



Science and Technical Advisory Committee
Delaware Estuary Program
www.DelawareEstuary.org

STAC Meeting (Number 52)

Wednesday, April 29, 2020
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

****Remote Meeting Format - Hosted by the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary****

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/983140512?pwd=RzNVRktvbWooYTlZrZVDcWJlMmVyZz09>

Meeting ID: 983-140-512 Meeting Password: 694705

STAC attendees:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <u>Chair:</u> Kristin Regan (EPA R3) | 14. Namsoo Suk (DRBC) |
| 2. <u>STAC Advisor:</u> Danielle Kreeger (PDE) | 15. Elizabeth Watson (Drexel) |
| 3. David Bushek (Rutgers) | 16. <u>ex officio:</u> Kathy Klein (PDE) |
| 4. Jeffrey Fischer (USGS) | |
| 5. Dorina Frizzera (GTR Ilc) | <u>Other attendees:</u> |
| 6. Kevin Hess (PADEP) | 17. LeeAnn Haaf (PDE-Zoom host) |
| 7. Susan Kilham (Drexel University) | 18. Emily Baumbach (PDE) |
| 8. Daphne Munroe (Rutgers) | 19. Douglas Janiec (Sovereign Consult) |
| 9. Alison Rogerson (DNREC) | 20. Megan Mackey (EPA R3) |
| 10. Peter Rowe (NJ SG) | 21. Joshua Moody (PDE) |
| 11. Kelly Somers (EPA R3) | 22. Elaine Panuccio (DRBC) |
| 12. Kari St. Laurent (DNERR) | 23. Marianne Walch (Center for the Inland Bays) |
| 13. Ken Strait (PSEG) | |

1:00 Call to Order & Introductions (15 minutes)

- Kristin Regan (STAC Chair) reviewed the agenda and initiated introductions

1:15 STAC Business (5 minutes)

- Kristin Regan asked for edits/approval of draft STAC minutes¹ from 1/15/20
- Motion to approve January minutes; seconded, small edit discussion—approved contingent on small edits

1:20 Roundtable Updates - COVID-19 and other News (40 minutes)

- Attendees shared info on how their entities and programs are being impacted
 - K. Regan – EPA R3 – field work on hold, HQ developing guidance to perform field work safely, but no timelines provided of yet; K. Somers added that EPA grant

- recipients to reach out to EPA representatives about disruptions or other issues, let KS or KR know if you need help connecting to the right people
- N. Suk – DRBC has been working remotely since 17 March, working well; fieldwork suspended (not accepting samples), including Boat Run; preparing for reopening but uncertain. Currently working on models, etc.
 - K. St. Laurent – DNREC Coastal Programs starting to develop guidance on how to perform fieldwork safely (with social distances); HSC surveys cancelled, except certain beaches; shorebird surveys will continue. Intern hosting may be shortened.
 - A. Rogerson – DNREC M&A – still trying to find ways to get fieldwork and grant deliverables done.
 - P. Rowe – NJ SG – Sandy Hook NP closed until end of May, not offering spring K-12 fieldtrip or other ed programs; June through fall – could be possibly to run programs; NOAA guidance for research, automatic extensions for awards.
 - E. Watson – ANS/Drexel – Drexel moved online as of March 14th, museums closed – support is limited by lack of visitors, ANS slightly less affected due to affiliation with Drexel. Moving into summer, guidance to minimize contact to work in buildings and develop other criteria to keep workers safe.
 - D. Bushek -- Haskin/Rutgers – Rutgers was closed for spring break and then went remote from then on (~14 Mar); facilities closed, although seasonal workers remain isolated at the Haskin Lab Dorm. Looking for exemptions to perform seasonal fieldwork; had to shut down industry seed productions at Cape May facility. Working with DEP to find alternative sources for seed. Working on guidance on how to bring workers back to facilities safety. Projects going well/moving forward: 1) new shellfish aquaculture project (NJSG+PEW grants) was launched to develop online GIS tool to identify areas to minimize conflicts in multi-use areas.
 - D. Kreeger – PDE— developed criteria for fieldwork approvals, especially ‘essential’ fieldwork (i.e., mussel broodstock maintenance); maintaining tight communication and sanitation protocols. No lab work due to Drexel buildings being closed; Concerns about grant funding—e.g. task swapping to accommodate inability to do lab work and some fieldwork—applying for extensions and looking for other economic support. K. Klein added that PDE has been doing its best to work with the situation, but ultimately will be impacted financially; happy to report PDE will get a Paycheck Protection Program loan (part of CARES Act) to help cover costs for a period of time; some contracts/funding may be cut, but in good shape right now.
 - DK later mentions PDE is on a hiring freeze.
 - K. Strait – PSEG – all non-essential work has been remote since ~16Mar. PSEG has workers testing positive in north NJ; attempting to reduce virus spread because essential workers arrive from all areas of the nation. Some field work is still going on, following safety guidance.

