

## **Long Island Sound Inventory and Blue Plan Advisory Committee**

**December 7, 2017**

**10:00AM – 12:00PM**

**Acton Public Library**

**Old Saybrook, CT**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Advisory Committee Attendance:**

**Robert Klee [ABSENT]**, Commissioner, **represented by Brian Thompson**, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Chair

**Sylvain De Guise**, Connecticut Sea Grant

**Catherine Finneran, represented by Mark Pappalardo**, Eversource, Gas and electric distribution industry representative appointed by Governor Malloy

**Nathan Frohling**, The Nature Conservancy

**David Carey [ABSENT]**, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture

**Christine Nelson**, Town of Old Saybrook Town Planner

**Evan Matthews**, Connecticut Port Authority, Commissioner Redeker's designee

**Jason Bowsza [ABSENT]**, Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Commissioner Reviczky's Designee

**Eric Lindquist**, Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, Secretary Barnes' Designee

**Melanie Bachman [ABSENT]**, Connecticut Siting Council

**Leah Schmaltz**, Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound

**William Gardella**, General Manager and Dockmaster, Rex Marine Center, Norwalk

**Bruce Beebe**, Beebe Dock and Mooring Systems, Madison

**Mike Theiler [ABSENT]**, Commercial finfish industry representative

**Alicia Mozian**, Town of Westport Conservation Director

**Sid Holbrook [ABSENT]**, Westbrook, recreational fishing/hunting community representative

#### **Other attendees:**

**Ian Yue**, CT Sea Grant

**Emily Hall**, NOAA Coastal Fellow

**David Blatt, DEEP**

**Mary-beth Hart, DEEP**

**Kevin O'Brien, DEEP**

**Brian Thompson, DEEP**

**Christian Fox, TNC**

**Penny Howell**

**Peter Auster**

**Paul Lobdell, Westport**

**Bob Deptula, Eversource**

**Jane Stahl**

**Susan Bryson**

**Jan Beebe**

**Alan T. Stevens, Port Authority**

**Yolanda Cooley, DEEP Boating**

**Deb Pacileo, DEEP Fisheries**

**Katie Lund, CIRCA**

**Other members of the public did not sign in**

### **Welcome, Introductions, and Update**

Commission Klee was unable to make the meeting, so Brian Thompson, Director of CT DEEP's Land and Water Resources Division and the Chair of the Blue Plan Policy Subcommittee, led the meeting.

Thompson started by updating the group on the NERR process, mentioning that a site is very close to being selected and there will continue to be a formal process through NOAA for nomination.

Thompson also updated on the efforts of the Northeast Regional Planning Body (NERPB) and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body (MARPB). NERPb's recent meeting contained a lot of discussion around the updating and different use of human activity and ecological data. The meeting also spoke of government coordination in reviewing projects that may come up in the Northeast. Thompson mentioned that both RPB's are similar in their approaches to ecologically important areas, a companion to our Ecologically Significant Areas (ESAs), but do focus more on ocean health issues. The NY Ocean Plan was also brought up, in that there is reference in the NY plan to the Blue Plan. .

Thompson then updated the committee on funding resources. There was a 200K grant from the Long Island Sound Study (LISS) to Sea Grant and 45K grant from the Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) to The Nature Conservancy for the Ecologically Characterization (EC) and ESA process. Sylvain De Guise also mentioned there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> LISFF grant at 35K for Ian Yue's time to the end of the calendar year. Nathan Frohling mentioned that all three grants are also in support of stakeholder engagement, outreach, data refinement, ESA's, and consultants Emily Schumchenia and Nick Napoli. De Guise also noted the additional resource provided through Emily Hall's time in the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship.

Thompson then updated the group on a LIS Caucus event held at Merchant Marine Academy in NY. The meeting was led by New York Representatives Suozzi and Zeldin, and Connecticut Representative DeLauro. There was a number of stakeholders present, mostly from Long Island but some from Connecticut. The event focused on priority issues in Long Island Sound, and sparked some interest in the Blue Plan. Thompson stated that the event was a good opportunity to reach out to NY stakeholders, and Representative Suozzi sent a letter commending the Blue Plan effort (See Appendix 1). Alicia Mozian, also present at the LIS Caucus event, added that there was good press coverage of the event, including social media and public outreach efforts. Mozian mentioned that the event had a nitrogen and septic focus, and that we could learn from the public enthusiasm generated by the nitrogen reduction efforts and how the effort has communicated that healthy water will increase real estate value.

