

Monthly Estuary Implementation Call

Thursday, August 13th 10:00am – 12:00pm

Attendees: Kim Cole, DNREC; Emily Baumbach, PDE; Kathy Klein, PDE; Danielle Kreeger, PDE; Chad Pindar, DRBC; Catherine Magliochetti, EPAR3; Jay Springer, NJDEP; Kelly Anderson, PWD; Megan Mackey, EPAR3; Rhonda Manning, PADEP; Kelly Somers, EPAR3; Irene Purdy, EPAR2

1. October 8th EIC Call - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) Training by Kohn Strategies for EIC members

- Emily Baumbach: We are going to use our October EIC call on October 8th for the EIC Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) training with Nancy Kohn of Kohn strategies.
 - We're conducting a series of three trainings with the consultant - one for PDE staff, one for the PDE Board, and one for the EIC and the Steering Committee
 - Feel free to invite your Steering Committee representative to the training if they are available (we will send an email to the Steering Committee as well)
 - The Kohn Strategies proposal was attached to the email that went out for this meeting
 - The training will take place during the regular call time - two hours on October 8th from 10:00am - 12:00pm
 - The training will cover a variety of topics, including some team building activities, exploration of class, race, and gender through a historical context, explore language including diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, bias, and privilege, and discuss from next steps for PDE and DELEP
 - There will be some materials to review prior to the training that will be provided by PDE or Nancy Kohn

2. Draft Poll for November DELEP Steering Committee Meeting

- E. Baumbach: We're going to send a Doodle out to the Steering Committee for the November meeting and wanted to check in with the EIC on the dates first before sending out
 - We're polling for morning and afternoon timeslots for 2.5 hour meeting 9:30 – noon and 1 – 3:30 on several dates in November
- Chad Pindar: We have a meeting on November 12th
- E. Baumbach: We can take out the 12th and poll for November 5th, 6th, 9th, 10th, 13th, 16th, 17th, 18th, and the 20th
 - We will copy the EIC in that email to the Steering Committee

3. PDE Strategic Planning Update

- Kathy Klein: Survey respondents all provided very rich information in their responses
 - We're trying to organize the feedback into different bins right now
 - What jumped out for most people was the PDE's role in facilitating collaboration and partnerships
 - That's the one takeaway and a strength area where PDE could do more moving forward
 - We are working with a consultant to see where programmatic activities fall under certain areas that we can then flesh out with the staff to establish metrics that we will work to achieve

- Something PDE explored during last strategic plan is if PDE's name the right name
 - Is the 'Partnership for the Delaware Estuary' an easy name for people to understand, or is it a barrier?
- In the last strategic plan, there was some market research done
 - The consultant at that time said PDE was not the best name since it's not very clear and it's a long name
- The general public does not know what an estuary is
- A decision was made to still stick with the current name for some reason
- I think we need to look back on the consultant's report and revisit this
- I hope we can have a discussion about this at the September Board meeting
- There will be associated costs for name changes that will still need to be evaluated
- This is an opportunity for PDE right now, especially since we are about to have our 25th anniversary and are looking at what we want to be as an organization looking ahead
- We're not quite as far along in the strategic planning process as we thought we'd be at this point, but we are still on track to get it done this year
- We are very thankful for everyone who filled the strategic planning survey
- The form was sent out to Staff, Board, and DELEP partners (EIC and SC) as well as a list of other close partners of PDE
- We will share the results back out once the feedback is a bit more organized
- Jay Springer: The Stoney Brook-Millstone Watershed Association changed their name to the Watershed Institute
 - It was a big change at first, but it just became normalized after while
 - If you come up with the right name and that steers what you do and defines the organization, I don't think that would be a problem
- K. Klein: A few other organizations have recently changed their name in this watershed to be more understanding with the public
 - People know what the river and bay is more much more than they understand what an estuary is
 - If you have a confusing name that takes a lot of explaining, you lose the interest of the listener
- Kim Cole: We've had a hard time with the name Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve (DNERR) and have tried to make a connection through a sense of place
 - The term estuarine is tricky, and some people think it's equestrienne and related to horses
 - Rather than labeling the sites as DNERR, we say 'St. Jones' or 'Black Bird Creek' so that people can easily know the location rather than using a long name with complex words
- Irene Purdy: After all these years of outreach and education around what an estuary is, you would think people would start to catch on eventually but this has not really been the case
 - When Kathy used the terms river and bay just now, it had a much different feel and might be easier for people to understand and relate to
- Danielle Kreeger: The estuary is defined as a tidally influenced mixing zone of fresh and salt water
 - The textbook definition of an estuary confines us to a specific geographic region
 - I've always felt that it would be a huge lift to change PDE's name, but we also don't want to limit ourselves to a smaller geographic area
 - Further up in the watershed, there are hundreds of organizations already doing work, and there is a greater need for coordination in some areas more than others
- K. Klein: PDE's name has been a huge obstacle for us in many ways

- It's been difficult with fundraising when you ask people to give money to the Delaware Estuary, but then people don't understand what an estuary is
 - This knowledge gap isn't going to improve unless we change the name and make a connection to people upstream that there is a bay in addition to a river
 - Maybe we could go to a foundation to get money to help support changing the name since there would be a cost involved in this effort
- Catherine Magliochetti: I think you are on the right track with looking into changing the name of PDE and should at least explore the idea
- I. Purdy: There's always some chaos and discomfort with changing a name, but there could be some long-term benefits and connections to more people this way
- Kelly Anderson: We've talked about this idea at meetings in the past, and I think it makes sense to seriously explore the idea again
- Megan Mackey: Changing the name of PDE has been a topic of discussion multiple times over the past several years during meetings
 - This idea of changing the name was explored in depth, but was then backed off for some reason

4. CCMP Tracking Update - your agency partners can upload their projects on the Google Form [HERE](#) (deadline is Friday, Sept. 4th)

- E. Baumbach: As a reminder, the CCMP Tracking Google Form was sent out several weeks ago to collect projects for this year to 460 contacts
 - We sent out a reminder email last week and will send a few more emails before the deadline
 - The Summer issue of Estuary News that just went out has a call for projects with a list of the prizes in a story in the newsletter
 - The Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed included a short message about CCMP reporting in their newsletter as well
 - Feel free to share information about CCMP tracking and the Google Form links with any email listserves, online blogs, etc.
 - The deadline is Friday, September 4th, so we still have a few weeks
 - We haven't received too many projects yet since it's still a bit early
 - We have submissions from EPAR2, DNREC, Schuylkill Headwaters Association, Schuylkill River Restoration Fund, and Chester Ridley Crum Water Association
 - I'll get out probably two more reminder emails or so over the next few weeks
- K. Anderson – PWD will work to incorporate more CCMP information this year
 - Marc Cammarata made the point at the last Steering Committee meeting that other areas of PWD work should be incorporated in CCMP tracking
- I. Purdy: We've been working with specific staff to identify projects related to the CCMP (water quality, social media, brownfields, environmental justice, resiliency, climate change)
 - We've been sending additional emails to individuals and trying our best to explain the CCMP and the process so that it's easy for people not familiar with the DELEP and CCMP to help with reporting
 - We are also trying to explain to folks that it's not that big of an ask to fill out the sheets
 - I put a one pager together, called out CCMP strategies for folks in EPAR2, and identifies the agency contacts best for specific strategies
 - We also updated the excel sheets put together from last year

- C. Magliochetti: EPAR3 is also taking a similar approach to reaching out to staff for CCMP strategies for reporting this year

5. Annual Joint STAC and EIC meeting - *please hold Wednesday, October 28th*

- E. Baumbach: We sent a calendar invitation out and have a hold on October 28th from 9:30am – 2:30pm for the joint STAC and EIC meeting
 - We will finalize the time when we get closer to the date

