

**June 12, 2024 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:

Stacey Box	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Coastal Resources Management Program (CRMP)
Sean Gimbel	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC)
Nicole Auker	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
Brad Holcomb	Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC)
Joy Fronzoli	PA Dept. of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
Michael Kane	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)

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

Susan Weaver, P.E.	DEP, CRMP
J. Samantha Burton	DEP, CRMP
Joe Sieber	DEP, CRMP
Matthew Walderon	DEP, CRMP
Shane Gutsie	DEP, CRMP
Austin Grace	DEP, Bureau of Regulatory Counsel
Shelby Clark	DEP, CRMP Northwest Regional Staff
Sydney Witter	DEP, CRMP Intern
Robert Banks	Erie County Dept. of Planning and Community Development
Amy Verbofsky	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)
Ernest Szabo	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)
Erin Wiley Moyers	PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
Greg Czarnecki	PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
Diana Olinger	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Honey Stempka	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Johnna Potthoff	US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE, CELRC)
Cara Patullo	US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE, CELRC)
Sarah Whitney	Pennsylvania Sea Grant

I. Introductions

Stacey Box began the meeting at 9:33 a.m., welcomed attendees and led the introductions.

COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

II. Review and Approval of Minutes

Stacey Box asked for approval of the draft minutes from the January 10, 2024 CZAC meeting. The minutes were approved as written.

III. Coastal Resources Management Grant Program, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Updates

Shane Gutsie provided several updates, starting with the CRMP grant program. Since the last CZAC meeting, the 2023 Coastal Zone grants were announced. More than \$800,000 was distributed to fifteen projects. Press releases announcing the grants were provided for CZAC members review.

CRMP submitted an application to NOAA for Fiscal Year 2024 funding for Sections 306 and 309 work. This application included funding for sixteen pass-through grant projects.

CRMP submitted an application for Inflation Reduction Act funding that is provided by NOAA to all state Coastal Programs. This funding will support a bluff-related project in Erie County and the staff time related to the project. More details to come. Finally, CRMP is awaiting announcement of more funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law capacity building funds to Coastal Programs from NOAA. The program hopes to hire a new staff person with these funds.

IV. Section 309 Strategy Update

Joe Sieber stated that CRMP's current Section 309 strategy is centered on coastal hazards, a NOAA priority, and coastal zone boundary expansion in the Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone. In the Lake Erie Coastal Zone, CRMP contributed to a forthcoming update of the Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program Manual as it relates to the bluffs.

In the Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone, CRMP has been currently investigating opportunities to expand the DECZ boundary in areas where impacts of climate change and sea level rise may extend beyond the current coastal boundaries. The proposed boundary expansion investigation is considering the needs of underserved communities with a focus on coastal hazards, safe and welcoming linkages to growing waterfront public access sites, and the potential for green infrastructure opportunities that will provide resiliency against stormwater flooding and urban temperature rises.

CRMP has been partnering with DVRPC to implement a strategy to build capacity for facilitating climate adaptation planning and community resiliency. As part of this effort, CRMP attended interviews that DVRPC held with 10 municipalities and other stakeholders. Ultimately, CRMP wants to encourage and support multi-municipal stormwater planning and projects.

While this current Section 309 grant cycle is ending, we are starting to prepare for the next five-year cycle. The CRMP will start writing a five-year Section 309 strategy that will cover October 1, 2026 to September 30, 2031. As part of that process, CRMP staff are currently asking for

COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

feedback to set up our next 309 Strategy. CRMP staff have prepared a survey to collect your opinions on what our priorities should be.

Section 309 funds are used to make changes to the coastal program to better address one or more priorities from nine enhancement areas that are defined by NOAA. The five-year strategy we are currently working on is focused on ways to improve our ability to address climate change/build community resiliency to coastal hazards (including flooding).

For the future round of 309 funding, NOAA has selected Coastal Hazards and Wetlands as enhancement areas of national importance and strongly encourages state coastal programs to develop strategies for these areas. Due to the national importance of these enhancement areas, we are requesting your input on one or both. We are also looking for input on the remaining seven enhancement areas on the survey that will be sent to all CZAC members.

V. Local Coastal Zone Updates

Lake Erie Coastal Zone Update:

Robert Banks (Erie County Planning and Community Development) has replaced the Erie County position previously held by Joy Fronzoli. Robert began by discussing two projects that have been completed and finalized with one final report pending. These include the McDannell Run and the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Erie projects.

