

**June 14, 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, provided both in-person at the RCSOB 12th Floor Conference Room and virtually via Microsoft Teams.

The following committee representatives were in attendance:

Susan Weaver, P.E.	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Coastal Resources Management Program (CRMP)
Justin McKeel	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)
Sean Gimbel	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC)
James Spatz	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
Michael Stutts	Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC)
Diana Olinger	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

The following agency representatives (non-CZAC members) were in attendance:

Randy Brown	DEP, CRMP Southeast Regional Staff
Lori Boughton	DEP, CRMP Northwest Regional Staff
Shelby Clark	DEP, CRMP Northwest Regional Staff
Stacey Box	DEP, CRMP
J. Samantha Burton	DEP, CRMP
Joe Sieber	DEP, CRMP
Matthew Walderon	DEP, CRMP
James Peifer	DEP, CRMP
Luke Stoev	DEP, CRMP Intern
High Garst	DEP, Policy Office
Amy Verbofsky	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)
Tom Hughes	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)
Ernest Szabo	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)
Ellen Brody	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Sarah Whitney	Pennsylvania Sea Grant
Erin Wiley Moyers	PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
Honey Stempka	PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

I. Introductions:

Stacey Box began the meeting at 9:35 a.m., welcomed attendees and led the introductions.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes:

Stacey Box asked for approval of minutes from the previous CZAC meeting. Due to lack of a quorum, minutes could not be approved.

III. Coastal Resources Management Grant Program Update:

Stacey Box said that all 2022 CZ grant awards have been fully executed and all projects are underway. Nineteen projects were awarded a total of just over \$885,000. Pennsylvania's total funding for Sections 306 and 309 for Fiscal Year 2021 was \$2,036,000.

The 2023 CZ grants have been selected and have been forwarded to NOAA for review and approval. This process includes National Environmental Policy Act review, legal review and eligibility review. CRMP typically receives approval from NOAA in August or September; and barring any kind of government shutdown, CRMP will plan to announce grant recipients by October 1, 2023 which is when these awards are slated to start. The FY2022 projects were announced in December 2022.

FY2023 funding is slightly increased from 2022 totals. Total funding for 2023 is \$2,070,000. Funding for Section 306 is \$1,962,000, just over \$813,000 of which is being passed through for grants in the Coastal Zones. Funding for Section 309 is \$108,000, \$50,000 of which is being passed through for coastal resiliency work.

The FY2024 grant round is slated to open on August 28, 2023 and will remain open through October 16, 2023. Grant application workshops will be held in August in both Coastal Zones (virtual or in person if possible) to give applicants the opportunity to learn more about the grant requirements and to ask questions about their proposed projects.

The first year of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding was awarded in April 2023. The next funding competition will open in early summer with letters of intent due by early July. The Coastal Resources Management Program plans to open a grant round to solicit projects for this funding.

IV. National Marine Sanctuary – Lake Erie Quadrangle Nomination (Ellen Brody, NOAA)

Ellen Brody of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) began by providing an overview describing what a National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) is, its purpose and intent and a brief discussion of the NMS nomination process. With the Lake Erie Quadrangle NMS, Pennsylvania could have new opportunities, sharing technologies and research with a focus on preserving and better understanding Lake Erie's many shipwrecks.

COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Brody said that NOAA's mandates for the NMS include protecting resources, education and outreach, research and monitoring, and expanding community outreach and partnerships. With the creation of the Lake Erie Quadrangle NMS, NOAA could share its infrastructure in terms of its boats, buildings, research labs, staff, and partner closely with local colleges, labs, residents and maritime community. Relatedly, the NMS would have a Sanctuary Advisory Council.

Ms. Brody described the NMS nomination, providing background on the past five years of waiting in the nomination pipeline to move to the current point in the process. At this time, NOAA has accepted the nomination of Lake Erie Quadrangle NMS into its inventory of sites for potential designation. NOAA issued a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* to begin the public scoping process and obtain public comments to consider in designating the NMS in Lake Erie.

