AGENDA

11:00 Welcome Dr. Kirk Havens

Chair Comments

Introductions

- Attendees/ Introductions: Kirk Havens, Bill Crowell, Jennifer Dimaio, Rua Mordecai, Claire Johnson, Peggy Mullin, Susan White, Jeff Michaels, Angela Padaletti, Tim Ellis, Giancarlo Richardson, Natalie Ivey, Sean McDevitt, Dean Carpenter, Eric Walburg, Tom Allen, Stacey Feken, Karen Forget, John Nicholson, Adrienne Katula (Wilson Laney joined meeting later)

Agenda Review

- No changes to agenda

Approval of meeting notes

- Minutes from last meeting were approved
- Kirk started the motion to approve
    - Susan was first to approve
    - All waved in approval
        - Adrienne abstained because she was not present during the last meeting

Public Comments

- Nobody from the public was present and comment period was closed.

11:10 Director's Briefing Dr. Bill Crowell

- APNEP would like to investigate getting highway signs for entering the Virginia portion of the watershed
- Dates for strategic planning session March 17-18
    - Pre-meeting survey beforehand
    - Christy Perrin from NC Sea Grant & WRRI facilitating the meeting
    - Session will likely be held in NE part of the North Carolina
- NC General Assembly allocated funds to APNEP - $850k for this and next fiscal year, non-recurring
- Received $200,000 in additional funding for SAV mapping (marked as recurring)
- Early October EPA approved Communications and Engagement Plan
    - Component of 2025 CCMP and available on website now
    - Working to finish adaptation, finance, restoration, and monitoring plans
        - Restoration plan will likely release last, later next year
    - Nate Marsh, Sea Grant STEM Fellow, is working on wetland policy review and then will work on restoration plan when completed
- State of the sounds report / assessment / dashboard hopefully coming in the next year following other CCMP components
- New partnership with VA Sea Grant expanding joint fellowship to support fellow in the Virginia part of the watershed

Commented [IN1]: Not sure this is accessible format

Commented [IN2]: Either do everyone's affiliation or none. Look at past meeting notes to see which is standard.

    - Dr. Tim Ellis, Dr. Susan White and Mona Behl (VA Sea Grant) made this happen
    - Susan said VA Sea Grant is very pleased to be in this partnership
    - Bill says Mona has been great to work with
- 40th anniversary of NEP coming next year. Hoping to host APNEP symposium around November 2027
- Next Spring we will be developing a new format for reports
    - Should be less redundancy within documents while meeting reporting requirements
    - Sending out survey for spring meetings as well
- Left open to questions
    - Kirk emphasized importance of General Assembly allocation and thanked John and NC DEQ for their role in making it happen

11:15 EPA Updates Ms. Jennifer Dimaio, EPA Region IV

- EPA approved comms and engagement plan to support CCMP on Oct 6
    - Thanks Angela and Sara for collaboration in reviewing it
    - Turned around in Region IV in 3 weeks
        - Collaboration is needed to make these move at a reasonable pace at HQ
    - Thanks to APNEP for sharing draft and doing public comment period
- Thanks to STAC for work on monitoring plan
    - Dean has been updating her, Angela, Kelly
- She will not be at the Nov 19 meeting but will hear from them about it
- EPA is continuing to work with APNEP and ICF to develop the vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan
    - New CWA requirement after revision – protect and Restore America's Estuaries
- Thanked Bill for mentioning funding of the workplan for FY26-27
    - Funded on September 11
    - Happy we got that before the beginning of the fiscal year
- Very busy with documents, grants, etc. Acknowledged Heather and Stacey's work in this
- EPA is under continuing resolution and has funding until December. Hopefully will get another continued resolution to "keep their doors open"
- Sara update on EPA guidance document
    - Several out in draft
- ANEP meeting last week. Thanked Natalie for this. Sara provided detailed outline of guidance documents there.
    - Program evaluation guidance still in draft
        - Albemarle-Pamlico due for PE in 2028
        - Group 1 scheduled to get it to them by February.
    - Program guidance
        - They were waiting for other things to be finalized to put it out
        - Moving forward with this by beginning of calendar year

Commented [MS3]: Was this date mistakenly said?

