

Program Report December 4, 2019



I. HIGHLIGHTS

1. NBEP Committee officers and Steering Committee members [**For discussion later today**]
2. Guiding Principles Revision [Update]
3. CCMP Update Progress [Update]
4. Science Advisory Committee meeting [Update]
5. Select NBEP internal and external projects [Update]



II. MANAGING THE PROGRAM

1. Financials

➤ NBEP's funding status as of November 29, 2019 is included is provided below.

FY15 (JCC: 318) 10/1/2015 - 9/30/2020	FY16 (JCC: 326) 10/1/2016 - 9/30/2020
Personnel and Fringe Balance	Complete
\$0	STATUS: Awaiting EPA approval of closure request.
Subawards/Contracts Balances	FY17 (JCC: 332) 10/1/2017 - 9/30/2020
FY15 SNEP Subawards [\$5,071]	Personnel and Fringe Balance
E. Providence \$5,071	\$27,384
FY15 NBEP Research Subawards [\$21,840]	Subawards/Contracts Balances
Clean Ocean Access \$0	FY18 Contracts [\$39,437]
Pete August (split 318, 332) \$0	URI STORMTOOLS \$26,964
John King \$0	Communications support \$0
Dan Codiga \$21,840	Watershed Counts Archive \$0
FY18 NBEP SNEP Subawards [\$0]	Priority projects \$12,473
\$152,000 shifted to NBEP SNEP JCC:338	CCMP support \$12,473
Remaining NBEP Tasks Initiated in FY15	Remaining NBEP Tasks Initiated in FY17
None	STORMTOOLS expansion to Mt Hope and Taunton
STATUS: A no cost extension was approved until 6/30/20 for East Providence and Codiga subawards.	STATUS: Contract support for the CCMP Update began this period.

FY18 (JCC: 338) 10/1/2017 - 9/30/2020	FY18 (JCC: 0100-324) 10/1/2018 - 3/31/2021
Personnel and Fringe Balance	Personnel and Fringe Balance
\$518,502	\$14,563
Subawards/Contracts Balances	Subawards/Contracts Balances
NBEP SNEP [\$606,000]-includes \$152,000 from FY15	\$0
\$131,260 for watershed planning subawards	Remaining NBEP Tasks Initiated in FY18
\$101,590 for Blackstone Needs Assessment subawards	GIS support for Hundred Acre Cove Project
\$223,900 for Shovel-Ready Projects subawards	STATUS: No update.
\$45,221 left to be allocated	FY19 (JCC: 0349) 10/1/2019 - 9/30/2023
Project Support [\$5,000]	Personnel and Fringe Balance
Open source availability for manuscript \$5,000	\$439,824
Remaining NBEP Tasks Initiated in FY18	Subawards/Contracts Balances
Finance plan	Research Grants [\$35,000]
Case statement	NBEP Tasks to Be Initiated Under FY19 Agreement
CCMP update	Communications strategy and implementation
STATUS: SNEP money shifted to NBEP staff time for Blackstone Needs Assessment and award of shovel-ready projects. Based on the most current numbers from NEIWPCC \$45K is available for other projects.	Data management protocol
	Social science workshop
	STATUS: Individual staff work plans and the SC update process are complete. Funds will be spent later in FY20.

2. People

- *Committee Officers.* Caitlin Chafee of the RI Coastal Marine Resources Council (CRMC) was nominated for Steering Committee (SC) Vice-Chair at the September 11th SC meeting. Executive Committee (EC) members and the Program Director pursued potential Chairs, but none accepted. NBEP will begin 2020 without a Chair. For future meetings the chairpersonship will be rotated around EC and SC members until a new Chair is approved. Sue Kiernan RI Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and Jaimie Vaudrey of UCONN were nominated as Co-Chairs of the Science Advisory Committee (SAC) at the November 15th meeting. The EC will vet all these officer candidates and may advance them to the SC for review and approval.
- *SC Update Support Materials.* In response to request from the EC at their October 9th meeting, the following documents to inform an SC update were developed and will be shared with the EC and SC for review/use as appropriate:
 - A draft document titled, 'Process for Adding New Steering Committee Members and Officers,' revised based on EC input. Ultimately this information can be added to the NBEP Guiding Principles.
 - A draft SC recruitment flyer that was created in lieu of a job description to use for nominee vetting and future cultivation.
 - A refined matrix of SC nominees based on the master document started as a Google document that was shared with the SC in September.
- *SC and SAC Departures, Reappointments, and New Members.* Note that SC reappointments and nominees are collectively referred to as 'nominees.'
 - Four members of the SC are stepping off after the December 4th NBEP meetings, including Judith Swift (SC Chair), URI Coastal Institute; John King (SAC Chair), URI Graduate School of Oceanography; Jim Boyd (SC member), Coastal Resource Management Council; and Dave Taylor (SC member), Roger Williams University (who would like to shift from the SC to the SAC).

- Further, six members are seeking reappointment: Eric Boettger, Natural Resource Conservation Service; Walter Galloway, RI Rivers Council; Susan Kiernan, RIDEM; John O'Brien (new The Nature Conservancy representative), Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon; and Bob Stankelis, Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.
- The EC will also consider seven potential new members.
- The nominees noted above will be vetted by the EC and may be sent to the SC for final review and approval.

3. Governance

- *Guiding Principles Revision.* The idea to revise the NBEP's Guiding Principles arose from the August 8th EC meeting where Mike noted the need for an "official" NBEP document that explains the financial relationship between NBEP and the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC). Such a document would greatly help when approaching potential funders. While several other options were discussed (e.g., new bylaws or resolution) revising the Guiding Principles was viewed by the EC as the best approach. Revised principles would accomplish many useful things, including (1) enabling consistency with current committee practice, (2) fixing existing inconsistencies, (3) enacting governance changes already requested by NBEP committees, (4) complying with the existing principle's provision that they be reexamined in 2020, and (5) adding text about NEIWPCC's role as NBEP's fiscal sponsor. A track-changes version, clean copy, and line-by-line description/justification of changes were provided to the EC prior to their October 8th meeting. Initial discussion of the document made it clear that several unanswered questions limited further useful conversation. Some pending questions include:

- What EPA considers prohibited fundraising?
- What amount/type of revenue NEIWPCC is willing to manage?
- Whether the administrative costs of managing non-NEP funds can be billed to Clean Water Act 320 funds?

Meetings among EPA Region 1, EPA lawyers, and NEIWPCC are planned to discuss. Therefore, the revision is on hold awaiting clarity on these issues.

- *Committee Meeting Updates:*
 - Executive Committee. The EC met on October 9th. The timing of the December EC and SC meetings and NEP funding diversification were the main topics of discussion. See the Guiding Principles Revision update above for further information.
 - Steering Committee. NBEP held a productive meeting on September 11th. Notable parts of the meeting were a presentation from Emi Uchida with URI on the results of the new *Narragansett Bay Watershed Economy Project—The Ebb and Flow of Natural Capital*; a group process to take committee input on a proposed new NBEP vision, mission, and intentions; and a demonstration of some new NBEP mapping skills and work products.
 - CCMP Subcommittee. NBEP also held very constructive second and third meetings of the CCMP Subcommittee that completed the introductory phase of CCMP Update development. On September 19th sessions included presentations from

Curtis Bohlen with the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership and Pam DiBona with the MassBays National Estuary Program; a presentation on the governance and CCMP approach of 15 NEPs; a discussion of which high priority actions in the 2012 CCMP were completed; a discussion of eight provisions at the core of the CCMP roadmap; and a brainstorm of groups/individuals that should join the committee. On November 18th, CoastWise Partners, Holly Greening formerly of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program and Rich Batiuk formerly the Science Director at the Chesapeake Bay Program, shared their big picture views on partnership-based large landscape restoration and specific advice for CCMP development. The group also went through the 119 actions in the 2012 CCMP to determine which should be considered for the CCMP Update. Lastly, potential audiences for the new CCMP were identified to inform outreach prior to, during, and after document creation. We are very pleased with our progress on this task so far. A final CCMP Update is due by October 2022.

