

NECAN MPWG call 6/17/19

Beth, Chris Williams, Ivy Frignoca, Emily Silva, Esperanza Stancioff, Todd Callaghan, Prassede Vella, Erik Chapman.

State updates:

ME (Ivy): The governor's Climate Council bill passed with unanimous support in the ME House and Senate. Since the state budget just passed, it is assumed that the council is included in that. The budget bill is expected to be signed on Friday, which will enact the council.

MOCA is holding 3 stakeholder meetings this summer to develop recommendations for actions. These will inform the Governor's office for incorporation into the state climate plan as well as forge a path forward for MOCA itself. The three meetings are planned around Research/Monitoring, Policy/Law, and Adaptation/Resiliency. Because of these stakeholder meetings, there will be no MOCA summer symposium. It is unclear at this time whether MOCA will receive any ongoing support, or if most of MOCA's actions will transition to the new Climate Council. Some MOCA activities (such as the symposia) would not be part of the council's purview.

ME (Esperanza): Shell Day is scheduled for Aug 22, with analyses on Aug 23. This will be a sampling "blitz" in the NECAN region that involves a one-day effort of citizen science monitoring groups in collecting water samples for Total Alkalinity and salinity analysis. Close to 30 sampling groups have been identified, science advisors and laboratories are on board to process samples, and media outreach is being prepared. This is both an outreach event and a pilot effort to gauge the potential for using citizen science groups to enhance coastal acidification monitoring.

NH: (Erik) NH SG has been working with NECAN to bring some recent SG-funded work to the webinar series. (Chris W) Steve Couture is helping to coordinate NH activities for Shell Day and engaging the [Piscataqua River Estuaries Partnership](#).

MA (Todd): The OA task force is still not completely populated, although few people have been named and confirmed. There is a new Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs in MA ([Kathleen Theoharides](#)), the task force may rise to more prominence under her. (Prassede) Sensors in MA Bay are coming in the future, hoping to get them in the water and generating data sometime this year.

RI: No RI representative were able to be at this meeting.

NY: No updates. The NY OA Task Force has a [website](#) that includes agendas from their past 2 meetings, and the Task Force members. Their 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, scheduled for June 18, was postponed.

National updates: Sarah will provide updates via email to the group. The 4 OA bills have passed the House, and are seeking co-sponsors in the Senate. It is unlikely that they will pass the Senate anytime soon.

OA Alliance meeting: Jessie Turner from [the OA Alliance](#) and Jennifer Hennessey from the Washington Governor's office are convening a meeting at the end of September to bring USA west and east coast interested parties together to help formulate OA action plans at the state level. MPWG members were suggested as potential invitees. Beth recently heard from Jessie that the meeting was still being planned, but no firm details have emerged yet.

NECAN updates (Emily): The Sea Grant research 4-webinar series will occur in Sept – Dec. Emily will provide details when they are scheduled. The NECAN newsletter will go out this week. In July, there will be a special newsletter issue for Shell Day. NECAN is also working on a conceptual modeling project with MACAN, to develop communication materials on coastal acidification in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. Julianna Mullen of NERACOOS is providing much needed assistance on this. As depictions of the conceptual models become available, they will be shared with the MPWG for comments and input.

The NECAN Implementation Plan is nearly completed. The MPWG has action items related to continuing support of the state commissions (ongoing), engaging in state-to-state exchange of information and approaches to coastal acidification (likely assisted by the OA Alliance meeting), considering how to implement recommendations from the [2018 monitoring workshop](#) and developing conceptual models for outreach (see paragraph above). MPWG members should provide any further ideas for actions to Beth and Todd Capson.

(Beth) Todd Capson suggested that it might be interesting to have a NECAN webinar on policy developments. Ivy has been approached to trace developments in Maine from the original commission through MOCA and to the new Climate Council. This might be in conjunction with Sarah to introduce the 4 US House OA bills. If MPWG member have other ideas for webinars, please share them with Beth, Todd and Emily.

Updated via email after the call:

Sarah Cooley: As Beth mentioned during the call, the four OA bills in the House passed. We've been doing education and advocacy on the bills for some time. Here is an [explainer blog describing briefly what each of the four bills do](#). Briefly, they make additional space for OA research and monitoring federally by recommending federal agency involvement, funding levels, and research focuses that will help advance preparation and adaptation. It's been a long road for these bills – some of them have been introduced for many, many Congressional sessions. They always went to committee and sat there. But the House Science Space and Technology committee, specifically the Environment subcommittee, finally marked them up and approved them. What was extremely notable was that both the subcommittee and the HSST committees passed the bills with unanimous support and only friendly amendments. Having passed out of committee, the bills were placed on the schedule for the full House and because of the strong support they got in committee,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the bills passed with voice vote, rather than a counted vote. THIS IS AMAZING FOR A CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUE.

Next steps – we are meeting with some leading Republican offices on both sides of the aisle to see if there are opportunities to bring these bills up in the Senate. Right now only one of these four bills, the Coastal Communities OA Act of 2019, has been introduced in the Senate. Because of the polarized environment in the Senate, it is likely that if introduced, the farthest these Senate companions would get would be to committee. However, having the bills introduced and in committee offers opportunities to build coalitions of federal leaders willing to take a public stance on this issue. That is actually a fine place to be, strategically.

Also, important to note is the FY20 budget numbers are coming out; the House recommended level for the NOAA OAP is a **\*stunning\*** \$20M. (Note that FY19's appropriated level is \$12M, which was a pleasing gradual upward increase.) No word yet on where the Senate is though. Again, AMAZING for a climate issue.

One more note re: the OA Alliance west-east state gathering. We are working with Jessie Turner to build out some of the meeting components, and she has told us to save the dates of September 26-27, and plan for NYC (it's connected somehow to a UN-related event that week).

We will aim for our next meeting in August, TBD. Depending on availability of MPWG members to call in, this may slip until September.