Commented [IN3R2]: The STAC meeting is Nov 19

        - When finalized they will get clear instructions on how to implement certain parts of the CWA. Federal agency activities. Ensure NEPs are consistent with other federal agency activities. Newer focus areas coming that will need to be navigated.
- 40th anniversary next year. For NEPs and APNEP.
- Had a call over how to respect space of NEPs. Will EPA promote them on their webpage or social media? Yet to be determined.
- Feel free to reach out to her or Angela.
- No questions

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11:20 Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Update Dr. Tom Allen, Ms. Karen Forget

- 4 themes:
    - Karen joining as co-chair. Holly White stepped aside. Karen is from LRN. Strong Virginia contingent with NC roots as well. Thanked her for joining him.
    - Spent a lot of time recently on an agenda for the November 30 CAC meeting in Edenton. Coming along nicely. Natalie and Bill helping.
        - Lost a few long-time members recently
    - Working on operating guidelines of CAC to address how many people there should be and the expected amount of participation online, in person, etc.
        - Will be addressed at meeting
    - Awarded grants in the summer. Very excited to see activity on the ground covering these projects.
- Karen happy to be joining him and raising the profile of the Virginia part of the watershed and work that can be done in partnership between states. Looking forward to the upcoming meeting.
- No questions

11:25 Science & Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Update Dr. Rua Mordecai, Dr. Wilson Laney

- Rua started. Very good progress on monitoring plan.
- Laying groundwork for the state of the sounds assessment. Some preliminary stuff by the next meeting on November 19.
- Wilson added that they had a good field experience with their last meeting in Elizabeth City State University. People got to experience an unfamiliar area. Looking forward to covering Core Sound in the future, rather than Currituck. A lot of good, productive workshops. Hoping to have something out in draft soon for the monitoring plan.
- Kirk excited for state of the sound and asked if there's a plan to get that out to the public, which appreciates these things.

11:30 CCMP Focus Team Facilitation: Process, Findings, and Near-Term Opportunities Dr. Claire Johnson, Ms. Peggy Mullin UNC-CH

- Claire shared their screen. PowerPoint presentation
- CCMP facilitation process from over the last year

- Background: CCMP is an ambitious 5-year plan with 31 actions that are quite broad. Makes implementation challenging. APNEP trialed an approach by the Chesapeake Bay program. Project leaders bring together stakeholders to develop reasonable plans of action for how to address 5 selected priority actions.
- NTIPS drafted at each workshop.
- Peggy
    - Assembled focus teams
        - 10-12 people recruited formally
        - Introduced virtually to each other and the objectives
        - Gather initial input on how to direct approach
    - Facilitate in-person workshops
        - 1–2-day discussions
        - Identify information gaps, opportunities, etc.
    - Develop NTIPS
        - Take input and make this document. Vary in length but contain ideas, recommendations, reviews of resources, expert input, etc.
        - All have inventories of existing efforts, identified gaps, and rankings of projects based on subject matter experts.
    - Priority actions focus teams
        - Targeted protection and restoration team
            - B1.2, 1.3, 2.3
            - 11 members and 2 -day workshop
            - Full packet lists many projects. Top three:
                - Updating existing marsh migration models to identify future wetland priorities
                - Assess current oyster reef protection and resilience conditions
                    - How are they changing?
                - Expand existing living shorelines mapping and programs across the state to stabilize shorelines and reduce nutrient runoff
        - Environmental Stewardship
            - C1.1
            - 7 members
            - Stewardship and volunteering
            - Greatest opportunity as connector and amplifier to help citizen engage with existing opportunities
            - Priority projects:
                - Meet your watershed initiative
                    - Connect with local areas
                - Expand use of impact stories
                    - Make stewardship relatable

            - Create more visible hub for citizen science and volunteer opportunities to get involved
        - APNEP can play a powerful role by promoting and connecting people to partner organizations and their work across the region
    - Environmental Policy Focus Team
        - C3.1
        - 6 members
        - Improving environmental information communication pathways to decision makers
        - Projects:
            - Regional needs assessment to determine what local governments need. Maybe a new assessment for this
            - System to connect partners (like a social web)
                - Remember Duke assessment
            - Create peer learning networks
                - Communities learn from one another's success. Peer-to-peer learning in decision maker environment
            - Holistic theme: Concise messaging and comms tools. A lot of hands in a lot of areas so they need something quick to know what we are doing.
- Claire gained a unique window into APNEP working with staff and stakeholders. Gained valuable insight
- Recommendations:
    - CCMP and actions could be refined and prioritized
        - Keeping in mind APNEP's limited staff capacity and funds
    - Clarify and communicate its role to partners and stakeholders in the region
        - People had very different ideas of what APNEP is and what it does
        - Communicate mission, value, strengths, limitations consistently and repeatedly. Would help this challenge
    - Work on strengthening partnership
        - Collaboration, coordination, partnership are NEP foundations
        - Strengthens valuable relationships through stronger commitments to shared priorities and partner input
            - Improve trust, participation, long-term cooperation
- Kirk said this was excellent. Wants Tim and Bill's input on if this should be presented with the strategic plan in March.
- Tim said APNEP was motivated by capacity limitation and a need to accelerate implementation of some actions. Contracting with them could help to drill down on some of these actions that may have slipped through the cracks. Develop strategy for implementation in the near term.
    - Take the STAC and CAC and talk through these tips. See what can be moved forward with in the next year or two.

