
  - The budget was so level-funded for so long, and we had to make decisions on what programs we were going to keep and grow
  - At the time, it felt like it had run its course since there were so many other programs

- We also didn't have a science staff back then either that needed support
  - PDE started being able to generate our own data and regional restoration initiatives instead of giving the money out
- J. Springer: DRBC was running the Estuary Program at that time as well
  - When PDE's role changed and expanded, some of those things didn't take precedence
- K. Klein: As we take a deeper dive into CCMP tracking, there might be some funding we want to put aside for the way that we are doing it for the online presence of it
  - I think it's something that we could consider to help benefit the program to help tell our story and make sure we are getting the information that we need and present in a way that's compelling and that we learn from
  - If we're collecting this information just to report back to ourselves, how are we telling those stories to other people in the watershed and potential funders?
  - Work needs to be more purposeful and use it as a calling card
  - This also gets to the point of what is in it for other organizations to help us with CCMP reporting?
- I. Purdy: We need to show that we are getting to our goals
  - Once we are confident in the information, we can look at how it is moving forward
- J. Springer: Giving other organizations money to help those partnerships is always helpful to start building those relationships
- K. Cole: Money is key because it's that holistic sharing of Estuary Program progress and we are giving folks money to do the work so that we can get more money to keep supporting the work
  - Just asking for information for reporting isn't enough
  - We also don't want it to seem like we are in competition with other NGOs to do good work in this region and have to consider that when making asks

#### **4. Steering Committee agenda items for spring call**

- K. Klein: We need to work on scheduling the spring meeting in April or May
  - Others here have been more involved with the Steering Committee meetings, so what is normally reviewed at the spring meeting?
- I. Purdy: At this meeting, PDE usually gives an overview of what's in the workplan
  - We want to give time for discussion about the workplan and allow that time
  - If there are any tweaks, if there will be a turnaround time on that for Steering Committee input
  - If PDE has any questions about some funding going one way or the other on something, maybe you could use some Steering Committee input on it
  - We will need to give briefings on the workplan and budget ahead of the meeting
- K. Klein: With the money we have in the budget, there isn't a lot of wiggle room, but maybe with this additional NEP funding we can engage the Steering Committee
- I. Purdy: It would be helpful for you to provide some background material on this for our briefings
- C. Pindar: For the next significant round of grant applications if you have grant concepts, could ask the Steering Committee what is the priority on grant concepts that you should be pursuing?
  - Ask the Steering Committee what projects do they envision DELEP pursuing
- K. Cole: I agree with Chad's idea that it would be challenging, but you could bring in more partners from the Steering Committee and their agencies to get involved in this discussion
- K. Klein: We would have to fundamentally rethink how we handle our grant writing
  - We need to sit down as a staff and see where we have needs and match available etc.

- We need to work on being more proactive instead of being so reactive on our grant writing and what funding we go after

## 5. NEP funding authorization for CCMP implementation (NEP budget increased to \$700,000 per NEP)

- K. Klein: There was an attempt with recent legislation to get the Estuary Program reauthorized
  - The NEP directors received email from Rich Innes saying that congress approved House Bill 4044
  - It went to the president to reauthorize NEP funding to \$50 million at almost \$1 million for each NEP
  - Authorizing and appropriating are two different things, so would allow up to that much but doesn't mean each NEP would get that much funding
  - There's also Geographic Programs funding where funding was given out to San Francisco Bay program at almost \$9 million dollars, Puget Sound at over \$33 million, as well as Long Island Sound at over \$30 million
  - My understanding is that this money goes to EPA regions where these programs are and then is distributed
  - I feel like now is a good time to look at seeing if we can get one of these geographic line items in the future since the president will be from our watershed
  - We can't use NEP funds to do this type of work to get more funding and hire someone to help us in DC and help lead the process, so we might look into how we can fund that effort
- Kelly Anderson: We are in the process of getting our legislative agendas up to speed, so we are happy to help
- M. Mackey: We can see on the EPA side how the geographic programs were identified
  - In some cases, some are to support to the NEP while some are separate from the NEP
- K. Klein: I think it's worth it to see if it's something we want to pursue
- L. Butler: PDE should talk to Rob Pirani at HEP to see what you can do to get some more money
- D. Kreeger: At the fall 2019 Steering Committee meeting we talked about the Science and Restoration Trust for the Delaware Estuary and reviewed that it would cost nearly \$100 million per year to implement everything in the CCMP
  - I feel like the Estuary Program should have the greatest prominence and traction with the decision-makers in our watershed
  - We don't have the political pull and the funding backing us that the Chesapeake Bay Program has
- I. Purdy: Is there a roadmap or visual for people to see and understand the different options to help focus the steering committee on PDE and Estuary Program priorities?
  - An outline of here's what we know or what we don't know
  - Seems very nebulous, but need to know where we've been and where we are going
- D. Kreeger: We did prepare a concept document on the trust concept for the Steering Committee meeting last year in November
  - The next step for the trust is to get a \$10,000-\$20,000 grant for foundation forming grants to help put a business plan together for funding opportunities

## 6. Monitoring Plan update and EIC review

- E. Baumbach: We've talked a bit with the STAC and MACC at the last few meetings on next steps for this monitoring report, so we wanted to remind the EIC about the Delaware Estuary Monitoring Report

- There is a Monitoring Approach section in the 2019 CCMP that outlines how we will assess critical monitoring activities across region
- The goals of this approach are to establish a baseline monitoring inventory for reassessment, and create a vetted list of future monitoring priorities
- Some of the activities outlined in this approach include continuing to hold the joint annual STAC-MACC meetings for sharing activities and updates, the Technical Report for the Delaware Estuary every 5 years, and through a monitoring workshop every 5 years to review current monitoring programs, identify gaps, and help prioritize future efforts
- We had a monitoring workshop back in October 2018, a post-workshop survey to gather additional feedback, and put together a baseline monitoring inventory
- The final step is to put together a completed monitoring report which includes an overall assessment and evaluation of these summary reports from the workshops and post workshop survey data, and also conducting a gap analysis to review the previous monitoring summary reports against CCMP strategies and TREB indicators to come out with a list of future monitoring priorities
- We're also going to incorporate feedback received from the STAC over the summer on ranking TREB and CCMP priorities that Kristin Regan STAC chair has been leading
- This final monitoring report is a requirement for EPA as part of the CCMP revision process
  - It's due three years from the revision of the CCMP which is beginning of 2022, but we are aiming to have this completed before that.
- A draft will be shared with STAC, MACC, and EIC for initial review
- We will review edits and make any necessary changes, and then recirculate and share with the Steering Committee since this is a CCMP document and needs their approval
- K. Klein: We will want to have this on the agenda for the fall Steering Committee in 2021 for their review