- Science Advisory Committee. On November 15th, the SAC met to discuss potential indicator updates for the 2017 *State of Narragansett Bay and Its Watershed* Technical Report. As you may remember, NBEP's work plan task and approved QAPP allows our indicator "updates" to take many forms, including full indicator chapter revisions, adding new information to an existing indicator, adding a new indicator, creating a white paper or workshop proceedings on an emerging issue, or create a new visual tool to explain an indicator (like our land use StoryMap). The SAC recommended investigating land use and benthic communities as potential updates. They also suggested creating a workgroup for water clarity to update the indicator and discuss mechanisms to share the data and new data sources. NBEP staff introduced the concept of a social indicator workshop and an internship program. The SAC supported these ideas and provided contacts and ways to refine the workshops and programs. The next SAC meeting in spring 2020 include review of draft indicator updates and further design of the Fall social workshop.
- Grants Subcommittee. The Grants Subcommittee met on September 30th to review proposals in response to NBEP's Request for Quotations for use of remaining SNEP funds shovel-ready watershed restoration projects. Roughly \$224k was available. Proposals requesting a total of \$317K were submitted. All projects were scored, discussed, and a consensus recommendation to award three projects full funding and one project at half their request. The following projects were awarded for a total of \$223,900:
 - Aquidneck Island Planning Commission–Wet Vegetated Treatment Systems [RI]--\$100,000
 - Mill Cove Causeway Project, Land Conservancy of North Kingstown [RI]--\$5,000
 - Armory Village Green Infrastructure Project, Town of Millbury [MA]--\$75,000
 - Salt Marsh Adaptation Projects, Save The Bay [RI]–partial funding--\$25,000All projects must be complete by June 30, 2020, thus NBEP will spend down the \$152K from the never completed City of West Warwick project that expires that date.

- *Office Space.* A new MOA between RIDEM and NEIWPCCC covering our existing office space at 235 Promenade, Suite 393 through September 30, 2023 was fully executed on September 20th.

4. Funding Diversification

- *Uses for New and Diversified NBEP Funding.* NBEP grant writing in FY2020 will focus on (1) increasing the money that can pass through for external contracts and subawards to support research, planning, technical assistance, and project implementation, and (2) internal use to achieve and sustain a staff of 4 FTE and necessary interns.
- *Finance Plan.* In their 2018 Program Evaluation, EPA required NBEP to develop a Finance Plan that maps out options for bringing in money to expand and diversify its funding. Note that this plan will focus on funds that comes into NBEP and stays for staff or goes out via contracts or subawards to meet NBEP’s annual Work Plan. The CCMP Update will include a separate more expansive plan for funding its implementation. *Since the very same issues that are holding up the revision to the Guiding Principles also are central to the construct of the finance plan, its development has also been paused.* To advance thinking on both governance and funding diversification in the interim, NBEP developed and shared with the SC a document titled, “Organizational Revenue Options Matrix.” It detailed some potential positives and negatives, readiness, available dollars, and examples of where NBEP/NEIWPCCC has used any of the 14 revenue sources included in the table below. They are ranked based on their potential for use by NBEP.

Rank	Potential Revenue Source
1	Increased Federal NEP authorization
2	Fee-for-service for any partner
3	Peer-to-peer with SC members
4	Single Private foundation
5	Other Federal
6	Corporate sponsorships
7	State funding
8	Corporate donations (no individual donors)
9	Multiple private foundation network
10	Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) funds from enforcement
11	New NFWF investment
12	Local, regional, or national fundraising NGO
13	Workshop/event fees
14	Round-up/co-venture with business

- *Allowable Grant Writing Decision.* Subsequent to the compilation of the four outstanding funding questions noted in the Governance section, EPA Region 1 shared an answer on November 22nd to one question. EPA HQ lawyers indicated that NBEP’s pursuit of funding from foundations or corporations where NBEP provides a service in exchange for the funds (e.g., a deliverable is provided per the grant agreement and so it does not meet the IRS definition of a gift) is allowable and is not considered prohibited fundraising under [OMB Uniform Guidance 200.442](#) or NEP Funding Guidance. Also, whether NBEP is responding to a specific/formal RFP is not relevant. Answers to the other questions remain pending.



III. BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

No NBEP hosted workshops or other convenings were completed beyond the NBEP committees noted in Section II and outreach/professional development noted in Section V of this report.



IV. SYNTHESIZING AND MANAGING DATA

- *Synthesis Manuscript.* The synthesis manuscript titled, *A synthesis of adaptive management case studies from Narragansett Bay emphasizing implementation of the U.S. Clean Water Act*, was submitted to the journal *Environmental Management* on September 27th. The manuscript has completed review and is with the journal editors. Staff also offered a well-received presentation on the manuscript at the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF) meeting. Commenters applauded the Clean Water Act and adaptive management threads used in the paper and talk. As a direct result of this CERF talk, NBEP was invited to speak at the New England Estuarine Research Society in June 2020.
 - *NBEP GIS Infrastructure Upgrade.* NBEP has made excellent progress re-organizing and cleaning up NBEP's GIS data files. Metadata development taking place concurrently with these upgrades. A data portal is also under development to make NBEP's data conveniently available. Initial roll-out of the first sets of data via the portal is expected by the end of the year.
 - *NBEP Grants Map.* Staff have completed a GIS map of the NBEP funded projects from 1988 to 2019 that are associated with a specific location. Major subbasins are represented, projects are color-coded by project type, and can be viewed by decade to screen out older data.
 - *Draft Environmental Justice Map.* Drafted a GIS map that shows environmental justice (EJ) communities in the Narragansett Bay Watershed in RI and MA based on a mix of race, income, education, and health (e.g., Health Equity Zones). 75% of the 113 towns in the watershed include a census block group with an EJ area (17% of land area in the watershed are considered EJ communities). These areas are likely to be a focus in our CCMP Update.
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V. SHARING INFORMATION

- Below is a list of NBEP staff outreach efforts since the September 11th SC meeting.
 - Sept 14th Providence Ports and Environmental Justice (Twichell)
 - Sept 13th Climate Adaptation and Resilience Information Sharing Group (Gerel)
 - Sept 17-18th Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Coastal Zone training in DC (Gerel)
 - Sept 18th Leadership Rhode Island (Schmidt)