- D. Frizzera – GTR - been working on her garden and working online, mostly focusing on a project to improve habitat plantings with solar panel arrays.
- K. Hess – PA DEP CP—everyone working from home until 8 May, but perhaps will be extended, postponing workshops, making some virtual. Still issuing permits (about the same # as before transition to remote work).
- J. Fischer – USGS- state offices handling things differently, in NJ, doing fieldwork with precautions, but mostly everyone working from home.
- S. Kilham – Drexel – teaching online, biggest challenge is how to give exams online!
 - D Kreeger heard about Drexel Co-op losing their positions (who need the experience to graduate).
 - D. Bushek mentioned that their student workers/seasonal workers have a delayed start, faculty position delayed for 1 yr. Had to cancel NSF REU this year;
 - D. Munroe altered plans to incorporate ways to offer virtual internships/professional development moving forward. Additionally, mentioned that oyster harvesting has been proceeding at 30% capacity; fisheries are basically shut down unless processing can include freezing products. Farms trying to offer direct online sales, but market is a fraction of the size. She mentioned that bigger companies easily transitioned online, but smaller companies have been struggling (60% spoilage/refund rate). Oysters are growing too big from delayed harvests to be viable for the market (i.e. smaller oysters sell @ higher price for raw market).
 - P. Rowe mentioned that Lisa Calvo has been trying to find out how other states are handling these issues—searching for financial support to help the industry.
 - On chat, K. St. Laurent mentioned that Hollings Scholars were made virtual
 - D. Munroe – a Barnegat Bay shellfish workgroup is looking into whether farmed oysters that get too big might be repurposed for restoration efforts. She mentioned that there could be a role for PDE in this effort too.
 - DK: PDE has also discussed shellfish enhancement options like that as part of open NEP discussions about future projects, should additional stimulus funding materialize to support jobs. K. Klein mentioned that Stan Hales (Barnegat Bay Partnership) submitted an NEP oyster stimulus project concept that included PDE, but no specific funding has been earmarked.

2:00 STAC Charter Revision and Spring Elections (30 minutes)

