



PROTECTING AND RESTORING LONG ISLAND'S PECONIC BAYS

To be approved April 15, 2026

PEP Management Committee Meeting

January 14, 2026

10am – 12:30pm

LOCATION:

Suffolk County Community College, [121 Speonk-Riverhead Road](#), Riverhead, NY 11901

Orient Building, Room 201

Links to: [College Map](#); [Google Map](#)

Briefing Materials Package:

[Link to Briefing Materials Folder](#)

MC-PC October 29, 2025 Meeting [Minutes](#)

Draft [Communications Strategy](#)

Join Zoom Meeting

ID: 93543382160

Passcode: 840850

Agenda:

10:00 Welcome

Management Committee Roll Call: *Joyce Novak PhD., PEP Executive Director*

10:05 Minutes

Action: MC approval of MC-PC October 29, 2025 Meeting Minutes

EPA abstained¹. All remaining members voted in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

Introduction of Bill Zalakar, Executive Director of Long Island Farm Bureau.

10:10 Committee Leadership: CAC Chair/Vice-Chair/Steering Committee leadership;

Kevin McDonald, CAC Chair

Chris Clapp, CAC Vice-Chair

Maxine Montello, Pete Topping, Bob DeLuca, Ken Koenen - Steering Committee

Action: MC recommendation for the approval of the PEP CAC Committee Leadership to the Policy Committee.

Chris Clapp abstained. All remaining members voted in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

10:15 NYSDOS discussion of potentially regulating docks in Great Peconic Bay as part of Coastal Consistency review- *Jeremy Campbell, NYSDOS Office of Planning, Development,*

¹ Due to the Federal Government lapse in appropriations and subsequent staffing furloughs, the EPA Management Committee representative was not in attendance at the October 29, 2026 meeting and therefore abstains from voting on the minutes from this meeting.



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and Community Infrastructure

Jeremy Campbell provided an overview of federal consistency appeals related to residential dock construction in Great and Little Peconic Bay. DOS described how the 2001 CCMP dock language and the 2020 CCMP hardened shoreline provisions are being referenced in review. Committee discussion addressed the relevance of these appeals to other East End municipalities, including Shelter Island and Southold, and reflected on prior municipal experiences with codifying dock limitations.

DOS noted that two federal consistency appeals are currently under public notice and that DOS is not requesting additional input from the Management Committee at this time. Discussion included relevance to Shelter Island and Southold, prior municipal experience codifying dock limitations, and Southampton Town's ongoing actions. Council Member Michael Iasilli confirmed a Southampton Town work session and upcoming public hearing on dock restrictions.

Links: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/12/22/2025-23508/federal-consistency-appeal-by-georgina-clemente>

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/12/22/2025-23509/federal-consistency-appeal-by-bjq-properties-llc>

No action was requested.

10:25 Draft PEP Communication Strategy -Valerie Virgona, PEP &Michael Flood, U.S. EPA Region 2

M. Flood (U.S. EPA Region 2) provided an overview of why PEP was developing the Communications Strategy - a component document to PEP's 2020 CCMP - and the requirements that are set for in EPA's most recent National Estuary Program Funding Guidance.

V. Virgona (PEP) provided an overview and highlights of the Communications Strategy and associated COE plan as well as the efforts that the PEP and contractor made to engage the public through the process. V. Virgona also indicated that the Strategy is broader in scope, more flexible (able change to changing conditions) and sets long term goals, whereas the COE plans include the actions and tools needed for implement the strategy.

Discussion focused on how demographic considerations are incorporated into outreach planning, the turn to digital platforms, and how PEP messaging can be effectively

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condensed for social media and online audiences.

Committee members discussed balancing traditional print media with digital outreach, the potential use of targeted advertising and paid boosts on platforms such as Meta, and the importance of reaching audiences within the watershed. The Program Office noted that boosted posts are already used ahead of public meetings and will continue as part of the updated strategy.

Action: Management Committee members to review and submit comments to the Program Office within 14 days. The Program Office will circulate the draft and discuss any needed extensions if additional review time is requested.

10:45 Broad Cove Preserve, Phase II (IJA funded) Project update - *Jessie McSwane, Director of Stewardship, Peconic Land Trust*

Discussion addressed trail design and visitor experience, including how wider trails can encourage use while reducing negative encounters such as ticks. It was noted that most trails will be approximately eight feet wide, with some narrower segments designed for guided walks. Committee members emphasized accessibility considerations, including the importance of benches for visitors. Questions were raised regarding bench placement and whether seating would be installed in grass or gravel. PLT confirmed that benches will be set off the trail and placed on gravel or sand to minimize impacts from high grass.

