

**Minutes of the
January 15, 2014 Meeting of the
Coastal Zone Advisory Committee (CZAC)**

The regular meeting of CZAC was called to order at 9:35 AM by Mr. Don Benczkowski on January 15, 2014 in the 10th Floor Conference Room of the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg, PA.

The following committee representatives were present:

Don Benczkowski	PA DEP, Interstate Waters Office (IWO)
Gary Camus	PA Game Commission (PGC)
Julia Donahue	Erie County Department of Planning (ECDP)
Jeffrey Knowles	PA Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
Amy Miller	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)
Ann Safley	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)
Mark Shaffer	PHMC
John Van Zant	PA Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

The following DEP staff members were present:

Stacey Box	PA DEP, IWO
Randall Brown	PA DEP, Southeast Regional Staff
J. Samantha Burton	PA DEP, IWO
Laura Henry	PA DEP, Policy Office
Kevin Hess	PA DEP, IWO
Dave Jostenski	PA DEP, IWO
Jacob Moore	PA DEP, Northwest Regional Staff
Jim Peifer	PA DEP, IWO
Joseph Sieber	PA DEP, IWO
Matt Walderon	PA DEP, IWO
Andy Zemba	PA DEP, IWO

Mr. Benczkowski welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

Approval of minutes: Amy Miller made a correction to her comments at the June 2013 meeting. The Philadelphia waterfront 50' buffer bill does distinguish between native and nonnative vegetation and prohibits clearing of native plants. A motion to approve the June 2013 minutes, including this revision, was made by Mr. Benczkowski, and seconded by Gary Camus. **Motion carried.**

Public Comments: No members of the public were in attendance.

Coastal Resource Management (CRM) Program Updates:

FFY 2014 Coastal Zone Grants Update by Stacey Box: Ms. Box introduced herself as the new Coastal Zone Grants Coordinator. She has 15 years of experience in water quality management

in the western U.S. Ms. Box more recently held a position at the PA Dept. of Corrections. Please contact her with any questions or comments.

2013 Coastal Zone grants were awarded this past October. Post-award workshops were held for these grantees and the program intends to continue these sessions in the future.

A total of 46 applications were received in the most recent 2014 grant solicitation, which included 31 from the Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone (DECZ) and 17 from the Lake Erie Coastal Zone (LECZ). The local advisory committees have met to listen to grantee presentations, review, and rank the applications.

An FTP link to download the 2014 applications was provided to all CZAC members by e-mail on December 5, 2013. If you are unable to access the files, please contact Samantha Burton. Please send comments on these applications to Ms. Box by January 24 so they can be integrated into the funding recommendations. Ms. Box stated that we do regularly accept and welcome applications from other state agencies. Mark Shaffer commented that PHMC endorses the Pennsbury Manor application and that is a good project. Mr. Shaffer stated that he is interested in reviewing any project that disturbs the earth.

Mr. Benczkowski stated that overall federal funding continues to shrink. CRM is expecting to receive less in FFY2014. Our National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant has decreased about \$1M over the last ten years.

Jeffrey Knowles asked if all funding is federal. Mr. Benczkowski stated that there is some state money, but it is mostly federal. With the continuing resolution legislation, the House has recommended \$40M and the Senate is at \$70M. CRM anticipate they will split the difference at \$55M, divided between 34 coastal funded programs, which is \$11M less than FFY2013. Coastal States Organization is anticipating \$66M to be available. Mr. Benczkowski described that other states fully match federal money; Pennsylvania does not. Overall, DEP is receiving less money and getting more grant applications.

Mr. Knowles stated that Coastal Zone grants are unique because they are the first money that comes in to start up a project and it is a crucial grant source.

Section 309 Update – Coastal Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Update by Joe Sieber: Mr. Sieber provided background on the regional MSP effort, which began when President Obama passed an Executive Order (EO) to establish a National Ocean Policy and Council. Federal agencies tasked under the EO created regional planning bodies. The Delaware Estuary is part of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body, which CRM participates on as a representative. In the Delaware Estuary, Mr. Sieber has been attending the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body meeting where a framework with goals and objectives has been established. The group has agreed not to include the estuaries, but Pennsylvania remains a member of the planning body.