Ms. Brody discussed the goals of the nomination and stated that as part of NOAA's objectives and values, NOAA strives to employ problem-solving with non-regulatory solutions and approaches. Also, as part of this NMS, a designation would not negatively impact fishing or shipping activities.

Deeper into the designation process, (including the current public scoping effort) will be the required Environmental Impact Statement and a draft management plan. Ultimately, NOAA and the state will enter into a co-management partnership established with a high-level Memorandum of Agreement.

Next up in the process, NOAA has scheduled a series of public meetings starting with an upcoming in-person meeting at the Erie Library on June 21, 2023. Two virtual public meetings will follow later in June 2023. The results of this scoping process will assist NOAA in determining whether and how to designate the area as a national marine sanctuary. NOAA is accepting public comments through July 18, 2023.

V. Local Coastal Zone Updates

Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone Update:

Amy Verbofsky, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) presented updates on many trail projects in the southeast region, including several Delaware River Trail segments. She also noted that the long-term, complex project known as "Christian to Crescent" on the Schuylkill River trail east side is expected to be completed by 2025, with the swing bridge to open in 2024.

Another noteworthy project is the PA Route 240 (Darby Creek) bridge replacement, with its plans to serve as a connection to the John Heinz national refuge. Ms. Verbofsky discussed the progress on many additional projects such as the Park at Penn's Landing, the Battery Development (Fishtown) and waterfront condos in Bristol are underway.

COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Lake Erie Coastal Zone Update:

In the absence of Joy Fronzoli, Erie County Planning & Community Development (ECDPCD), Stacey Box presented an update on Erie County news and projects. In a major development at Erie's Harbor Place, Scott Enterprises is developing a \$150 million, multi-year, mixed use 12-acre Bayfront project.

In news regarding the Erie Port Authority, Martin LaMar became the New Executive Director in January 2023, and Anthony Pianta succeeded John Mulligan as the New Harbormaster in May 2023.

Ashley Porter Engineering has been working on the Port Authority Master Plan, with a focus on the following recently completed projects: The West Front Street Extension and the Sassafraz Street Extension.

Related to the Erie County Parks, Trails & Recreation (PTR) Plan, ECDPCD has completed the DCNR Peer Review process which evaluated the feasibility of creating a new county-level Parks and Recreation Coordinator position, to continue implementation of the PTR Plan. This process was a required initial step toward the DCNR's Circuit Rider Program.

Lastly, ECDPCD recently completed the Erie to Corry Trail Feasibility Study & Tourism Analysis, with project consultant Environmental Planning & Design, which evaluated the feasibility of trail route options and potential associated costs, as the Erie County segment and northern most leg of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail. Fittingly, the Northern terminus is located at Mile 0 on Erie's Bayfront on Dobbin's Landing.

VI. Agency Updates:

Sean Gimbel (PFBC) said there are new striped bass regulations developed with new emergency language to protect populations just for the Delaware River. Also, grant funds for Lake Erie projects will be available this Fall, and the Delaware Estuary region may have \$1.5 Million pending federal approval.

Ernie Szabo (PEMA) reported that PEMA is ready to submit its state hazard mitigation plan to FEMA for review.

Erin Wiley-Moyer (DCNR) noted that DCNR is currently conducting round 29 of C2P2 grant reviews, having received 424 applications with \$53 Million available for awards. The next grant round (30) opens on January 16, 2023 and will close on April 5, 2023.

James Spatz (PennDOT) discussed the I-95 collapse repair and the Erie Bayfront improvement project.

VII. Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

VIII. Other Business:

Matt Walderon (DEP CRMP) stated that CRMP received the fully executed Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study agreement and will share the project management plan upon request.

Sarah Whitney (PA Sea Grant) expressed interest in learning more about the study. Ms. Whitney also mentioned NOAA Marine Debris funding coming to Sea Grant for program use and added that NOAA also has climate resiliency funding via the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Act.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.