- Dean said the whole purpose of these focus teams is to help address more of the CCMP actions
- A lot of actions could include representatives from conference more equally(?)
- Often when APNEP tried to address certain actions bottlenecks were met and he felt trying and documenting challenges/opportunities might help push past some of these perceived roadblocks in efforts
- Thanked Kirk for suggestion of model from Chesapeake Bay
- Dean feels good about the effort and gave his appreciation.
    - Feels the pilot is not done until LC and Management Conference provide feedback.
- Angela asked when a report from their work will be published.
    - Claire said all 3 NTIPS are finalized and shared with APNEP, so she sent Angela a copy. APNEP can share as well
- Eric asked when synoptic materials will be available.
    - Pending staff review
- Open to questions

11:45 Mapping Indigenous Geographies of the APNEP Region Ms. Stacey Feken, Mr. Giancarlo Richardson

- Stacey linked the TCRC page for background
- EPA funds. Involved since 2019.
- Giancarlo presented PowerPoint on Indigenous Geographies in the APNEP Region
    - Indigenous environmental practitioners frustrated with lack of resources
- Showed two tribal mapping sources online. Limited with varying levels of recognition. My Tribal Area and nativelands.ca.
- Want to combine tools to create a more holistic map to guide tribal outreach for local environmental and resilience agencies.
- Provided sources and metadata
    - Historical, contemporary, challenges with data compatibility
    - *E.g. Nottoway - Beth Roach.*
        - *Identified significant waterways to those people. Sources from people he meets, online, historic records, etc. Territory takes from multiple datasets and uses a modified buffer tool to shape a polygon*
    - He demoed the tool with 1900-acre acquisition.
    - Able to highlight territory over time and its sources. Sources are incomplete now. Provides estimates.
    - Can reach out to tribal nations based on parcel location, but territories can be vague and overlapping
- Hopes to create index that weighs data by the level of reliability.
- Also has environmental layers like biodiversity, conservation value, etc.
- Susan White thanked him and said it was amazing. Angela concurred.
- Not public yet, but this demo was approved. Will need to do outreach and get approval.
- Stacey added in that Beth Roach originally led this effort and still participates.

Commented [MS5]: I don't know what this means exactly

Commented [IN5R2]: STAC and CAC instead of one or the other

Commented [MS6]: I don't know if this was spelled correctly

Commented [MS6R2]: Maybe it was Vukovic

Commented [IN6R3]: Is there an attendee or LC member with that last name? If not just say Kirk

- Rua asked about connecting this into some assessments and state of the sound. Is there value in summarizing trends in areas of interest?
    - Like ancestral lands, how have they shifted in habitat?
    - Kirk said to engage Beth and other tribal members in this. Gauge interest
- Kirk thanked him as well and hopes for a later presentation.
- Giancarlo addition post meeting: Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia Council Vice Chair and TCRC team member Beth Roach served as the primary inspiration for this project and has worked with us extensively in the development of the mapping tool. Additionally, we have received guidance from TCRC Team member, Hydrologist, and Professor Dr. Ryan Emanuel (Lumbee) on mapping outputs. We have shared our demo of the Tool at multiple conferences, including the 2025 Coastal GeoTools and the 2026 River Rally, with Vice Chair Roach present. However, formal consultation with Tribal Government of the Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia, or any Tribal Nation represented in the tool, has not been finalized to where we feel comfortable sharing the map in any formal public forum, including from official social media accounts, public share settings on DEQ, and public presentations without coordination with Vice Chair Beth Roach.

12:00 Adjourn