Mr. Knowles asked about the context of an MSP and whether it was motivated by Hurricane Sandy or something else. Mr. Sieber stated that an MSP encompasses all aspects of uses and resources of a water body.

Mr. Sieber stated that the Great Lakes Regional Planning Body is formed, but is lagging behind its Mid-Atlantic counterpart. CRM is currently working on its own state-based MSP effort. Kevin Hess stated that CRM has been gathering existing data and conducted lake substrate sampling last summer to designate critical habitat, which is turning out to be a difficult task. CRM is continuing with sampling this upcoming summer. Mr. Hess stated that windmill studies are showing that the structures may actually not negatively impact habitat and rather may create new habitat, but there are still concerns with migratory fish. Staff is also conducting archeological research to map existing shipwrecks in the Lake, confirming locations, and characterizing their state. This is a work in progress and so far 50 wrecks are cataloged, with 15-20 unknown, 30 known locations, including 15 located by CRM. A 2014 Coastal Zone grant was submitted by the Regional Science Consortium to form a partnership with Penn State and work with a marine archeologist from Indiana State University. CRM and PHMC have been coordinating with shipwreck activities.

Boundary Expansion Update by Joe Sieber: Mr. Sieber provided an update on boundary expansion in the Lake Erie Coastal Zone. This initiative was recommended by the Lake Erie Local Advisory Committee to include the entire Lake Erie watershed. In 2013, CRM, in cooperation with Penn State Sea Grant, conducted three public meetings, published two full-page ads in the newspaper, and received 12 letters in favor and 3-4 letters not in favor of expansion. CRM will not receive any additional federal funding once expansion occurs.

Mr. Knowles asked what the previous boundary was based upon. Mr. Benczkowski responded that it is a combination of railroad tracks and Route 5 in western portions of the county. The boundary narrows to the east and then is expanded. The boundary is relatively arbitrary.

Mr. Camus inquired into objections on expansion. Mr. Benczkowski described several objections, including perceived requirements that could be attached to accepting federal funds, misconception that zoning ordinances would need to be changed, or dislike for oversight. Mr. Camus stated that the expansion will benefit PGC.

Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone Update by Amy Miller:

- A successful FFY 2014 Coastal Zone Grant presentation session was provided to the local advisory committee. Ms. Miller presented a list and map of all received applications.
- Recent updates to the Schuylkill River Trail include the boardwalk, which is currently under construction, and completion of Paine's Park, which is a new skatepark adjacent to the art museum.
- The Delaware River Trail continues to expand with construction of Pier 53/Washington Ave Green and design of Pier 68.
- The Route 13 passageway on the Delaware and Lehigh Trail opened in November 2013 and is the first of five obstructions to be removed from the towpath.
- In 2010, Pennsylvania Environmental Council started an effort to designate the Tidal Delaware as a National Recreational Area, managed by the National Parks Service. In December 2013, the *Tidal Delaware River Reconnaissance Survey* study was published and recommended against designation.

- The Schuylkill was named 2013 River of the Year.

Lake Erie Coastal Zone Update by Ms. Donahue:

- Ms. Donahue provided a status update of FFY 2012 Coastal Zone funded projects, including four education, one construction, and one planning grants to total \$159,760.
 - Investigating and Researching Environmental Health Problems is a two-week summer school for kids interested in the environmental field. The project is complete and they are preparing a final report and invoices.
 - The County-wide Stream Study project will educate teachers and students on watersheds and pollution. Teachers have been trained in water chemistry and macroinvertebrates.
 - The Renewing Our Great Lakes project is continuing to provide students and educators science-based experiential learning, training, and field activities focused on stormwater management and land restoration.
 - The Erie City Comprehensive Plan Phase I includes conducting a background analysis of conditions. Currently, the steering committee is waiting on a final draft report to review.
 - The Lampe Marina project grantee is requesting a one-year project extension because matching funds were not awarded and a final organization budget has not been approved.
 - The Creating Coastal Zone Stewards project is complete. Grantees are preparing a final report and are requesting a budget modification to reduce match.
- Ms. Donahue provided a status update of FFY 2013 Coastal Zone funded projects, including one education, one construction, and three planning grants to total \$147,260. Most of these grants have just executed agreements over the past month. Project activity will begin shortly.
 - Lakeside Trail will include construction of ADA trail from Lake Cliff Park to Lakeside Boat Launch Ramp.
 - The Creating Coastal Zone Stewards project distributes newspapers to area schools to encourage active stewardship of the Lake Erie Coastal Zone.
 - The City of Erie Comprehensive Plan Phase II will include data collection, analysis, public participation, mapping and preparation of the comprehensive plan.
 - The Master Site Plan for Headwaters Park project has its steering committee meeting on 1/16/2014.
 - McKean Area Comprehensive Plan project will develop a multi-municipal plan between McKean Borough and McKean Township.
- Ms. Donahue reviewed some of the recent happenings in Erie:
 - The Erie County Greenways Program, funded through Act 13, provides money for acquisition, planning, and construction. The application period opened this week and closes on February 21.
 - The Seawall and public walkway on the GAF Site (Bayfront Place) has been completed. Public amenities, such as benches, trash cans, and life rings will be installed in Spring 2014.

- The Celebrate Erie event will run from August 14-17 and features a popular Chalkwalk.
- The International Coastal Cleanup will be held on September 20, 2014. Ms. Donahue is looking to try new marketing this year to increase volunteers.
- A new \$150 million development named Harborplace at State & Bayfront was unveiled. Information and videos can be accessed at:
<http://www.goerie.com/scott-enterprises-to-unveil-150-million-bayfront-plan>.

Agency Updates:

John Van Zant from PUC stated that the agency started an electric safety division and had a meeting with DEP yesterday. There have been recent personnel changes at PUC and the agency is trying to be more accessible. Mr. Van Zant welcomes contacting him with utility questions. Mr. Benczkowski inquired into PUC's involvement with the Lake Erie proposed submerged transmission line or turbines and to please keep CRM involved with any information they receive. It was stated that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission would have jurisdiction.

Mr. Camus from PGC stated that the agency recently acquired a property in the area of State Game Lands #314 and is executing disposition of a mobile home on site. PGC is continuing with land acquisitions for expansion and is currently searching for partner funding for acquisition of Canadian National Railroad lands. This parcel is 840-860 acres south of I-90 and has unique features and wetlands.

Mr. Knowles from DCNR stated that his agency announced their Community Conservation Partnership grants on December 5th. DCNR provided a memo prior to this meeting commenting on the 2014 Coastal Zone applications. Some highlights include \$1.6 million to National Lands Trust to acquire property of the Central Delaware River and work on connector streets as part of the East Coast Greenway in Southeast PA. Mr. Knowles described his background with DCNR for the past six months and PA Environmental Council for five years.

Ann Safley and Mark Shaffer from PHMC stated that their agency has a new Director of Bureau of Historic Preservation, Serena Bellew. Ms. Bellew supports partnerships amongst agencies and welcomes communications.

Other Business by Mr. Benczkowski: Mr. Jostenski expressed the importance of partnerships to CRM. This is especially true as the program is starting to seek projects managed by partner agencies that could be used as a match to our Federal grant with NOAA.

Mr. Benczkowski stated that CRM has existing interagency agreements with PHMC, PA Fish and Boat Commission, and PUC. The Program will be revisiting these agreements soon.

Mr. Benczkowski stated that CRM staff will be starting bluff recession monitoring work in Erie this May. This program goes back to 1986 and measures recession along the lake bluffs. In September CRM will be hold the annual Great Lakes Regional Meeting in Erie.

Laura Henry introduced herself as a new policy specialist with DEP to replace Sean Gimbel. She was previously with Waste Management in the Department.

Next Meeting Dates: The next CZAC meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2014.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM.