



PEP Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday August 16th 6:00pm-8:00pm

Peconic Lane Community Center

1170 Peconic Lane, Peconic



AGENDA

- 6:00PM Introductions, Kevin McDonald- PEP CAC Chairman
- 6:10 PM Program Office Update, Sarah Schaefer- Program Coordinator
HABs in the Peconics
PEP Budget Update
Septic Rebate Program
- 6:25 PM Summer Internship Overview
Christie Pfoertner-PEP Outreach & Education Coordinator
- 6:50 PM CAC Ambassadors- Ways you can be an active CAC member
Christie Pfoertner-PEP Outreach & Education Coordinator
- 7:10 PM Climate Change
Lena DeSantis
- 7:40 PM Post Lecture Survey
Christie Pfoertner- PEP Outreach & Education Coordinator
- 7:50 PM Closing Remarks and Adjournment

CAC MEETING DATES TO REMEMBER

- ✓ Saturday December 2nd 10am-12pm
East Hampton Town Hall
159 Pantigo Road, East Hampton

CONTACT

cac@peconicestuary.org

Christie Pfoertner, PEP Outreach Coordinator 631-727-7850 ext. 337

PEP CAC Meeting August
8/16/17
Minutes and Follow-Up Topics

Sarah Updates

PEP Budget:

- 2017 funding awarded in September will be fully funding similar to previous years (\$600,000)
- 2018 President's budget proposed elimination of program
- 2018 HOUSE funding bill maintains NEP funding at previous level
- 2018 SENATE bill not out yet – once it is the 2 will be reconciled and the final budget will be released

HABs in the PE

- Hasn't been too bad a year so far (in Peconic), a few north fork creeks had red tide closures during spring, some in places not found before
- Points to the need to do more extensive surveillance monitoring – we expect this to be a recommendation to come from the HAB Action Plan that Suffolk County is due to release this fall.
- Dissolved oxygen has been very low in the Peconic River in the last several weeks, but the bunker are staying off shore right now so not concerned about fish kill at this time.

Septic upgrade rebate program:

- As of July 3rd, 2017 Suffolk County has established a Septic Improvement Program to assist homeowners with the installation of Innovative/ Alternative Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems to reduce nitrogen pollution from wastewater.
- Homeowners who apply can be eligible for up to a \$10,000 grant and up to \$11,000 loan. Visit www.reclaimourwater.info for more information.

East Hampton's Septic Improvement Rebate Program was officially approved by the board last week:

- Up to \$16,000 is available depending on location,
- People are eligible for both county and town \$
- East Hampton rebate \$ can be used to fix/re-establish landscaping
- Goes into effect Sept. 5th, 2017
- Go to EH website for more info to be up shortly.

PEP 2017 Summer Internships

1. Horseshoe Crab Internship (3)
 - Three interns coordinated and participated in horseshoe crab tagging and monitoring at Squires Pond in Hampton Bays to quantify spawning behavior. They also helped to organize volunteers at public events where local enthusiasts can come to help and participate in the monitoring. We sample at night at high tide on the full moon as well as two days before and after the full moon. All the data is publicly available as part of the New York horseshoe crab monitoring network. Look out for horseshoe crabs with tags, if you happen to see one take a picture
2. Water Quality Internship (1)

- One intern was in charge of weekly water quality monitoring at three locations at the SCMELC facility in Southold. Volunteers also monitored the water quality at this location. We measured temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, and nitrogen in the form of nitrate (NO_3^-). This was the first year of a full program following a successful pilot program in 2016. We are in the process of launching a pilot program in Sag Harbor based on the success of this year's monitoring.
3. Terrapin Monitoring Internship (2)
 - Two interns assisted with a pilot program to monitor terrapin nesting behavior at the SCMELC in Southold. We look for test holes (nests) and adults who have come to the beaches to spawn.
 4. Salt Marsh Restoration Internship (1)
 - As part of a partnership with Cornell Cooperative marine division, one intern grew spartina, which is a salt marsh grass. We had a volunteer event, where locals would again participate in caring for the plants. These spartina will eventually be planted during national estuaries week in September.