There was also an update about a Connecticut DEEP Draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for renewable energy sources that went out on December 15, 2017. The RFP is aimed at securing alternative energy sources for Connecticut, including offshore wind, tapping into the potential of offshore BOEM lease areas. The request isn't for wind power in Long Island Sound, but the effort could generate cables in Long Island Sound that deliver wind power.

## Inventory Progress

Sylvain De Guise, chairman of the Inventory and Science Subcommittee, began the discussion by mentioning that there has been a lot of progress on stakeholder outreach and developing the Inventory document. De Guise explained that the inventory will hold objective information including data and map products pertaining to the sectors, and the primary audience of the Inventory will be the planning team. De Guise introduced a draft Table of Contents for the Inventory, where there will be an introduction discussing what the Blue Plan is and is not and chapters based on ecological and human use groupings. The timeline for the Inventory includes continuing outreach to stakeholder groups through December, completing drafts of chapters by January 3<sup>rd</sup>, completing finalized chapters by the end of January, and finishing the Inventory with an editorial review in February. De Guise then stated that each sector expert and assigned staff would give an update on their sector. Each update is covered in the table below (Table 1):

**Table 1.** Overview of Human Use Sector Updates as of December 7, 2017.

Sector	Sector Expert	Assigned Staff	Stakeholder/ Expert Engagement	Key Map Products <sup>1</sup>	Stakeholder Feedback	Relevance (Non-Spatial Data)
Marine Transportation, Navigation, and Infrastructure	Evan Matthews	Brian Thompson	Introductory email sent, with follow-up webinar. Twenty-one entities contacted, including the Port Authorities, Ferry Services, Marine Towing, CT Harbor Management Assoc., and Regional Council of Governments.	2013 All Vessel Density, 2013 Tug-Tow Vessel Density, 2012 Recreational Boating Density	TBD	Historically a water dependent use. Connecticut has three deep water ports. Sector contributes \$7-9B annually to regional economy, including 30-40K jobs.

<sup>1</sup> Map products are available on the [Blue Plan website](#) (CT DEEP, 2018).

Recreational Sailing and Boating (also includes Charter Fishing and Harbors & Marinas)	Bill Gardella	Nathan Frohling	Held a webinar with 25 attendees. Outreach to CT Marine Trades Assoc., Yacht Clubs around LIS, LIS Power Squadrons, CT Party & Charter Boat Assoc., CT Harbor Management Assoc.	2012 Recreational Boating Density, Distance Sailing Races, Marinas by County	General support for maps. Locally relevant areas are key (e.g. regattas). Interest in participatory mapping. Questions about Blue Plan process.	A fundamental traditional use. A primary way people connect with LIS. There are many interrelated sectors.
Non-Consumptive Recreational (including SCUBA)	Leah Schmalz	Christian Fox	Held one in person meeting, two Scuba webinars, and one general recreation webinar. About 46 participants. Outreach to two Scuba clubs, five Scuba professionals, three dive shop owners, Surf Rider Foundation, CT Office of Tourism, and two kayak clubs.	Scuba, AWOIS (Shipwreck) sites, Coastal Access Sites, Surface Water/Under water Activities	No one layer represents SCUBA perfectly. Need to identify where most SCUBA users go and what areas are crucial to the sport. Need to identify report on economics of non-consumptive recreation in the Sound. Participatory mapping opportunity. Could use the 2015 Surf Rider Recreational Survey.	Diving in LIS has been active since the beginning of SCUBA as a recreational sport. Paddle sports have risen in popularity in last decade. Many non-consumptive users rely on shore access.
Waterfowl Hunting	Sid Holbrook	David Blatt	Webinar in conjunction with Recreational Fishing sector. Outreach to Ducks Unlimited and CT Sportsmens Alliance. Eight individuals representing the sector were sent map books and invited to review data/ participate in webinar.	Connecticut Hunting Areas, Waterfowl Habitat	No responses from hunting groups. State agency wildlife staff suggest hunting oriented maps greatly underestimate the extent and range of waterfowl.	Long standing traditional use, with history of aiding conservation efforts. Activity generally takes place in wetlands and nearshore areas, particularly public lands. Access to open space and coastal waters is a concern. Statewide Comprehensive Recreational Plan (SCORP) survey suggest a relatively

