

ALBEMARLE-PAMLICO NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

Science and Technical Advisory Committee

Quarterly Meeting - Spring

UNC-CH Institute of Marine Sciences

Morehead City, NC

May 3, 2006

MINUTES

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Co-Chair, Nancy White called the meeting to order at 10:05am. She welcomed those present and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting (February 1). STAC Board member Kirk Havens moved to accept the minutes as written, and STAC Co-Chair Michael Rikard seconded. The motion carried.

Dr. White called upon STAC member Hans Paerl for welcoming remarks on behalf of Institute of Marine Sciences Director, Dr. Rick Luettich, who was unable to attend the meeting. While making his remarks, Dr. Paerl also introduced the newest STAC member from the Institute, Tony Rodriguez.

Dean Carpenter, APNEP STAC coordinator, completed the introduction of new STAC members by welcoming Drs. Heather McGuire of Chowan University and David Mallinson of East Carolina University to their first meeting. He then briefed the attendees on APNEP activities since the last meeting:

- STAC Executive Board held a teleconference call on March 20
- STAC Executive Board met at Cape Lookout National Seashore on May 2
- EstuaryLive!, a virtual fieldtrip into the estuary at the Rachel Carson National Estuarine Research Reserve, was occurring concurrently with the STAC meeting
- Next STAC meeting will occur August 2 at ECU's Greenville Center
- Group STAC picture would be taken during today's break time
- Members are urged to make outreach efforts by their respective constituencies/agencies known to the full STAC

Following Dr. Carpenter's remarks, Peter Claggett of the US Geological Survey (USGS) presented (via teleconference) progress-to-date in development of a modeling tool for improving forecasts of land-use change in the Chesapeake Bay

watershed. He mentioned the tool was based on a *GAME* model used in New Jersey and a *SLEUTH* model developed at the Woods Hole Research Center.

Dr. Claggett entertained questions and answers including how historical data were replicated; how the more physical characteristics of estuarine systems were interpreted; the consideration of water availability; how the differentiation between new and existing building permits was made; what might happen to predictions in the event of natural events; reception of the methodology by the regulatory body of clients; and the cross between Dr. Claggett's data set and the National Land-Cover data set.

STAC Board member Bob Christian led discussion on how activities of the APNEP and the NC Coastal Ocean Observing System (NC-COOS) could be leveraged, particularly as effects the establishment of a certified water-level station in the APNEP region.

Dr. Rodriguez mentioned the need for filling key gaps in freshwater systems, as well, while Dr. White commented on a movement aimed at getting scientists together from various universities to make such needs known.

Doug Rader agreed to draft language (for endorsement as a **motion*** by the STAC) pertaining to the investment of resources for establishing such a station, and the funds necessary for researching needs. Lauriston King seconded the "spirit" of the anticipated motion and the group agreed by consensus.

STAC member Barbara Doll briefed the STAC on discussions held at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Panel-Aquatic Nuisance Species (MARP-ANS) meeting in Wilmington, NC on April 18-19. Species of interest mentioned at the meeting included: zebra mussels, whelps, *Phragmites*, hydrilla and beach vitex that is invading dunes in both North and South Carolina.

Questions asked included how identification of invasive species versus natural evolution is determined; how the nursery and landscape industries are involved in invasive promulgation or eradication efforts; and what is the lowest life form addressed.

STAC member Jeff DeBlieu rounded out the day's presentations with discussion pertaining to The Nature Conservancy's approach to sea-level rise scenarios and climate change issues.

Dr. Rader, Chair of STAC Environmental Indicator Development, put the environmental indicator development process into perspective by leading discussion on the integration of recommendations made by the six STAC indicator teams. He stressed the importance of building a suite of indicators that would meet the goals of the APNEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) and acknowledged the advice of others in the process, including use of the recently-released *EPA Draft Guidance on Indicator Development for Estuaries* document.

Discussion ensued regarding the effective portrayal of ecosystem complexities to various user groups (e.g., resource managers, general public).

Dr. Rader suggested the formation of a steering committee for environmental indicator development purposes. It was suggested that three persons each from the APNEP STAC, Policy Board, and Citizens' Advisory Committee (nine members total) be named to oversee further development of APNEP indicators and to prepare a report (including marketing and funding strategies) by the end of the year. Dr. Rader asked that a lead person for steering committee formation be identified by the end of May, as the APNEP Policy Board is scheduled to meet on June 15.

Dr. Christian suggested that work on the environmental indicator spreadsheet Dr. Rader distributed should be the only agenda item at the summer STAC meeting because he felt the full STAC should evaluate it "one more time."

APNEP Field Representative and Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHHP) Coordinator, Jimmy Johnson, mentioned that the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) is waiting for indicator identification for CHHP implementation.

Dr. Rader then asked for (consensus) approval for establishing the environmental indicator steering committee, which was forthcoming.

ACTION ITEMS:

*Drafting of language for motion endorsing establishment of a water-level station in the APNEP region

Identification of environmental indicator steering committee leader/members

Next STAC meeting (August 2) devoted to workgroup deliberations to finalize identification of environmental indicators