11:00 PEP 2024 Mini Grant Recipients: Lightning talks

- PRFCT Earth, *Time Wheeler*
- Adopt A Pond, *Bob Mozer, Citizen Science Learning Center*
- Accabonac Protection Committee, *Adele Molina, PhD*
 - Lynn Mendelman: How many people in total have responded to the APC OLA surveys?
 - Adele Molina:
- Shinnecock Nation - *Shavonne Smith, Environment Department Director*
 - Corey Humphrey: Is the 50lb yield of kelp dry weight or wet weight?
 - Gavin Cohen: 50lb yield of dry weight

11:25 Fiscal Updates - *Joyce Novak, PEP Executive Director*

- SBU FY21,22 320 funds closeout
- Federal Update
 - FFY26 320 Funds
 - NEP Reauthorization

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11:35 Review PEP's 2026 Draft Projects - *Joyce Novak, PEP Executive Director*

- Diamondback Terrapins as Catalysts for Estuarine Conservation: Integrating Telemetry and Isotope Analysis to Advance Habitat Protection and Public Stewardship Proposal; *Dr. Matt Sclafani*

Discussion included the cost of telemetry tags, methods of tag attachment, tag lifespan, and the relationship between tag weight and terrapin body mass. Project leads confirmed that tags are affixed with epoxy, have an approximate one-year lifespan, and represent approximately three percent of body weight.

Additional discussion addressed whether environmental parameters such as temperature could be recorded, potential integration with eelgrass monitoring, and how the resulting data would inform habitat protection and restoration planning. Members suggested additional survey locations, including Napeague, and confirmed that data would be integrated into the VIMS model alongside other intertidal species.

Action: Motion to recommend the project to the Policy Committee for approval.

Paul Shepson abstained due to a conflict of interest. All remaining members voted in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

Additional projects were introduced for informational purposes only. These items were presented to provide advance notice and allow committee members to follow up for additional review. No vote was taken.

12:00 Ducks Unlimited [In-Lieu Fee \(ILF\) Program in NYS](#), *Cassie Bauer, Bureau Chief, Marine Habitat NYDEC*

Cassie Bauer (DEC Division of Marine Resources) provided a brief overview of the Ducks Unlimited In-Lieu Fee Program in New York State. Ducks Unlimited was not present. Additional discussion will be scheduled at a future meeting.

12:10 PEP Updates

PEP Committee Updates

- Local Government Committee, **Councilman Michael Iasilli, Chair**
 - *Amendment: hearing at the end of this month, public hearing in february underscore and emphasize this priority zone*
 - *Met with Chris Clapp, discussed the SSER and the needs to examine moving forward and recommendations*
- Citizens Advisory Committee, **Chris Clapp, Vice Chair**
 - Albany education day: March 4th 2025
 - Four community strategy meetings



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- CAC organized a boat trip with Congressman La Lota
- CAC Albany education day: February 3rd 2026
- Technical Advisory Committee, **Matt Sclafani, PhD. Chair**

PEP Active Project Updates, **Program Office**

12:25 Public Portion / Additional Comments

No additional public comments were received.

Action: Motion to adjourn.

All in favor. None opposed. Motion approved.

2026 Management Committee Meeting Dates:

- ~~January 14, 2026~~
- April 15, 2026
- July 22, 2026 *field trip!
- *Joint Meeting* October 28, 2026

PEP 2026 Management Committee Members

(Not present) Chair: Karen Stainbrook (DEC Division of Water)

(Not present) Vice-Chair: Joseph Sanzano represented by Jennifer McGivern (Suffolk County Dept. of Economic Development & Planning)

Liz Butler (US EPA Region 2)

Cassie Bauer (DEC Division of Marine Resources)

Jeremy Campbell (New York State Department of State)

Mike Jensen (Suffolk County Dept. of Health – Office of Ecology)

Corey Humphrey (Suffolk County Soil & Water Conservation District)

(Welker Not Present) Greg Doroski & Ann Welker (Suffolk County Legislature – Districts 1 & 2)

(Not Present) Councilwoman Cate Rogers (Local Government Representative to the MC)

Council Member Michael Iasilli (PEP Chair, Local Government Committee – Southampton Representative)

Matt Sclafani, PhD (PEP Chair, Technical Advisory Committee)

Chris Clapp (PEP Vice-Chair, Citizens Advisory Committee)

Paul Shepson, PhD (PEP Host Institution – Stony Brook University)

(Not Present) Shavonne Smith (Shinnecock Indian Nation) → late to role call; on zoom

Additional attendees in person:



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Jim Colligan (Shelter Island), Chris Clapp (Citizens Advisory Committee), Steve Heck (Technical Advisory Committee), Shauna Kammath (NYS Department of Environmental Conservation), Marissa Velasquez (Peconic Estuary Partnership), Jill Moretto (Peconic Estuary Partnership), Valerie Virgona (Peconic Estuary Partnership), Joyce Novak (Peconic Estuary Partnership) Bill Zalakar (Long Island Farm Bureau), Bob Mozer (Citizen Science Learning Center), Mary Ann Eddy (Sag Harbor), Joseph Kommer (Citizen Science Learning Center). Michael Flood (EPA Region 2)

Via Zoom:

Jade Blennau (Peconic Estuary Partnership), Theresa Masin (Town of Southampton), Paul Shepson (Stony Brook University), Jeremy Campbell (New York State Department of State), Bradi Gaer (New York State Department of State), Tim Wheeler (PRFCT Earth), Jennifer Street (New York State Department of State), Michael Iasilli (Southampton Town Councilmember), Adele Molina, PhD (Accabonac Protection Committee), Lynn Mendelman (Association of Marina Industries)