

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO THE SOUTH SHORE ESTUARY RESERVE COUNCIL

CAC Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2024

7:00-8:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Present:

Maureen Dolan Murphy, Citizens Campaign for the Environment/Chair CAC
Rob Weltner, Operation SPLASH/Vice-Chair CAC
Jeremy Campbell, NYS DOS/Reserve Coordinator
Sally Kellogg, NYS DOS/Reserve Office
Alexa Annunziata, Peconic Bay Keeper
Judi Bird, League of Women Voters Brookhaven
Kathleen Fallon, Co-Chair TAC/NY Sea Grant
Sarah Healy, NYS DEC/LINAP
Artie Kopelman, Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island (CRESLI)
Arielle Santos, Seatuck Environmental Association
Tara Schneider-Moran, Chair TAC/Town of Hempstead
Robyn Silvestri, Save the Great South Bay

1. Introductions

M. Dolan Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. Kathleen Fallon, Sea Grant; My Coast: An online tool to report local storm impacts

K. Fallon described the My Coast portal which collects and analyzes pictures and data relating to flood and storm events, it is connected to river and tide gauges that feed data into the application. The portal can be found online: <https://mycoast.org/ny> and is an effort between NY Sea Grant and NYS Water Resources Institute. This is a statewide application that has three different tools, Flood Watch, Storm Reporter, and CoastSnap. Each tool was described. It is free to use, and anyone can upload or access photos. MyCoast creates information flow between a community, municipalities, state government, academia, researchers, etc. The portal went live in July 2022 and now has over 700 users. When reports are submitted, they are linked to environmental data.

Question: How can someone request the data?

Answer: You can download photos from the site or reach out to Kathleen Fallon if a large amount of data is needed.

Question: What is the baseline for the data?

Answer: The tool pulls from specific tide gauges with real time info.

Question: Can volunteers document the water levels of the creeks in this app?

Answer: Yes.

3. Horseshoe Crabs

S. Kellogg provided an update on the Horseshoe Crab Meadow Lane site where SSER has been the site coordinator since 2019 and Peconic Baykeeper joined as co-site coordinator in 2021. The survey steps were briefly described, 2024 dates can be found here: <https://www.nyhorseshoecrab.org/meadow-lane-southampton>. The total count numbers for 2024 were displayed with the peak counts happening at the end of May. The Index of Spawning Activity for 2019 through 2022 showed a relatively stable trend at the Meadow Lane site, 2023 numbers were not available yet.

M. Dolan Murphy reported CCE has spearheaded a new Horseshoe Crab coalition which is advocating for state legislation that would ban the harvesting of horseshoe crabs, similar to legislation that was passed in CT. If anyone is interested in joining the coalition, please reach out to Maureen Dolan Murphy.

4. 2024 SSER Funding: Senate & Assembly Budgets

M. Dolan Murphy thanked Rich Groh and the Town of Babylon for previously championing a letter to increase the SSER line item to \$5 million. However, the executive, senate, and assembly budgets funded SSER at \$2 million and it is unlikely that will change this year.

5. Jeremy Campbell, South Shore Estuary Reserve Office

J. Campbell informed members that the next Council meeting will be April 16th at National Park Service Patchogue-Watch Hill Ferry Terminal. Additionally, the SSER Action Agenda is progressing and the contract will hopefully be executed and ready to begin this spring. The 2023/2024 Community Science Long Island webinar series is still ongoing and the next in person event will be a Living Shoreline visit in Patchogue on March 30, 2024. Please register if anyone still wants to sign up: <https://seatuck.org/community-science-webinars/>. Lastly, Alewife monitoring has begun.

6. TAC Report

There has been one virtual TAC meeting since the last CAC meeting. Presentations were on shoreline monitoring with presenters from DOS and Town of Hempstead. The next meeting will be April 2nd focusing on saltmarsh restoration.

7. Public Comment/Announcements

R. Weltner informed folks that the next Operation SPLASH meeting will be April 2nd at 7:30 where there will be an update from Operation SPLASH, CCE, TNC, and NYS DEC on the progress of the Bay Park Conveyance Project. All are invited to attend.

R. Silvestri announced that Save the Great South Bay is piloting a unified water study based on the Long Island Sound Study project and it will be at four sites this year: Carmans River, Connetquot River, Great Cove, and Shinnecock Bay. Surveying will be May through October and will occur every other week.

A. Santos reminded members that the Long Island Natural History Conference is April 12-13 at Brookhaven National Lab. More information can be found here: <https://seatuck.org/2023-li-natural-history-conference/>

The meeting adjourned at 8:07.