



Key Findings and Recommendations from the Organizational Assessment: Opportunities for Re- Building the Partnership

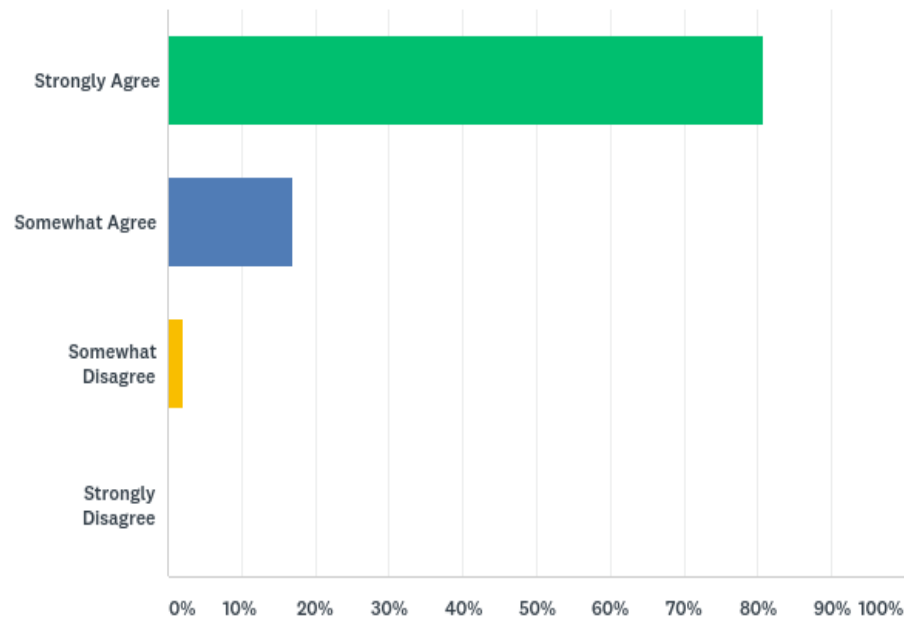
October 10th Peconic Estuary Program Management Committee Meeting

Online Survey and Interviews

- CoastWise Partners developed different questions for the online survey and interviews.
- Requests to complete the online survey sent by CoastWise Partners to about 350 email addresses provide by PEP staff and included Committee members plus attendees from various PEP events. 56 responses to the online survey were received.
- CoastWise Partners conducted more than 30 phone interviews with key members of the PEP Committees, as identified by PEP staff.
- The following results and recommendations are from assessment performed by CoastWise Partners based on the online survey and phone interviews.

Widespread, strong commitment to the overall goals and mission of the Program

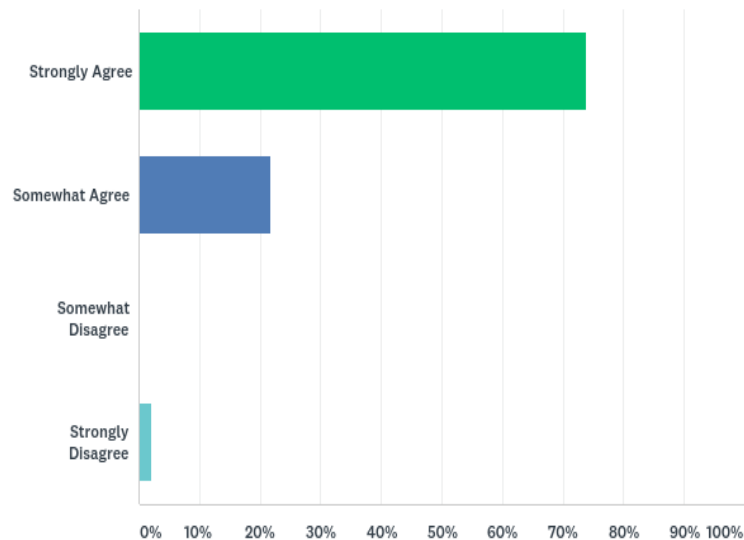
Q4 Peconic Estuary Program's draft Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan or CCMP has proposed the following as a mission for the program: Mission: To protect and restore the Peconic Estuary Watershed. Do you (please select one) with the above draft mission statement?



Suggestion to clarify as “Peconic Estuary and Watershed’, to indicate both the estuary and watershed are included in PEP’s mission.

Widespread, strong commitment to the overall goals and mission of the Program

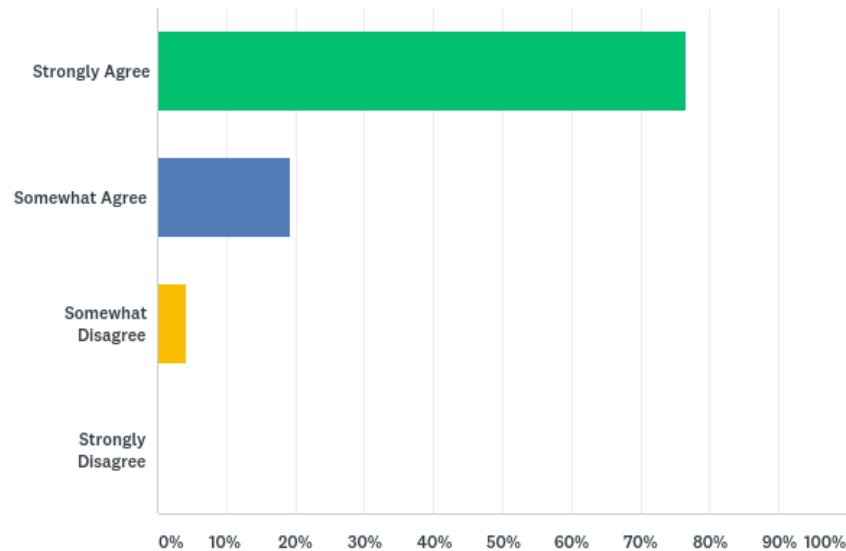
Q6 Peconic Estuary Program's draft CCMP has proposed the following as a vision for the Peconic Estuary Program: Vision: A successful partnership dedicated to restoring clean water, protecting and enhancing vibrant ecosystems and communicating sound science for nature-based coastal planning in the Peconic Bays. Do you (please select one) with the above draft vision statement?



Suggestion to be consistent when using either Bays or Estuary. Suggest the use of 'Peconic Estuary' to be consistent with the Peconic Estuary Program name.

Strong agreement with Core Values

Q7 The Peconic Estuary Program's draft CCMP has proposed the following as the core values for the Peconic Estuary Program: Core Values: Sound Science, Strong Partnerships, Community Leadership, Beneficial Communication Do you (please select one) with the above four core values?



Suggestion to change
Beneficial Communication
to Effective Communication

Discussion and Decisions

Summary of Recommendations:

1. **Adopt the draft CCMP Mission Statement**, clarified as “Protect and Restore the Peconic Estuary and Its Watershed”.
2. **Adopt the draft CCMP proposed vision**, clarified as “A successful partnership dedicated to restoring clean water, protecting and enhancing vibrant ecosystems and communicating sound science for nature-based coastal planning in the Peconic Estuary and its watershed”.
3. **Adopt the proposed Core Values**, clarified as “Sound Science, Strong Partnerships, Community Leadership, Effective Communication” for publication in the draft CCMP.

Discussion:

- Public does not understand what an estuary is.
- We need to focus on who is our target audience—recommend keeping with “estuary” vs. “bays” at this time until we do further polling of the general public and understand their needs.
- Add a simple description of what is an estuary—where the river runs into the ocean.
- A successful partnership of who?

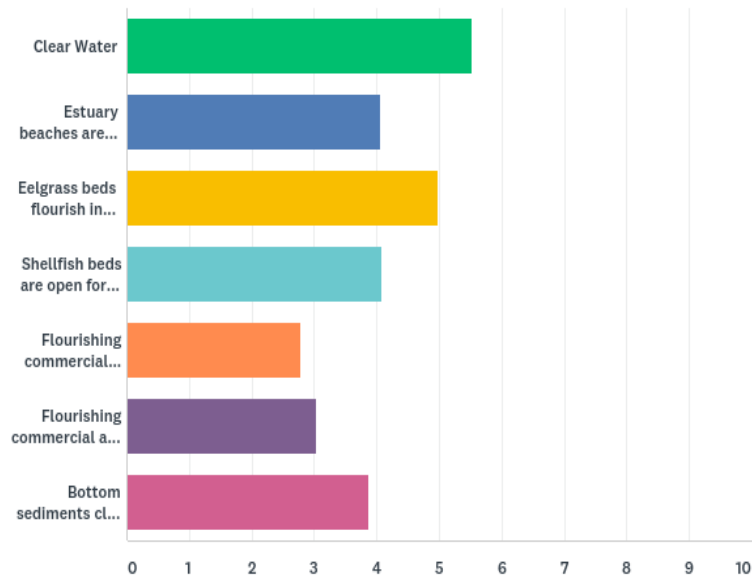
Decisions: Agreement on the recommended mission statement, vision and core values.

Due Date: Incorporate the recommended mission statement, vision and core values in the draft CCMP now.

Agreement on key characteristics

Q8 What do you think are the key characteristics of a Peconic estuary that reflects the intent of the Peconic Estuary Program's draft vision statement as described above in Question 3?

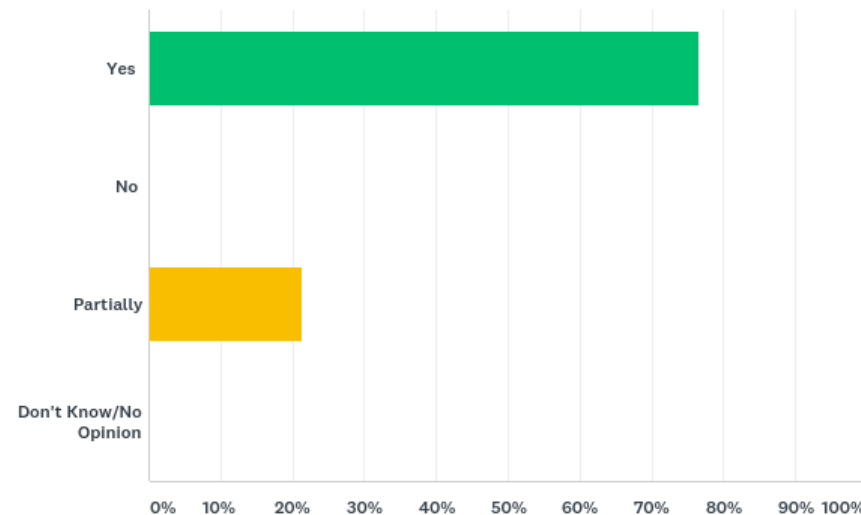
Please rank the following, with 1 being the highest-ranked characteristic.



Although 'clear water' received the highest number of '1' ranks, rankings were diverse and divided. All seven characteristics received at least one top rank and one bottom rank.

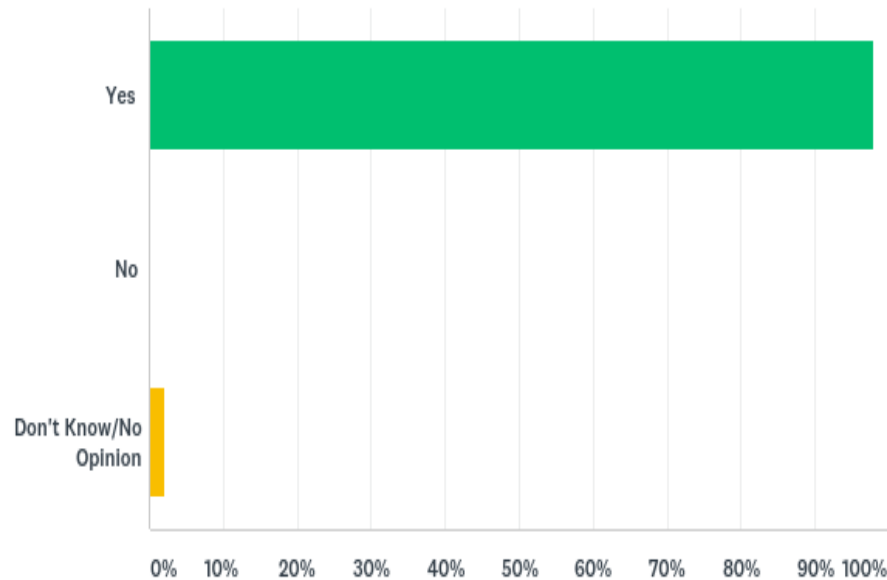
Strong agreement on draft CCMP Goals

Q11 The Peconic Estuary Program's draft CCMP includes the following goals: · Improve water quality by reducing current and future sources of pollution. · Develop and implement strategies to manage historical pollution loads in groundwater. · Expand scientific understanding of the estuary ecosystem. · Restore and protect key habitats. · Instill positive behavioral change within the Peconic community that supports estuary health. · Develop stronger engagement with underrepresented groups. · Empower local communities to take meaningful, well-informed action to prepare for and minimize climate change impacts in the Peconic estuary. · Increase and diversify funding for the partnership. · Strengthen the role of municipalities. Do you believe the goals articulated in the draft Peconic Estuary Program CCMP are appropriate and clearly defined?



Strong agreement to keep the public informed

Q15 Should the public be regularly informed about progress (or lack thereof) being made towards achieving the goals listed in Question 11, once approved?



“YES, YES, YES, YES”

Discussion and Decisions

Summary of recommended actions:

1. Adopt the proposed key characteristics.
2. Adopt the draft CCMP Goals.
3. Charge the Citizens Advisory Committee with developing recommendations on ways to keep the public informed on progress (or lack of) towards goals.

Discussion:

- These key characteristics are a starting place to be further refined as we undertake more polling of public opinion.
- This initial list shows us that there is not a single issue that rises above all the others, based on polling a very informed and engaged group of 50+ partners.
- Kevin McDonald offered access to TNC polling information for use by the Partnership.

Decisions: Agreement to adopt the proposed key characteristics as an initial starting point, adopt the draft CCMP goals, and move forward with development of a strategic communications plan for the Partnership.

Due Date(s): Bringing on strategic communication support is dependent on next year's budget and work plan. Start the dialogue with the Citizens Advisory Committee at their December 5, 2019 meeting.

Finding: Functions, roles and benefits of the Program are unclear to the program participants much less the public.

Recommendations:

Management Committee and Program Office staff will define the principle functions, roles and benefits that PEP provides to its partners and the community, for review and approval by the Policy Committee. These may include other functions not identified in the survey, such as providing sound science on regional issues.

Charge the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Program Office staff to design a PEP 'identity campaign' to raise awareness of what PEP is and does in the community, for review by the Management Committee and approval by the Policy Committee.

Charge the Program Office staff to develop a web-based 'Peconic Estuary Program member/volunteer package' tab, for new and existing members, that includes an overview of the Peconic Estuary Program's mission and goals, its organizational structure, bylaws or guiding principles of each Committee (including its charge, member organizations, etc.), lists of members for each committee and a summary of major accomplishments. Update as needed.

Discussion and Decisions

Summary of recommended actions:

1. Define principle goals, roles and benefits.
2. Design a PEP 'identity campaign'.
3. Develop a web-based 'Peconic Estuary Program member/volunteer package' tab.

Discussion:

- Useful to partners who are new to the Peconic Estuary Partnership.
- Is this a branding exercise?
- Part of the challenge to PEP has been a question of relevancy to the public as well as to our partners. If we are focused on describing our relevancy, if so, we can do this.
- This is also linked to the discussions with CAC and development of a foundation to help with raising funds for implementation.
- Clear finding from the on-line survey and interviews—the key questions raised were “who is the Peconic Estuary Program” and “what is this partnership”?
- Decision on becoming a partner is a BIG decision—we need to consider helping organizations in making such a decision.
- Importance in helping answer questions like who is in this partnership, what does this partnership do, and why is this partnership important.
- Need to understand how our partnership is different from other organizations/partnerships also focused on the Peconic Estuary Partnership.

Discussion and Decisions

Summary of recommended actions:

1. Define principle goals, roles and benefits.
2. Design a PEP 'identity campaign'.
3. Develop a web-based 'Peconic Estuary Program member/volunteer package' tab.

Discussion (Continued):

- Could use a simple table that describes the roles of the Peconic Estuary Partnership compared with those of other Peconic Estuary related organizations.
- Consider focusing in a select number of watersheds to have work underway at the neighborhood level.
- We need to update the PEP website to reflect the updated CCMP as well as the actions agreed to by the Policy Committee and Management Committee.

Decisions: Charge the CAC to draft up the table describing the roles of the Peconic Estuary Partnership compared to other organizations. Agreement to move forward with the above three recommended actions. Need to further flesh out the next steps needed to move forward on each of these items.

Due Dates: CAC to work on at the December 5th meeting and bring their recommendations forward to the Management Committee at their February 2020 joint meeting with the Policy Committee.

Agenda Items for the February 2020 Joint Policy/Management Committees Meeting

- Draft partnership by-laws and organizational chart for review and decisions
- Draft description of committees functions and roles for review and decisions
- Draft descriptions of how the committees and workgroup will interact, communicate, work together on decision making for review and decisions
- Report out from Task Force convened to evaluate partnership needs and host entity for review, discussion and agreement on next steps
- Draft formal agreement for review, discussion, agreement on next steps
- Update on development of numeric goals, feedback and next steps
- Update, feedback and next steps on communications plan for the public
- Finance plan outline for discussion and agreement on next steps
- First draft outline of annual workplan for review, feedback, and direction
- Agreement on issues for discussion/decision at the May 2020 meeting

Agenda Items for the February 2020 Joint Policy/Management Committees Meeting

Management Committee added two additional agenda items to the February 2020 joint Policy/Management Committees meeting:

- Draft telling the Peconic Estuary story
- Plans for developing the Peconic Estuary Program identity program

Due Dates, Timelines and Next Steps to Move Forward on the October 9 Retreat Decisions

- Work toward a 2020 timeframe for renewing the partnership, including a formal partner agreement; CCMP signing ceremony; name change
- Move forward with development of numerical goals which are achievable, understandable by the public and build off existing indicators
- Charge staff to work with Chairs of each Committee to: define roles and responsibilities; develop by-laws; and define roles of Chairs; convene a joint PC/MC meeting to finalize and approve the above
- Charge the LGC to work with Staff to recommend: how the LGC interacts within the PEP management structure; and roles of local government representatives with the partnership

Due Dates, Timelines and Next Steps to Move Forward on the October 9 Retreat Decisions

- Convene and charge small task force to: determine the needs of the partnership, explore the pros and cons of existing/potential alternatives for the organizational home; evaluate existing MOUs and how they can be strengthened; and evaluate agreements with local governments and how they can be strengthened
- Plan to evaluate existing staff capacity to support ongoing and anticipated additional effort, and assess whether additional staff and/or skills may be needed after the partnership makes progress on the CCMP, formal agreement, by-laws, etc. and better understands its staff support needs
- Start to outline elements of a funding strategy and work towards and assigning responsibilities and timelines for developing the strategy