- Kristin and Danielle solicited final edits to the draft revised STAC Charter²
 - Any final edits need to be submitted within the ****NEXT WEEK**** in order to get EIC review and approval at their upcoming meeting. This timing would also align well with STAC spring elections (since the new charter would allow for expansion of member number to 25).
 - DK summarized the main changes in the new STAC charter, noting that it has been 11 years since the last revisions!
 - Membership # increases from 21 to 25, would allow us to broaden diversity of expertise, geospatial coverage, sector coverage
 - Official creation of a ‘vice chair’ position
 - DK note that this discussion of any edits will be recorded, to facilitate post-meeting edits ****STARTED RECORDING****
 - *DK sharing screen of the draft charter*
 - K. Strait noted that the new draft requires the TREB every 5 years? This is a big commitment of resources and NEP guidance could change – so, should the Charter merely state that the STAC will facilitate state of estuary reporting to meet guidance and contingent on funding and capacity?
 - M. Mackey noted that the NEP’s are not obligated to do a big technical report, just some form of State of Estuary indicator report (every 5 years). So it is the prerogative of the STAC to weigh the value and costs of this technical report effort and to decide how much to invest each cycle.
 - DK reminded that for the 2017 TREB we had limited resources due to the costs of revising the CCMP. So we focused harder on updating sections that had new data since 2012, and we invested more effort on defining actions and needs to facilitate the CCMP revision. So the STAC has actually been adaptively managing TREB, tailored to the resources available.
 - D. Frizzera added that it’s vital that the public SOE report be grounded on freshest possible data, and the TREB stands out among other technical reports by its comprehensiveness and value for developing science-based products for the public like the SOE.
 - S. Kilham – an alternative approach might be to only do the full TREB every 10 years and do updates every 5 years for the SOE.
 - DK thanked everyone for this input, and noted that TREB is on the agenda for later in the meeting. *REVISIT THIS DISCUSSION LATER IN AGENDA.* DK added that if TREB happens in 2022, then we actually need to do half of the work in 2021, but COVID has introduced uncertainty.

- N. Suk – many organizations are stretched thin right now, so assessing commitment to TREB is difficult;
- K. Regan – for the charter, suggested rewording TREB mentio to be less committal.
 - Group Discussion – although some felt we should strive for full TREB every 5 years, the consensus was to change the draft charter to reword and remove discrete timeframe references.
- Regarding the summit, DK suggested changing “biennial” to “periodic,” given uncertainties regarding funding and also unforeseen challenges like the Covid pandemic.
 - MM says [COVID] presents very special circumstances, and the goal should be biennial; KS + PR agrees, keep biennial
- DK asked if anyone did not support increasing STAC membership from 21 to 25? [no]
- A. Rogerson suggested adding more details about the role of the vice chair since it is a new position. And what about conflicts of interest?
 - DK noted that these details can be addressed in the “Governance” section.
 - KS suggested that the “conflicts” issue can be addressed in the “Impartiality” section.
 - D. Janiec (via chat): suggested “In the absence or incapacity of the Chair, or in the event of a vacancy in the office of Chair, the Vice Chair, if one (or in the event there be more than one, the Vice Chair in the order designated by the Board of Directors, or, in the absence of such designation, then in the order of their election) shall have the powers and perform the duties of Chair. A Vice Chair shall also have such powers and perform such duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Board of Directors or by the Chair.” [DJ- taken from the PDE Board by-laws]
- D. Bushek also emailed DK suggested edits to this section on 4/29/2020 (confirmed via chat)
- Suggestion to clarify that ballots are to be emailed in late May and due 2nd week of June, notification by July 1st
 - Ballots to include Vice Chair, Chair, Membership
- N. Suk – in Section 1, suggested to remove the reference to EIC and DRBC coordination outside of NEP estuary focus area. After some discussion, DK suggested retaining that sentence but adding ‘as appropriate’ to allow flexibility. Discussion followed about NY

representation, which is coordinated via DRBC; KK suggested that we solicit candidate STAC members from NY in the future, to strengthen NY representation specific to the STAC.

- KS – agrees with KR earlier comments about taking out things that can easily change; specifically, take out location.
- DB – change paper ballots to electronic ballots.
- ****DK will** incorporate the new edits and email a new version after this meeting, and allow 1 week final review**. **KK will** then forward the draft charter to the EIC to allow ample time for EIC review before their meeting in 2 weeks.
- K. Regan called for a vote to accept the draft Charter, contingent on incorporating the agreed edits
 - KS made motion
 - DF seconded motion
 - vote: 0 objections, 0 abstentions, unanimous approval.
 - ****end of recording****
- Danielle summarized current STAC membership and status of new nominations (not due until 5/15/20)
 - So far, we have received 3 nominations for new members: Ron Hewitt (Exelon); Jason Morrison (Rutgers); Josh Moody (PDE); Doug Janiec (Sovereign)
 - We have lost or will be losing 3 current members (Jeff Fischer, Greg Breese, Dave Bushek)
 - If the charter is approved and we add 4 membership slots, we will therefore have 7 open positions to potentially fill. Are there any nominations from the floor?
 - Dave Bushek (via chat) suggested considering David Smith at USGS
 - Based on the expertise that is being lost or growing in importance, DK suggested that folks consider candidates with experience in water quality, finfish, geochemistry, and climate modeling
 - Send DK nominations to place on ballots by 5/15; DK will contact candidates explain STAC duties and to confirm willingness to serve