						small number of participants.
<b>Historic &amp; Archaeological (Marine Cultural Resources)</b>	Christine Nelson	Ian Yue	Outreach focused on CT and NY State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO). Additional Outreach to CT State Archeologist, archaeological consultants, and LIS history experts. Thirteen stakeholders engaged so far. In-person meeting with CT SHPO.	Shipwrecks, National Register of Historic Places listings in NYS	NY SHPO has had a recent transition to new online data viewer system, submerged archaeological data either confidential or in shareable form. Additional data and map products may be available.	There is a long history of human use in and around LIS, leaving behind shipwrecks, historic structures, archaeological artifacts and historic sites. There is also a cultural value of shipwrecks and archaeological sites for diving, tourism, public interest and museums.
<b>Shellfish and Aquaculture</b>	David Carey	Sylvain De Guise	Individual interviews with shellfish stakeholders in CT and NY. About 15 to 20 individuals contacted. There were in-person meetings and phone interviews.	The Aquaculture Mapping Atlas, NY Shellfish Landings by Value, CT Kelp Aquaculture	There is an overall good agreement with the maps from the Aquaculture Mapping Atlas (CT), which are used in day to day operations. Lack of spatially explicit information related to shellfish in NY waters of LIS. NY DEC has maps for classification for shellfish that would be helpful.	Pre-colonial sector that is important for the economy, culture, and ecosystems of LIS. There are \$30 million in farm-gate sales in CT. Natural beds (which may be in rivers) are important as a source of seed shellfish for use in aquaculture. Practices in NY (mostly wild harvest) are different than in CT (mostly aquaculture).
<b>Energy and Telecommunications</b>	Catherine Finnerran, Bob Deptula, Mark Pappalardo	Ian Yue	Primary engagement includes vetting map products through agencies/ organizations with knowledge of Sound-based activity (ex. Eversource, Citing Council). Eversource	Cable and Pipeline Areas, Submarine Cables, Offshore Wind Technology Zones	TBD (Further data vetting to take place through CT and NY agencies and other energy stakeholders via upcoming webinar.)	Long history of development in and around LIS, energy development has followed (ex. Nuclear plants, Cross Sound Cable). LIS region

			<p>carried out initial review of preliminary map product data, including outreach to NOAA and other ocean planning contracts.</p> <p>Engagement through in-person interviews, upcoming webinar this month (Millstone is on invite list).</p> <p>Further engagement with DEEP PURA, and LIS entities planned.</p>			among the most densely populated in US (7.5% of total population < 50 miles of LIS), and energy demand is high.
<b>Commercial Fishing</b>	Mike Theiler	Sylvain De Guise	<p>Outreach to commercial fishermen in New London via Mike Theiler. Two people attended the in-person meeting.</p>	<p>Communities at Sea – Lobster Commercial Fishing Activity (2011 – 2013), Multispecies – Groundfish 2011-2014, Multispecies – Groundfish 2011-2014 (&lt;4 knots), Scallop 2011 – 2014 (&lt; 5 knots)</p>	<p>Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and Vessel Trip Report (VTR) data generally poorly representative of commercial fishing in LIS. Most relevant data for fishing in LIS is not available through templates reviewed. Fishermen have data on where they fish but are reluctant to share.</p>	<p>Historical sector, important for the economy and culture of LIS. Economic impact to document. Fisheries management issues and maintaining working waterfronts are important to the commercial fisheries sector.</p>
<b>Recreational Fishing</b>	Bruce Beebe	Christian Fox	<p>Multiple email blasts sent to existing list of CT and NY contacts, minimal response. Published webinar notice in The Fisherman, assisted by prominent local shop owner. Directed invites to active anglers. Held webinar with 5-10 participants.</p>	<p>DEEP Saltwater Fishing Resource Map, Fishing – Northeast Region 2012, Target Fish Species – Northeast Region, 2012</p>	<p>Maps need to represent the changing recreational fisheries, both seasonally and inter-annually. Gaps include lack of all target fish, maps not representative of decadal changes in fisheries, and maps are static representations of mobile fish. Users are interested in</p>	<p>Recreational fishing is a significant industry. In 2015, there were 255 jobs supported, \$14.2M value added, \$27.3M trip expenditures and 1.3M trips made (data from NOAA Office of Science and Technology).</p>

					participatory mapping to improve existing maps.	
National Security	Rob Klee, Commissioner	David Blatt	Met with DEEP Encon Police and US Coast Guard personnel. Will follow-up with Navy and regional Port Security groups.	Safety, Security, and Regulated Zones, Anchorage Areas, Ports Cargo Volumes 2013, Shipping Lanes and Zones,	Coast Guard regularly updates NOAA charts, and all layers should be consulted for planning purposes. Many good suggestions for additional data sources. Marine event permits are not spatially catalogued but could be.	CT has a long naval and maritime tradition and currently hosts a major sub base and Coast Guard Academy. Sub base and Electric Boat are a vital part of CT's economy, and the security zones around them must be considered. Most human uses of LIS have some association with navigation by ship or boat; navigational traffic patterns will be primary concern for potential new uses.

Through the updates, there were some follow-up conversations surrounding the importance of working waterfronts and how many of these sectors rely on that maritime industry. Alicia Mozian and Evan Matthews specifically emphasized this point, noting the ramifications if working waterfronts are not protected. Brian Thompson noted that other parts of the Coastal Management Program have protection measures for working waterfronts. Christine Nelson added that a goal of the Blue Plan is to look at onshore uses related to offshore uses, and Thompson agreed this would be an important discussion to have when thinking about the policy of the Blue Plan.

Nathan Frohling then presented on the ecological portion of the Inventory, speaking of the Ecological Characterization process (EC) and identifying Ecologically Significant Areas (ESA) (See Appendix 2). The boxes highlighted in green are completed, boxes highlighted in yellow are ongoing, and boxes highlighted in blue are next steps. The review of data products and developing of the inventory is occurring now, and the process is moving into putting together an ecological expert group and trying to identify/fill data gaps. To inform the Inventory and EC/ESA process there were five ecological webinars: 1) Birds, 2) Marine Mammals & Sea Turtles, 3) Benthic Physical Habitat, 4) Benthic Biological Habitat, and 5) Fish, Shellfish and Zooplankton. In these webinars experts assessed data representativeness, relevance, and accuracy, while providing insight into other potential data sources. Below is a table identifying the number of participants and key take-away's from each webinar (Table 2):

**Table 2. Overview of Ecological Sector Updates as of December 7, 2017.**

<b>Webinar Topic</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Example Map Product <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Key Take-away's</b>
Birds	25	NOAA ESI Birds	Practical spatial data limited, many new sources/ideas (e-bird), cooperation/interest from experts
Marine Mammals & Sea Turtles	19	Sea Turtles (Number of Species)	Data products limited, dynamic situation – occasional Humpback Whale & Harbor Porpoise presence (potentially Bottlenose Dolphins too), Do we have enough scientific data to say a species doesn't exist in LIS? (e.g., no sperm whales), gained understanding of situation including modeling and sampling, new sources/ideas (e.g., using stranding information)
Benthic Physical Habitat	27	Soft Sediments by Grain Size	More complete and definitive than other areas, pro/con/cautions on benthic habitat models and interpretation, scale and how binned data matters
Benthic Biological Habitat	31	LISEA – Seafloor Portfolio	Where physical and biological data come together, caution to not mix and match data, there are places multiple species persist over time, DEC lobster & trawl data offered for western LIS, expert knowledge & empirical input may be key
Fish, Shellfish, Zooplankton, Pelagic Invertebrates	30	LIS Trawl Survey Towpaths 1995-2012, LISEA Total Species Richness	Addressed ecological and species factors (e.g., species persistence), data sets & products exist (CT DEEP Trawl, LISEA, Management Areas), use data carefully & know the limits, data from NY DEC may help fill gaps

Following the discussion on the Inventory, there was a brief conversation on how to identify and fill the data gaps identified in the Inventory. Ian Yue spoke about his work to identify what the data gaps are, make note of the suggestions provided to fill those gaps, and separate/prioritize filling gaps based on what could be done now or later.

De Guise concluded by thanking everyone for their work thus far, and mentioning that there will be a draft out in February. De Guise also emphasized that version one of the Inventory will not be perfect and there will be room for edits and improvements.

<sup>1</sup> Map products are available on the [Blue Plan website](#) (CT DEEP, 2018).

## **Policy Updates**

Brian Thompson mentioned that the Policy Subcommittee has had a few calls, and has spoken about policy options and approaches, a framework report, and decision tools. There was a policy template proposed, consisting of siting and performance standards, policy around Ecologically Significant Areas (ESAs)/areas of high human use, and general sound wide policies (See Appendix 3). Christine Nelson suggested that the first column in the matrices of the policy template should follow the sectors of the inventory.

Thompson also mentioned the decision support tool matrices, analyzing conflicts and compatibilities among uses and resources. All the categories in these matrices have draft definitions that can still be commented on, and the policy subcommittee is also looking at different ways to approach the conflict vs. compatibility idea by understanding disturbance through the benthic environment to the water column. It was also mentioned that there will be an analysis and comparison of other marine spatial plans to help form ideas for the structure of the Blue Plan.

## **Stakeholders, Outreach and Messaging**

Christian Fox started the conversation with an overview of how the Blue Plan is approaching the “non-data” groups, or sectors that may not have direct data to contribute to the Blue Plan but will have an interest in the process. The “non-data” entities include but are not limited to elected officials, government entities, conservation groups, waterfront businesses, cruise tours, and education groups. Fox mentioned that two non-data group meetings are taking place in Greenwich and Avery Point with effort to coordinate a webinar in the New Year. The “non-data” meetings consist of a presentation on the Blue Plan process and Inventory, a request for input, and guidance for interested stakeholders on other avenues to participate.

Emily Hall then spoke about some of the efforts behind messaging and informing the general public about the Blue Plan. One of these efforts was to produce a [Blue Plan Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs) document, which was informed by the public and answered by Advisory Committee Members, Stakeholder Engagement Subcommittee Members, and Blue Plan staff (CT DEEP, 2018). Also to assist the public in understanding and engaging in the Blue Plan process, a series of factsheets have been produced that outline the “basics” of the Blue Plan including [Blue Plan Basics: Introduction](#), [Blue Plan Basics: Public and Stakeholder Engagement](#), and [Blue Plan Basics: Focusing on the Issues](#) (CT DEEP, 2018). Hall additionally mentioned the effort to reach the public through [CT DEEP’s Facebook page](#), where posts have been made introducing the Blue Plan and the FAQ’s; with more postings to come.

Fox and Hall wrapped up the discussion by speaking about the next steps of stakeholder outreach and messaging. These include holding a public meeting to introduce and gain feedback on the first version of the Inventory, updating the website to make it more user-friendly and interactive, and conducting interviews with Advisory Committee members to better understand how the Blue Plan can benefit their sector.

## **Timeline of Blue Plan**

Also discussed during this Advisory Committee meeting was the overall timeline for the Blue Plan. David Blatt explained that when looking back at the legislation, once the draft Blue Plan is completed in March 2019 it will enter a 90-day public comment period followed by up to an additional 90 days to revise the document into a final draft. Only after that time may the final draft be submitted to the legislature, which won’t take up the Blue Plan for potential approval until the 2020 legislative session.

## Public Comment Period

Peter Auster had a few suggestions for additional resources and topics to consider, including engaging the World Conservation Society and NY Ocean Sea Scape. Auster also mentioned coordinating with the TNC Ecological program for information exchange, as they are looking to expand and have useful ways of looking at data. Auster additionally noted that acoustic environments should be considered in the planning phase. There was also discussion about how to define habitat, that habitat hierarchy is often in the eye of the beholder, and that using seafloor and oceanographic complexity is one way to define habitat.

Auster asked whether the Blue Plan was a one shot activity or if there would be room for modification. Bruce Beebe replied that the Advisory Committee has to continue meeting and have a public hearing every year following approval; with an update to the Blue Plan every 5 years. Brian Thompson noted that there would be opportunities to recognize new datasets and new tools in Blue Plan updates.

Susan Bryson asked about shoreline residents, if they are considered stakeholders and if they are finalized into one of the sectors spoken about. Sylvain De Guise replied that the Inventory was data focused, and that outreach to the “non-data” community and engagement in the planning process is where shoreline residents would play more of a role. Bryson noted that the shoreline communities may have data that should be utilized. She explained that shoreline communities could be put into the categories of historic villages, shellfishers, etc. and should be a voice in this discussion. She mentioned that communities know more about “the bodies of water in front of them” than experts do, and if you look at them in the grand sweep they may get lost. David Blatt noted that the Blue Plan will not redo coastal or nearshore policies, and will only have jurisdiction from the 10ft depth and offshore. Nathan Frohling added that the Blue Plan does seek to understand contextual information on the connection of nearshore uses to the offshore environment, and that we are trying to reach everyone with a relationship to those nearshore uses.