6. EIC Partner Updates

- K. Klein: I recently sent an email out to our partners with some PDE updates
 - Link to a new video that wetlands staff put together that explains what an estuary is
 - The most recent Estuary News Newsletter just went out virtually and printed
 - Flooding took place at the Fairmount Waterworks (FWW) has impacted the hatchery
 - There's a delay with building the hatchery at Bartram's Garden since PENNVEST informed us that no more work can be done on the RFP until the lease arrangement with the city of Philadelphia is finalized
 - We received 7 requests for the letters of acknowledgement for the Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) grant program
 - PDE submitted 3 proposals ourselves
 - There's only \$1.4 million for whole country, so will be interested to see who they request proposals from
 - They might only choose one from each NEP study area
 - Thanks to everyone who submitted comments on DRBCA collaborative governance framework and bylaws
 - Dates for the Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed Forum are September 14-17th
- E. Baumbach: The Urban Waters partnership has continued to hold monthly planning calls with the federal leads, including PDE, EPA, NOAA, USDA Forest Service, and USFWS
 - There will be an online session or webinar series focused on Urban Waters efforts for the Delaware River location in the fall, specifically on connecting urban youth to local waterways
 - The leads are also interested in convening a workgroup for expanding the Urban Bird Treaty Program to Wilmington, DE using the success of the program in Philadelphia as a model
 - We sent out a survey to the Urban Waters listserv to gather feedback from previous contacts to see how the partnership can add value to this location
- E. Baumbach: The freshwater mussel costume, Tidewater Mucket (*Leptodea ochracea*), that we've been working on with an artist is almost complete
 - The costume will be used at future outreach events to better engage with the public
 - We worked with our shellfish coordinator on this to confirm costume details and design
- D. Kreeger: PDE's role at the FWW hatchery is to design, operate, and assist with outreach
 - All losses will hopefully be covered by insurance
 - The water inside got up to 5 feet, there was lots of large woody debris onsite, the water flipped lots of equipment over as well
 - The good news is that this is a facility that was designed to flood
 - Electric wires and plumbing are all on the ceiling and unaffected
 - All material on shelves seemed to be unaffected as well

- The equipment for infested fish for mussels was damaged, and this is a \$15,000 piece of equipment
- The main motherboard was above the waterline, but UV light disinfecting units are all most likely ruined
- Electrical might take weeks to restore
- Danielle and Angela went in for preliminary assessment and make the area as safe as possible
- FWW is looking for people to come in and help a bit more with cleanup
- PDE has a few staff that can help out a little, but we are not sure how much workforce we can give without funding attached to our time, and we can't volunteer our time either
- The main exhibits are slightly higher, so they did not get as much water damage
- K. Anderson: The damage at FWW is so heartbreaking to see
 - We are trying to help out in any way that we can and possibly engage some PWD volunteers
 - FWW operates under a different unit since they are on the public affairs side
 - Unfortunately, there was not much cross-communication on this
 - We need to have some staff go in and help out with the damage
- D. Kreeger: There's been a lot of devastation around this area
 - Most places received 6-8 inches of water in a very short period of time
 - We haven't seen this much damage on Darby Creek since Hurricane Floyd in 1999
- K. Cole provided DNREC updates:
 - Wastewater, surface water, drinking water grants are open now through September 22
 - The Delaware Coastal Cleanup will take place for the whole month of September instead of just one day
 - We are encouraging people to clean up areas they live so that debris doesn't get into their waterways
 - National Estuaries Week is September 19 to 26
 - We are working with PDE on communication for Estuaries Week and are reaching out to Center for Inland Bays as well
 - For the Research Reserve Science Collaborative, DE is involved in three projects
 - These include detecting impacts of climate change across multiple scales, hurricane impacts, and transfer of low-cost tidal wetland monitoring system for change and restoration planning
 - The Reserve is holding a virtual federal evaluation in September
 - We lost our maintenance shop from downed trees at the Blackbird Creek Reserve from the storm
 - It was a record breaking tornado, an EF-2, and the longest tornado tract recorded in this area of over 29 miles
- C. Magliochetti provided EPA Region 3 updates:
 - Lori Reynolds recently retired and Karen Crumlish is now acting in her place
- Rhonda Manning provided PADEP updates:
 - For the Growing Greener grants program, we are working on finalizing the project details and the internal approval process
 - We had a small reorganization that resulted in some office sections moving over to align with PA's Chesapeake Bay Program Office
- J. Springer: Michele Putnam is retiring on September 1 with Pat Gardner in charge of the Water Supply program taking over for Michele
 - NJDEP is also going through a reorganization