There are multiple open CRMP-funded grant projects including monitoring bird migration and preserving historic structures and fish habitat work. The Regional Science Consortium (RSC) continues its Harmful Algae Bloom collections and lab work and has started work on a clean marinas program. Also, the RSC has two other grant projects underway, including tracking yellow perch and songbird migration.

Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone Update:

Amy Verbofsky, (DVRPC) updated information on many different trail projects being funded, planned, constructed and completed. The park at Penn's Landing will be enhanced by placing a cap over I-95 with a major goal of being to connect neighborhoods to the waterfront that are blocked by I-95. In addition to this project, Amy reported on a significant amount of planned residential development to be located along the river.

Multiple projects and efforts are being created to bring awareness and solutions to flooding issues in Eastwick. The USACE is looking to construct a levee along Darby Creek to help prevent flooding, and a Hesco barrier may potentially be used as an interim solution. Approximately \$450K from both FEMA and the EPA are helping the Eastwick Flood Resilience Strategy.

COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

VI. Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study

In this collaborative study, Johnna Potthoff (USACE) said that the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study has an objective to protect long-term economic, environmental, and social value of the Great Lakes coast. The study is anticipated to cost approximately \$14.4 million. The project involves the USACE coordinating with the states, tribes and other agencies to identify climate scenarios with water levels and ice. The main goal of the project is to identify focus areas and in turn provide workshops within the Great Lake's states to develop strategic recommendations on how to improve resiliency.

Cara Patullo (USACE) discussed the methodology for finding areas of high risk by compiling data, creating indexes based on coastal resources, then will combine this information with projected climate change scenarios. The Basin analysis should be completed by the Summer of 2025. The workshops will be held in PA during Spring 2026, and the overall project completed in 2028. For more information, the public can go to the study website at <https://glcrs.evs.anl.gov/>.

VII. Agency Updates

Sean Gimbel (PFBC) announced a new boating infrastructure grant program for transient motorboat mooring. There are few options of these types of boats within PA, thus this grant will be used for construction and renovation of tie-up facilities. There is a required 25% match, but that match will later be reimbursed. In addition to this new grant, there are two more popular grants, including the standard boating facility grant, and the Erie access grant opening in late August-September.

In other news, the PFBC made changes to striped bass fishing in the Delaware river. The changes are to reduce fishing mortality rates in order to replenish the stock. For Spring 2024, the daily limit changed from two to one, while the size limit was changed from 21-24 inch to 22-26 inches in length.

Joy Fronzoli (DCED) said that the Office of Community Planning municipal grant program has a rolling application process with Spring/Fall awards, focusing on community planning and multi-municipal efforts.

Brad Holcomb (PGC) discussed work done on State Gamelands 314 in Erie County. PGC has both short-term and long-term efforts to control invasive species, having sprayed hundreds of acres this Spring. Weevils have become a big issue on the gamelands. Also, the PGC is completing a new Conservation Management Plan for the area.

Sarah Whitney (PA Sea Grant) provided an update on Sea Grants 2025 funding.

Nicole Auken (PennDOT) reported that she and/or Drew Ames will be the PennDOT representatives attending future CZAC meetings. Also, PennDOT has received grant funds from federal IJA money to plan and develop new wildlife corridors projects in Pennsylvania.

Honey Stempka (NOAA) clarified that the proposed National Marine Sanctuary (NMS) slated to be established in the waters of Pennsylvania's Lake Erie, formerly titled "*The Lake Erie*

COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Quadrangle,” now has a new title. Specifically, the proposed NMS will drop the word “*Quadrangle*” from its title.

As part of the process to establish the NMS, NOAA is working to establish a charter and has had conversations with state partners and the coast guard regarding the process. Documents to create a sanctuary advisory council are in the clearance process. The NMS council will have fifteen voting seats and fifteen alternates. There will also be two seats for youth, ages 14-17. Honey said that the timeline for NMS designation will take about three years, with a projected designation around spring 2027.

VIII. Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

IX. Other Business:

Brad Holcomb (PGC) asked if CZAC members had any information regarding a national transatlantic energy line/corridor that would cross Lake Erie from Canada and enter Erie County. Matt Walderon (CRMP) responded that although he understood only basic concepts of the proposal, the US Department of energy is declaring an energy corridor across the lake to join with a Lake Erie connector line that was permitted but never constructed. There is a concern about a route that could intrude on Erie Bluff State Park, but current discussion has the original energy connector locating just West of the park and East of state game lands.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.