Frohling also mentioned that the idea was to include shoreline residents in the “non-data” groups, but asked Bryson what was the best way to reach out to that sector. Marybeth Hart also asked Bryson how she found out about the Blue Plan and Advisory Committee meeting. Bryson mentioned she found out about the meeting via the Blue Plan listserv but didn’t find out until 5 days prior to the meeting. She noted that there needs to be more advanced notice of the meetings, and another way to get in touch with shoreline residents was through beach associations. Peter Auster also agreed that the email notice could be sent out sooner and was concerned about the “non-data” outreach emails, as it was not clear from the email who the group was trying to target and what input was needed. There was also some concern about the location of the “non-data” group meetings, as Bill Gardella noted that the event in Greenwich was not very accessible and may have suppressed CT involvement. Christian Fox noted that Greenwich was chosen for the availability of venues, and that there would also be a webinar looking to expand outreach to “non-data” groups.

**The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.**

<http://www.ct.gov/deep/lisblueplan>

## Resources

- CT DEEP. (2018). *Blue Plan Frequently Asked Questions*. Retrieved from Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection: [http://www.ct.gov/DEep/cwp/view.asp?a=2705&q=599192&deepNav\\_GID=1635](http://www.ct.gov/DEep/cwp/view.asp?a=2705&q=599192&deepNav_GID=1635)
- CT DEEP. (2018). *Blue Plan Related Links*. Retrieved from Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection: [http://www.ct.gov/DEep/cwp/view.asp?a=2705&q=574470&deepNav\\_GID=1635%22](http://www.ct.gov/DEep/cwp/view.asp?a=2705&q=574470&deepNav_GID=1635%22)
- CT DEEP. (2018). *Long Island Sound Blue Plan Webinars*. Retrieved from CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection: <http://www.ct.gov/DEep/cwp/view.asp?a=2705&q=593814>

Appendix

Appendix 1. Letter from Representative Suozzi regarding the Blue Plan.

**THOMAS R. SUOZZI**

3RD DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

FOLLOW ON

 Rep.TomSuozzi

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<http://suozzi.house.gov>

November 9, 2017

RECEIVED

NOV 27 2017

CT DEPT OF ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

The Honorable Robert Klee  
Commissioner  
Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-5127

Dear Rob:

Thank you for making a presentation on the Long Island Sound Blue Plan at the Conference that was held on October 20.

When completed, the Long Island Sound Blue Plan will contain a great deal of information that can be used to plan future uses of the Sound while protecting traditional usages and marine habitat and wildlife. I was pleased to hear that Connecticut is working with New York and hope you will let my office know when you plan outreach events on Long Island.

Again, many thanks for participating in the conference. Here's to another 20 years of protecting and enhancing Long Island Sound.

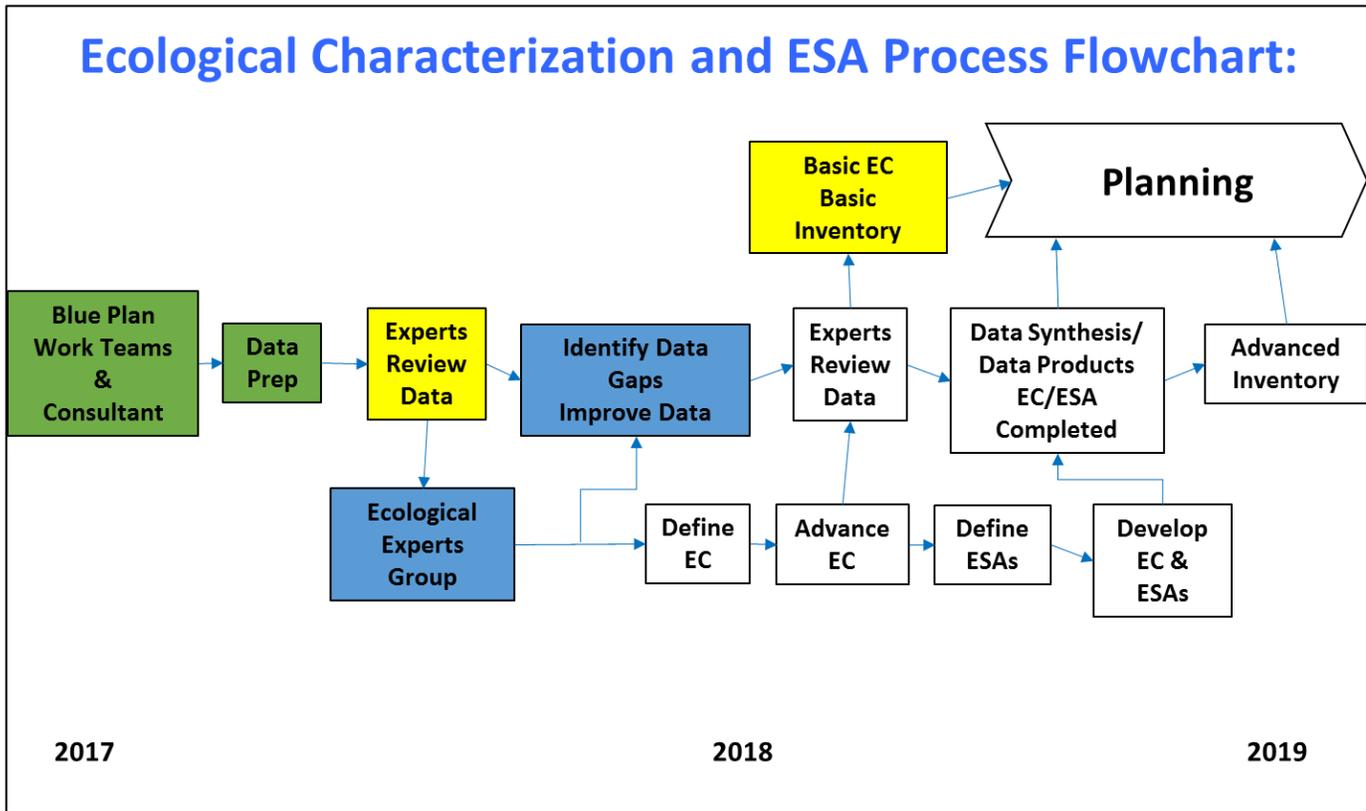
With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress

TRS:csr

**Appendix 2. Ecological Characterization and ESA Flowchart: Current Status, where green boxes are completed, yellow boxes are in progress, and blue boxes are the next steps.**



**Appendix 3. Draft proposed Policy Template**

## Blue Plan Document Policy Template

**Part I Sound-Wide Policies:**

Narrative list of broad policies and criteria for regulatory programs, incorporating the statutory policy criteria of CGS §25-157t(b)(2) as integrated through the Vision & Goals Statement.

Additionally, a list of more specific, but not site-specific policies, e.g.:

- a. Discourage significant permanent visual encroachments or above-water structures, except as necessary for public safety (e.g., aids to navigation) or general public benefit;
- b. Offshore structures shall only be allowed if they support water-dependent uses or resource restoration/enhancement and are functionally dependent on an in-Sound location (e.g., floats

and buoys for kelp farms would be OK; floating ferry terminals and FSRUs not), and shall be minimized in physical extent and visual profile;

- c. No new offshore residential uses except on previously developed islands;
- d. New permanent cross-Sound transportation infrastructure (bridges and tunnels) are discouraged except in cases of public necessity where adverse impacts, including visual, have been minimized. Fred Carstensen notwithstanding . . .

**Part II Siting and Performance Standards by Ecologically Significant Resource Category:**

For each category of Ecologically Significant Area, there will be a narrative description of the resource and a list of broad policies and criteria for regulatory programs, incorporating the statutory ESA = “special, sensitive or unique estuarine and marine life and habitats, including, but not limited to scenic and visual resources” CGS §25-157t(b)(2)(I). There will also be a summary table, such as the partial example below.