2:30 CCMP Monitoring Assessment Project (10 minutes)

- E. Baumbach summarized the revised plan for completion of the Monitoring Assessment White Paper that will serve as a CCMP appendix
- PDE still working on final monitoring report from efforts in 2018-2019 re: inventory development
- Near final stages, still need to accomplish:
 - Updates to monitoring inventory
 - Gap analysis summary
 - List of top 10 monitoring priorities

- Current goal is to circulate the report this summer for STAC-MAC review, contingent on the timing of that meeting and Covid.

2:40 Delaware Estuary Science and Environmental Summit 2021 (10 minutes)

- D. Kreeger summarized progress on the Summit planning that had already occurred prior to Covid, and recent Covid-associated discussions.
 - PDE was planning the Summit in advance (including considering hosting NOT at the Grand—and instead at Bally’s in Atlantic City (no contract was signed)
 - At this point, PDE will likely cancel the January 2021 Summit for various reasons related to budget concerns, attendance concerns, potential loss of Summit credibility, “Zoom fatigue”, etc. Would people attend if it is virtual? Would it lose that “winter retreat” specialness? Would people even have new data to present if so much work is being canceled this year?
 - Although no final decision has been made, the current consensus is that the risks outweigh the benefits.
 - KK and DK will reach out to the STAC for more advice about the summit as/when needed.

2:50 State of the Estuary Report/TREB 2022 (10 minutes)

- D. Kreeger asked for STAC recommendations on whether we should plan to produce another TREB report in 2022, which would need to be launched by 2021 if we do it.
- PDE will be on the hook to produce the State of the Estuary Report in 2022, especially since we did not produce a public-friendly translation of TREB in 2017 (due to CCMP revision). DK shared framed the main considerations:
 - How much new data will be available for various indicators in 2021, compared to 2016-2017?
 - What resources would be needed?
 - Are there volunteers (or potential contractors) to lead various chapters?
 - How will the effort be impacted by COVID?
 - KK noted that PDE is including some support for TREB in our FY21 workplan, mainly for internal staff and for about half of the usual amount needed for contractual help (\$25K); expecting that the effort would carry into 2022, there might be an opportunity to also add funds for TREB in FY22, but PDE would need to also budget for the public SOE in FY22.
 - DK plans to reach out to past contractors and chapter leads as a starting point, but noted that some past contributors have retired, etc.
 - KK added that the DELEP budget for FY21 may need to be adjusted because so much is uncertain right now with how COVID might affect various DELEP-funded activities and products. The DELEP fiscal year runs from 1 OCT to 30 SEPT, not a calendar year.
 - DK suggested that we will do something for TREB and we will count on the STAC to help us do the best we can with what \$ is available.

- D. Bushek recommended that J. Morrison might be able to help with fish sections of TREB.
- DK asked the STAC to consider what TREB chapters and indicators merit updating, versus not, and to send her any other suggestions
 - DK also asked N. Suk to look at the two water chapters
 - NS agreed, noting DRBC's water quality will be report coming out soon and should help provide guidance

3:00 STAC Futures Discussion (30 minutes)

