Peconic Estuary Partnership

PROTECTING AND RESTORING LONG ISLAND'S PECONIC BAYS

Peconic Estuary Partnership
Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda

April 8th, 2026, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Location:

Suffolk County Community College -Eastern Campus
121 Speonk Riverhead Rd.
MLRC Room 107
Riverhead, NY 11901

Join Zoom Meeting

ID: 95448105760

Passcode: 053252

https://stonybrook.zoom.us/j/95448105760?pwd=bVpoaqYmj8ao3cKdgQR96tRsNCfcYV.1&jst=2

10:00 - Welcome and sign in

10:05 – Roll call : Marissa Velasquez (PEP)

In person: Marissa Velasquez (PEP), Sarah Groves (DOS), Luis Medina (SBU), Hannah Collins (PEP), Mary Ann Eddy (Sag Harbor Harbor Committee), Alexa Annunziata (PBK)

Zoom - Bradi Gaer - NYS DOS, Kate Rossi-Snook - CCE, Gavin Cohen, Shinnecock, Nancy Pierson - SCDHS, Jennifer Yeltekin, Alex Caporale - Suffolk, Chris Gobler, Stony Brook Univ, Sally Kellogg - SSER, Nick Cormier (Suffolk Co, Gordon Taylor, Caitlin Craig (NYSDEC), Peter Priolo (County Parks), Jordan Russo (DOT), Pete Topping, Peconic Baykeeper, Sarah Healy NYSDEC, Nicole Maher, TNC, Lynn V Mendelman - AMI, Andrew Walker - NYSDEC, Josh Halsey -PLT, Jessica Druze - Ducks Unlimited, Cassie Bauer, NYSDEC, Chris Engelhardt?

10:10 - Old business: vote to accept minutes from previous meeting

Minutes approved

10:20 - Dr. Luis Medina, *Stony Brook University*, Tracing Microplastics in the Peconic Estuary

10:40- Questions

Nicole Maher (TNC) - Can you comment on the recent University of Michigan study that found that nitrile and latex gloves release stearates, which closely resemble microplastics and can contaminate samples during testing. Do you think this effect might be at play in your samples?

Luis Medina (SBU): Those contaminations can be detected by the Raman and are able to be factored out of the results and microplastics distinction.

Chris Gobler (SBU): asked for clarification correction of the units used to determine density of microplastics in a water sample

Luis Medina (SBU): clarified that it is units per cubic meter instead of units per liter

Hannah Collins (PEP)- what is the methodology behind determining the volume of microplastics within a water sample?

Luis Medina (SBU)- similar to the methodology of bacteria counts; count the total number of particles

Sarah Groves (DOS) - is this a locally created problem, not coming from the open ocean?

Luis Medina (SBU) - Microplastics seem to be more densely sourced in the Western Peconics

Chris Gobler (SBU) - big particles concentrated to the west. There's lower numbers of the larger particles, could argue that it's not concentrated in river area, compared to what's being seen in the main stem for the smaller particles. Luis - larger particles are found in smaller concentrations, however higher than what you find in other places and seem to have the same origin.

Lynn Mendelmann (AMI): were samples taken based on tide (incoming, slack, outgoing)?

Luis Medina (SBU): did not correlate sampling time with tides. Has sampling time and date logged, therefore could go back and look at tidal correlation.

10:45 - Dr. Christopher Gobler, *Stony Brook University*, Updates on the HABs Priority Embayment Studies throughout the Peconic Estuary

11:05 - Questions

Kate Rossi-Snook (CCE) - Why do you think Three Mile Harbor did not experience a mega-HAB despite its detected level of nitrogen?

Chris Gobler (SBU) - Flushing of water, as well as the food chain within the harbor could be having an effect on preventing a mega-HAB.

Nicole Maher (TNC) - This is sobering. What are your thoughts on the best way to achieve these reductions in a timely way?

Gobler (SBU) - 70% of nitrogen comes from on-site septic systems. The SC Subwatershed plans look at the subwatershed to find sources. Addressing watershed based sources, and then thinking about other mitigation options in water or at water-land interface to mitigate sources.

Mary Ann Eddy (Sag Harbor): Have you noticed if there has been a higher buildup of HABs around marinas?

Gobler (SBU)- There are studies that show bacteria levels increase during boating season, with human sources. However, it's not quantitatively a big source when compared to wastewater and fertilizer.

Lynn V Mendelman (AMI) - Initially you included phosphorus as well as nitrogen. Do we need to consider phosphorous concentrations as well?

Gobler (SBU)- Yes, phosphorus is important and has been included but our initial tests on nitrogen, further testing will incorporate components such as phosphorus.

Joyce Novak (PEP)- Wants TAC to be aware that the upcoming workplan will propose to continue funding for this work, as well as how to better report this info and report to municipalities. We will be discussing at the next Management Committee meeting to continue with work going forward.

11:10- Sarah Groves, Department of State, New York Ocean Action Plan

State of the Science Side Meeting on Monday June 8th, 2026. Time is TBD; there will be three 2hr sessions. Registration can be done online here: https://www.jotform.com/260815136803050

11:20 - Questions

11:25 - PEP Program Office Updates

JoyceNovak (PEP) - Looking into further locations for CHANGES project site suitability to expand, looking into locations in all 5 East End Towns. Contingent on further funding.

Mary Ann Eddy (Sag Harbor): For SeagrassNet partners - is scuba involved?

Marissa Velasquez (PEP): No- for this seagrass monitoring protocol it is meant to engage and be accessible to interested citizen scientists.

11:50 - Public Comment

12:00- Adjourn