- Sept 25th Ches Bay–Narragansett Bay Leadership Exchange in Newport (Gerel, speaker)
- Sept 26th NEIWPC Tech Transfer Call (Schmidt, Twichell, Bancroft)
- Sept 26th Mapping and Understanding Heat Health Vulnerability webinar (Twichell, Bancroft)
- Sept 27th RI Infrastructure Bank Summit (Gerel, speaker)
- Oct 1-3 ANEP Technical Transfer Workshop (Gerel, Schmidt)
- Oct 4th Senator Whitehouse RI Energy and Water Summit (Gerel)
- Oct 8th Stefanie Covino, City of Worcester, (Gerel)
- Oct 9th Danica Warns, MassAudubon (Schmidt, Twichell, Bancroft)
- Oct 9th RI Rivers Council meeting (Twichell, Bancroft)
- Oct 10th Alicia Lehrer and Lisa Aurecchia, Woonsocket River WC (Twichell, Gerel)
- Oct 11th Kate Michaud, Town of Warren, RI (Gerel)
- Oct 11th Resilient Taunton Watershed Network (Bancroft)
- Oct 15th Narragansett Beer new brewpub planting event (Schmidt, Twichell, Bancroft)
- Oct 15th Judith Swift, Nate Vinhateiro, Coastal Institute (Gerel)
- Oct 16th Tim Stagnitta, RIDEM (Twichell)
- Oct 17th Nate Merrill, Autumn Oczkowski, Darryl Keith, EPA ACESD (Twichell, Schmidt)
- Oct 18th Kim Jacobs and Phil Hervey, Town of Barrington (Twichell, Gerel)
- Oct 18th Eric Howe, Lake Champlain Basin Program (Gerel)
- Oct 21st Curt Spaulding, Brown and Bryce Dubois, RISD (Gerel)
- Oct 21st Racial Equity Groundwater Presentation (Gerel, Schmidt, Bancroft)
- Oct 23rd Marcus Holmes, Environmental Justice lead, EPA (Gerel)
- Oct 21-23rd Northeast Arc Users Group Conference (Twichell, speaker)
- Oct 24th Meg Kerr, RI Audubon Society (Gerel)
- Oct 30th New Voices to the Water Table Project at Woonasquatucket River WC (Twichell)
- Oct 30th Anne Kuhn, Mike Charpentier, EPA–ORD (Twichell)
- Oct 31st Communicating About Climate webinar (Twichell)
- Nov 1st Emily Shumchenia, URI (Schmidt)
- Nov 1st Katie DeGoosh-DiMarzio (Schmidt)
- Nov 2-8th Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (Schmidt, speaker)
- Nov 8th Holly Greening and Rich Batiuk, CoastWise Partners (Gerel)
- Nov 5-6th Racial Equity Institute training (Twichell, Bancroft)
- Nov 14th Courtney Rocha, MA Municipal Vulnerability Program (Gerel)
- Nov 14th Bryce Dubois, RISD (Twichell)
- Nov 20th CVS Health (Gerel)
- Nov 20th Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership Program Evaluation (Gerel)
- Nov 21st EPA Climate Vulnerability Assessment for NEPs (Gerel)
- Nov 22nd Providence Port meeting (Gerel)
- Nov 25th Restore America’s Estuaries development lead call (Gerel)
- Dec 3rd NEERs 2020 Planning call (Schmidt)
- Dec 3rd RI Habitat Fund Technical Advisory Committee (Gerel)



VI. SUPPORTING EXTERNAL PROJECTS

- *EPA ORD Story Maps Pilot.* NBEP posted in early November the pilot story map titled, *A Landscape of Change*, created in collaboration with the EPA ORD Atlantic Coastal Environmental Sciences Division. The story map uses data from the 2017 Status and Trends report to chronicle population change in the watershed, impacts to the landscape, and flows into a connection to our CCMP update. It is publicly available on NBEP's website.
- *Mapping for Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council (WRWC).* Julia Twichell has been assisting the WRWC with some watershed mapping to be used for public signage and consulting on a Story Map project that are pursuing with high school children. WRWC is a very well-regarded and successful organization that we see as a great future partner.
- *SNEP Funded Projects.* Scopes of work and contracts with NEIWPC are now in place for all five planning projects awarded earlier this year. See Committee Updates for the status of the four shovel-ready projects funded late this year. NBEP has now allocated nearly all SNEP funds (~\$45K is unallocated) across 10 projects (5 external planning, 4 external restoration externally, and 1 internal project—Blackstone Needs Assessment).
- *FY17 Research Projects.* Projects from East Providence (Sabin Point Park Stormwater Improvement Project), Clean Ocean Access Marine Beaches Bacteria Project), and Dan Codiga (*Analysis and Synthesis of Bay Oxygen, Chlorophyll and Temperature Data*) are progressing and on target for completion by June 30, 2020.



VII. UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- Priority staff activities for the next few months:

Gerel	Schmidt	Bancroft	Twichell
CCMP Update Roadmap and Goals Matrix	2020 indicator update	Support CCMP Update and Blackstone assessment	GIS database redesign and metadata
Blackstone project kick-off	Land & Water Summit		Data portal development
Committee meetings notes	NBEP Internship Program	Data organization support and metadata	2020 indicator update
NBEP fact sheet/annual report	Social Indicator Workshop	Website update	Explore new projects
Partner Outreach			

- Upcoming NBEP meetings:
 - Blackstone Needs Assessment: December 11th, Cumberland Library, RI
 - Executive Committee: January 14, 2020, **location TBD**
 - Steering Committee: March 25, 2020, **location TBD**
 - CCMP Subcommittee: February 20, 2020, **RI location to be determined**