CAC Ambassador Points

1. Homeowner Rewards Program
 - Next year is the final year. We need a big final push to inform the public about this amazing program.
2. Share Social Media Posts
3. Website
 - a. Coming very soon; hoping to launch by September. New website will have many new and exciting features, including an interactive map for the monofilament sites, online application process for the homeowner rewards and interactive map to ensure you are within the watershed, extensive native plant guide including information on where to purchase natives, and more.
4. Youth Program Outreach
 - Described rainbarrel programs for young children, which includes a presentation on stormwater and children decoration rainbarrels to install on location at Hallockville Farm and Quogue Wildlife Refuge.
 - We have 3 more that need to be installed and are actively looking for organizations to partner on for this. Let us know if you have ideas of some place within the watershed that is interested. Asked for recommendations on locations and organizations or schools who would be interested in native gardening or rainbarrel type of events with PEP
5. Suffolk County Septic Improvement Program
 - See info in Sarah update. Spread the word about these available rebates. We have a brochure with information regarding both the grand/loan programs and details on eligibility.
6. CCPM Participation
 - We still have time for people to fill out the survey. If you are passionate about any particular issue in the estuary please participate.

7. Fishing Line Receptacles

- Described the monofilament receptacles that have been installed throughout the bay
- All but one on Shelter Island remain to be installed
- Asked to be informed of other monofilament receptacles partner locations so we can add them to the interactive map

Citizen Questions

- Do we actually service all of these receptacles? → yes, including the partner locations
- Can we potentially place grates on some of the partner locations that do not yet have them → possibly we will look into this

8. Minority Outreach

- We are working to reach out to minority communities in the watershed, who may use the estuaries but could struggle to read information online about closures and signs with regulations and information. We are working to translate much of our materials into Spanish. All of our newsletters are also released in Spanish and we have some brochures. Are looking to partner with churches and community centers on a partner education event geared towards minorities. If you have any recommendations of potential partners please let us know.

9. STOP and Clean Sweep Program

- Please mention and promote these programs to any friends, family, or acquaintances who may not know how to dispose of old tires, hazardous waste, household chemicals, etc. A list of drop off locations and dates is available online. We also have STOP brochures with this information.

General Questions and Comments

- What are we doing to mitigate nutrients in the bay?
 - We are promoting people to discuss the dates where fertilization is not permitted and will be distributing flyers to all garden centers, hardware stores, nurseries, etc to help spread the word about safe fertilization techniques.
- Can we install grates on partner monofilament locations to reduce their use as recycling/garbage bins?
 - Potentially, we will look into it.
- What was meant by a medium amount of sea level rise in Lenas presentation?
- Question regarding what can be done when land above mean high water is lost to sea level rise and how to deal with the rising costs of flood insurance.



CAC AMBASSADOR TALKING POINTS

August 2017-December 2017

CAC Ambassador Program

The purpose of the Citizen's Advisory Committee Ambassador Program is to provide members information about the Peconic Estuary Program, upcoming meetings and scheduled events to share with your community. Together we can spread the message of healthy ecosystems, clean water and ways in which people can participate to reach this common goal.

Encourage Homeowner Reward Program Participation

The Peconic Estuary Program offers up to \$500 reimbursement for residents of the Peconic Estuary watershed who plant native vegetation on their properties or install a rain barrel or rain garden. This program will only be available until 2019 so be sure to encourage your community to apply soon! PEP's new website will have a full plant database and suggestions as to where people can purchase native plants.

Share Peconic Estuary Posts on Facebook

This is an easy way to help PEP spread the word about what is happening in our estuary. When you share or like our Facebook posts we reach and educate more people.

PEP's Updated Website

Upgrades include a native plant database, online submission for the Homeowner Rewards Program, downloadable kids material, best management practices, quizzes to test your estuary knowledge, responsible boating practices and more! The website will have an updated look and will be easier to navigate.

Youth Program Outreach

The Peconic Estuary Program is reaching out to youth programs to participate in PEP activities or work together to design activities specific to each group. Currently, we can offer rain barrel painting events to teach children about stormwater runoff, special Peconic River Walking Tours to introduce several of PEP's projects and fund native garden plantings at schools and churches within the Peconic Estuary watershed. If you know of a youth group interested please encourage them to reach out to Christie Pfoertner, Outreach Coordinator at pep-talk@peconicestuary.org.

Suffolk County Septic Improvement Program

Thousands of properties are currently served by cesspools and septic systems that will never be connected to a sewer system. Reversing degradation of water quality will depend on replacement of existing systems with new, individual Innovative and Alternative Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (I/A OWTS). Suffolk County has devised the Septic Improvement Program consisting of both a grant and low-interest financing program as a way to assist residents to transition to systems that better protect water quality. More information can be found at www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/Planning/ReclaimOurWaterInitiativeUpdate.aspx.

CCMP Update Participation

This year the Peconic Estuary Program is embarking on a revision of the Peconic Estuary Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP). It's been 15 years since the Peconic Estuary Program first released our plan to conserve and restore the Peconic Estuary. Much has changed since the first plan was written and it is your turn to be a part of molding the new CCMP. Improving water quality in the Peconic Estuary is a complex issue and requires the cooperation and coordination of multiple groups. Help us refocus our efforts on the latest threats to the waterbodies of the Peconic by filling out a survey online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/P7HCVXB

Fishing Line Receptacles

In December 2016, volunteers helped assemble monofilament fishing line receptacles to be installed around the Peconic Estuary. We are now looking for all fishing line receptacles to be included on an interactive map for the recreational fishing community to utilize. Please e-mail cac@peconicestuary.org to inform us of locations you are aware of.

Minority Outreach

PEP has been increasing efforts to reach out to minority groups within the Peconic Estuary watershed. Our newsletters and kids materials have been translated into Spanish and our new website will have a translation feature to accommodate the Spanish speaking community. If you know of any organizations interested please encourage them to reach out to Christie Pfoertner, Outreach Coordinator at peptalk@peconicestuary.org.

Clean Sweep Program and S.T.O.P.

CleanSweepNY is a NYSDEC environmental benefit project that provides for the environmentally safe and economic collection and disposal of unwanted or unusable pesticides, golf course chemicals, and mercury-containing devices. S.T.O.P. (Stop Throwing Out Pollutants) is a program where you can drop off your household hazardous materials for proper disposal instead of throwing them away. A list of accepted items for drop-off can be found at toh.li/sanitation-depa.../stop-throwing-out-pollutants.

About the Peconic Estuary Program

The Peconic Estuary Program (PEP) is one of 28 National Estuary Programs around the country under section 320 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Clean Water Act. The program is responsible for creating a management plan to protect the estuary. The PEP was established November 1992 after citizen groups formed in response to the Brown Tide algal bloom events in the mid 1980's and early 1990's. At that time, it became the 20th National Estuary Program in the country.

The PEP is comprised of all stakeholders within the estuary. Committee members from each stakeholder group meet quarterly to discuss concerns and solutions with the PEP program staff: "CAC" Citizen's Advisory Committee- citizens, business leaders "TAC" Technical Advisory Committee- scientists, environmental groups "MC" Management Committee- program staff, USEPA, NYSDEC, Suffolk County, local townships and east end incorporated villages. The PEP program office is located in Yaphank at the Suffolk County Dept. of Health Services, Office of Ecology. Public outreach and education is contracted annually, currently to Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County.

PEP Accomplishments

- Development of Critical Lands Protection Strategy and implementation of Community Preservation Fund to protect land from development
- Riverhead Sewage Treatment Plant effluent to irrigate Indian Island Golf Course
- Enactment of the Suffolk County Fertilizer Reduction Law (Local law 41-2007)
- Development and implementation of sub-watershed specific management plans
- Continuous long-term monitoring of water quality and sea grass distribution
- Peconic River Rock ramp passage in Grangebelle Park, Riverhead and installation of eel and fish passage Edwards Avenue, Calverton
- Implementation of Peconic Estuary nitrogen and pathogen pollution reduction plans and upgrades of Sewage Treatment Plants
- Support bay scallop restoration efforts

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Protecting and Restoring Long Island's Peconic Bays.