Resource Categories	Air and Surface	Water Column	Benthos & Substrate
Structured benthic habitat	No restrictions	No restrictions	No permanent on-bottom structures, no activities that would create turbidity or physical impacts lasting beyond one growing season
Submerged aquatic vegetation	No restrictions on navigation or angling provided depth is sufficient to avoid impacts. Seasonal restrictions may also be considered	No in-water structures or activities that would interfere with plant growth. Seasonal restrictions may also be considered	No bottom disturbance
Shellfish habitat (natural beds, not harvested)	No permanent fixed or floating structures that interfere with shellfish growth. Marker buoys etc. may be allowed if appropriate	Fishing, navigation allowed.	Cables, pipelines or other on- or under-bottom structures should be routed elsewhere except in cases of significant public necessity. In such cases, agreement of managing authority (town Shellfish Commission or DA/BA) will be required, and installation and other impacts shall not last more than one season.
Undeveloped islands and other bird (or mammal?) habitats	No permanent fixed or floating structures, including docks, that would encourage human or predator access to habitats. Appropriately minimized facilities for scientific or research access may be allowed.	No in-water structures or activities that would interfere with or disturb species of concern	No on-bottom structures or activities that would interfere with or disturb species of concern.

**Part III Siting and Performance Standards by Category of Significant Use Areas:**

For each category of Significant Use Area, there will be a brief description of the use (corresponding to the description in the Use Compatibility Matrix) and a list of broad vertically-sorted policies and criteria for regulatory programs. There will also be a summary table, such as the partial example below.

<b>Significant Use Area Categories</b>	<b>Air and Surface</b>	<b>Water Column</b>	<b>Benthos &amp; Substrate</b>
Navigation channels	No permanent fixed or floating structures that interfere with vessel traffic, except ATONs	No aquaculture or other in-water structures at any depth that would interfere with navigation. Fishing activities allowed subject to vessel traffic	Potentially appropriate to co-locate cables, pipelines and other uses that may require bottom disturbance, given the need for periodic dredging
Plant aquaculture (kelp farms)	Should be sited away from navigational areas; adequate space or lanes provided to navigate through or around	Limited fishing (e.g., recreational angling) may be appropriate on periphery	Bottom disturbance for appropriately sited uses may be allowed, subject to seasonal restrictions as applicable
Designated shellfish beds (bottom-culture aquaculture)	No permanent fixed or floating structures that interfere with aquaculture operations. Seasonally removed floats, buoys etc. may be allowed if appropriate	Fishing, navigation allowed at times that do not interfere with aquaculture operations or with buoys or other markers of the shellfish beds	Cables, pipelines or other on- or under-bottom structures should be routed elsewhere except in cases of significant public necessity. In such cases, agreement of bed owner/leaseholder will be required, and installation and other impacts shall not last more than one season.
Popular dive sites	No permanent fixed or floating structures that affect submerged natural or cultural resources. Site marker buoys may be allowed.		

**Part IV Area-Based Priority and Performance Standards:**

For each individually-identified Ecologically Significant Area and Significant Use Area, there will be a narrative description of the area and its attributes, the priority uses and the types of vertical impacts that should be evaluated. There will also be a summary table, such as the partial example below.

<b>Designated Management Area Locations</b>	<b>Priority Uses</b>	<b>Air and Surface</b>	<b>Water Column</b>	<b>Benthos &amp; Substrate</b>

Stratford Shoals	Habitat Conservation	No permanent fixed or floating structures	Fishing, vessel traffic allowed	No bottom disturbance
ELDS	Dredged material disposal	No restrictions except during disposal operations	No in-water aquaculture structures or fixed fishing gear (e.g., lobster pots)	No bottom disturbance except for disposal operations
Thimble Islands	Shellfish aquaculture, navigation	No structures that would interfere with priority uses; no residences or other non-WDU within regulated areas	No fixed structures or fishing gear that would interfere with navigation or aquaculture activities	Utility lines should be comprehensively mapped and encouraged to be buried within existing corridors, outside of leased or designated shellfish beds, and not be extended to undeveloped islands.

**Part V Applicant's Guide to Using the Blue Plan:**

Prospective applicants for permits referenced in CGS §25-157t(h)(1) are encouraged to first examine Ecologically Significant Areas and Significant Use Areas, then consult the data Inventory as appropriate for the nature of the proposed application. The Significant Areas and Inventory data templates should help guide the siting of proposals for which there is some flexibility in locating the proposed activity. However, no information in the Inventory or Plan should be construed relieving an applicant of its responsibility to conduct site-specific investigations of resources and uses, and to consult with user groups, as appropriate, to minimize adverse impacts of a proposed activity.