- K. Regan and E. Baumbach shared progress and next steps regarding the TREB/CCMP workbook³ and an initial list of candidate STAC projects/activities.
- They also orientated attendees to the ranking framework that STAC members will be asked to complete, leading to a “top 10 STAC priorities” wish list.
 - There are some CCMP strategies (e.g. for Healthy Communities) that do not have a nexus to TREB indicators, and there are some TREB indicators (e.g., ice jams) that do not have a direct nexus to CCMP strategies. Unless you feel strongly that a particular indicator not covered by the CCMP should be a STAC priority, simply skip any framework elements where there is not a CCMP/TREB match.
- Goal is to have a short list for the next STAC meeting
- ****Return completed ranking framework to KR by JUNE 1st****

3:30 Upcoming Events, Opportunities and Notices (15 minutes)

- Roundtable sharing of meeting announcements, funding opportunities, etc.
 - K. Regan – EPA R3 is planning to continue SAV monitoring in 2020, focusing on the tidal Delaware River. We are almost done post-processing 2019 data. At some point this year, we should have SAV maps to share with partners. KS added that she also submitted an internal grant to install sensors around Philly (will update if it gets supported).
 - N. Suk – DRBC has a WQAC meeting scheduled that will have as key topics: 1) improving DO in the estuary, presenting overall approaches to reach end goals; 2) recreational use is a hot topic—some secondary use is ok but significant primary use has been occurring. Elaine Pannucio also set the next MACC meeting for May 12th. DRBC should have a better idea of 2020 fieldwork feasibility to report at that MACC meeting.
 - K. St. Laurent – Offered updates on: 1) SET data visualization packages from NERR, and 2) coastal acidification committee – workgroups: science, industry, policy, outreach. Contact Kari if interested in either topic.
 - D. Kreeger – the next Delaware Living Shoreline Committee meeting is tomorrow
 - P. Rowe – Updates: 1) the mid-Atlantic Sea Grant meeting has been moved back to October, to occur in Ocean City, NJ. And the planned ocean outreach event has also been postponed until October.

- K. Klein – PDE currently still planning RiverFest in October, but we will make a decision soon; we have sadly already cancelled our annual Estuary Celebration fundraising dinner which was set for October.
- DK – reminded folks that the STAC bulletin board is available to post meeting info and other events
 - DK – STAC-MAC mtg in Nov? suggestions on when?
 - EP early Nov sounds good
 - KS – MAC-STAC coordination with CCMP/TREB monitoring inventory report? DK/EB – that report will be organized outside of the MAC-STAC meeting (will do MAC and STAC input separately)

3:45 Wrap-Up (15 minutes)

- Review action items
- Future meetings
 - STAC-EIC - September or October
 - STAC-MACC – November
 - STAC in Jan 2021?

4:00 Adjourn

Motion to adjourn offered by D. Bushek

Second by D. Kreeger

Discussion by DK thanking everyone for a productive first virtual STAC meeting

Vote: 0 objections, 0 abstentions, unanimous yay

For additional information, please contact either:

Kristin Regan (STAC Chair) - Regan.Kristin@epa.gov

Danielle Kreeger (STAC Advisor) - DKreeger@DelawareEstuary.org

Current STAC Members:

Kristin Regan **Chair**– EPA Region 3
 Lance Butler – PWD
 Laura Craig – Princeton Hydro
 Dorina Frizzera – Getting to Resilience LLC
 Kevin Hess – PADEP
 Ron Huen - Exelon
 Doug Janiec - Sovereign Consulting
 Desmond Kahn – Fishery Investigations
 Sue Kilham – Drexel

Danielle Kreeger – PDE
 Greg Lech - PAFBC
 Joshua Moody – PDE
 Jason Morson - Rutgers
 Daphne Munroe – Rutgers HSRL
 Kristen Regan – EPA R3
 Andrew Reif - USGS
 Alison Rogerson - DNREC
 Peter Rowe – NJ Sea Grant
 David Smith - USGS

Kelly Somers – EPA Region 3 (*alternate*)
Kari St. Laurent – DNERR
Ken Strait, PSEG
Namsoo Suk – DRBC
Elizabeth Watson - Drexel
Bart Wilson - USFWS
David Wolanski – DNREC
Metthea Yepsen - NJDEP