- There will be a new watershed group for land use management
 - We are still not sure where the Estuary Program will be housed, but we will let everyone know when we find out
 - We are still recruiting for the New Jersey Watershed AmeriCorps Ambassadors for a 1-year term of service
 - You can view the posting under NJDEP employment opportunities and here: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/wms/bears/recruitment.htm>
 - We are trying to get someone to conduct a training for grant writing
- K. Klein: We can see if Karen would be available to do a session on grant writing
- K. Anderson provided PWD updates:
 - Philadelphia was decimated by the tropical storm last week, so we are working with a number of Philadelphia communities near waterways that had significant storm damage
 - PWD was involved with the mooring of the dredge barge became unmoored
 - The Army Corps of Engineers is one of the contractors for mooring regulations and is conducting an investigation on how the equipment became unmoored
 - The barge was moored downstream of the Fairmount Dam and upstream of the 676 bridge.
 - The Delaware Riverkeeper Network has been petitioning to change secondary use of the Delaware River to primary use in Zones 3 and 4
 - PWD has been working on messaging around this and put out a position statement on the no swimming policy in Philadelphia waters on maintaining secondary contact
 - This issue is very estuary-centric and involving many of our regional partners
 - You can view PWD's statement here: <https://www.phila.gov/water/sustainability/protectingwaterways/Pages/recreation.aspx>
- I. Purdy provided EPA Region 2 updates:
 - Javier Laureano continues to be is very interested in incorporating environmental justice
 - There was a water division meeting earlier this week that focused on racism
 - There was some great discussion during this session, and really opened up a safe space for dialogue
 - We will be holding future seminars, workshops, and virtual discussions on environmental justice
- Chad Pindar provided DRBC updates:
 - The Water Quality Advisory Committee met on Monday
 - There was a comment deadline for a Kleinfelder engineering report reviewing the costs for nutrient removal
 - A new advisory committee for climate change met for the first time last week
 - Notes and presentations from that meeting will be up on the DRBC website soon
 - Next week we are starting a voluntary back to work policy and limiting the office to 25% capacity (~8 people max)
 - DRBC is taking certain precautions for fieldwork right now
 - This is the first year that we don't have a dataset for the Boat Run data
 - We are going to try to get some data for this summer
- D. Kreeger provided PDE science updates:
 - Fortunately, PDE has been able to do conduct most of our fieldwork this year, but no lab work
 - A lot of our living shoreline work, freshwater mussel restoration fieldwork, and MACWA assessments have been happening

- There have been some setbacks due to the need of using boats and some access issues
 - We are continuing to follow a modified field safety plan to maintain social distance, daily certification forms that staff need to submit the day before and get approved by supervisor
 - We can't afford to lose the field days to get the work for some of these projects done since a bulk of this work pays for of our staff time
 - Everyone has to take their own vehicles to get to sites for fieldwork, so we need to make sure we have the travel funds for everyone
 - Have done a little work with the Rutgers Haskin Lab boat with a max of four people able to socially distance
- K. Cole: We've postponed all boat-related fieldwork because we can't maintain six feet apart on a small skiff
 - NOAA has been pretty good about understanding the need to shift some projects around, so we are creating some alternative deliverables to deal with fact that we can't collect some data out in the field during this time
- D. Kreeger: We are still not conducting any lab work since labs and equipment are at Drexel and all PDE badges are still deactivated
 - To acquire lab access, there's a rigorous training involved
 - Playing into strategic planning for PDE, we need to have lab space outside of Drexel
 - The hatchery at Bartram's Garden will eventually have lab space, but we might need to explore some other options on the short term
- K. Klein: PDE made decision to not have a Science Summit in person next year, but we will most likely have a virtual conference in January 2021
 - We are waiting to review some budget numbers to see what it would look like for us to hold a virtual event like this
 - We've learned a lot about virtual meetings through the PDE webinar series, and it takes lots of planning time to hold virtual events like this.
 - PDE will send out save the dates for the summit once the plans are finalized
- K. Klein: We wanted to thank Megan Mackey for helping us with the work plan process and grant application that was approved in record time this year
 - We are trying to hold off spending until January 1 if possible (the money is awarded on the fiscal year, but PDE tries to spend it on the calendar year)
- D. Kreeger: Historically, the Science Summit was largely unreachable by many audiences like students since it's an expensive event, and other agencies have travel restrictions
 - Holding a virtual event gives us the opportunity to engage with other audiences
 - We still need to look at how to do sponsorship and what type of entry fee to charge for a virtual summit
 - Some program elements for the summit will include regular 15 minute presentations, lightning talks, plenary speakers, and some special workshops or special programming tracts that are sponsored or funded in some way
 - At previous Summits, we've had a living shoreline workshop and a NJDEP coastal resiliency workshop
 - If you see a need for a workshop and an advantage to linking work into a session at the Summit, let us know
 - We could have a session on Environmental Justice, Urban Waters, or how can we engage Environmental Justice community leaders, private sector, students, etc.
 - Jan 25-27 are the dates on hold for the Summit right now