



**CHNEP Management Committee Meeting**  
Friday May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Charlotte County Centennial Park  
Large Multipurpose Room  
1120 Centennial Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33953

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order and Introductions — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair
2. Agenda Additions or Deletions — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair
4. Management Committee January 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair
5. TAC Report — Ernesto Lasso de la Vega, TAC Co-Chair
6. CAC Report — Harry Phillips, CAC Co-Chair
7. CHNEP Update — Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP
8. Amended FY2023 Work Plans & Budgets — Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP
9. FY2024 Work Plans & Budgets — Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP
10. *One Water: Theory v. Practice* Presentations and Interactive Committee Discussion — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair & Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP
  - Mike Britt, One Water Project Manager, City of Winter Haven
  - Keeli Carlton, Water Conservation Specialist, City of Winter Haven
  - Brandon Moody, Water Quality Manager, Charlotte County
11. CHNEP Technical Projects Updates and New Tools — Nicole Iadevaia, CHNEP
12. Management Committee Member Updates — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair
13. Public Comment — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair
14. Future Meeting Dates and Topics — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair
  - Upcoming Meeting: September 8, 2023
15. Adjourn — Melynda Brown, Interim Co-Chair

# DIRECTIONS TO OUR MEETING LOCATION

1120 CENTENNIAL BLVD, PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 339532



Coming from the North:

1. Take I-75 S to Sumter Blvd (exit 182) in North Port.
2. Follow Sumter Blvd for 8 miles to US Hwy 41 S, then Turn left onto US Hwy 41 S
3. Follow US Hwy 41 S for 4 miles to Centennial Blvd., then Turn right onto Centennial Blvd.
4. Follow Centennial Blvd. ½ mile down, turn **LEFT** into Centennial Park/Pool Parking Lot.
5. Check in at Front Desk and they will direct you to the Large Multipurpose Room

Coming from the South:

1. Take I-75 N to Kings Hwy in Charlotte County (exit 170)
2. Use the left 2 lanes to turn left onto Kings Hwy (signs for Port Charlotte/Charlotte Sports Pk)
3. Follow for ½ mile, then Use the right 2 lanes to turn right onto Veterans Blvd.
4. Follow for 7 miles, the Turn right onto US Hwy 41 N
5. Follow for 2 miles, then Turn left onto Centennial Blvd.
6. Follow Centennial Blvd. ½ mile down, turn **LEFT** into Centennial Park/Pool Parking Lot.
7. Check in at Front Desk and they will direct you to the Large Multipurpose Room

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**If not able to attend in person, the Zoom meeting link is below:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86938115972?pwd=Q3JzM0FjeFVzWkowNzlwYjNyWFV5QT09>

Meeting ID: 869 3811 5972, Passcode: 968476

Call in number: +13052241968,,86938115972#,,, \*968476# US

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**1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The CHNEP Management Committee Interim Co-Chair will call the meeting to order and then members will introduce themselves, followed by CHNEP staff and any members of the public who are participating.

**2. AGENDA ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS**

If any Management Committee member would like to make an addition or deletion to the agenda, this item is the time to suggest such.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Each participating member of the public is afforded up to 3 minutes total to speak on agenda topics only at this point in the meeting.

**4. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE JANUARY 13, 2023 MEETING MINUTES**

This item is to review, offer any potential revisions, and approve final meeting minutes from the previous January 13, 2023 Management Committee meeting.

**Recommendation:** Approval of the minutes from January 13, 2023 meeting.  
**Attachment:** Draft January 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

**5. TAC REPORT**

Ernesto Lasso de la Vega, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Co-Chair will be providing a verbal report from the April 13, 2023 meeting. The meeting was called into order at 9:30 am. After the agenda and prior meeting minutes were approved, followed by the routine CHNEP Update, the annual TAC Co-Chair elections were held. Ernesto was nominated and unanimously voted to serve a second term as Co-Chair. Jennifer Hecker presented a Hurricane Ian Follow-up to the TAC, outlining actions CHNEP staff have taken to follow-up on prior discussions of committee- most notably to work with the Central Florida Regional Planning Council to initiate drafting of a natural resource emergency response element that can be added to County Emergency Response Plans. TAC members commented that there is still a lot of Hurricane Ian analysis on-going, with dissolved oxygen levels returning to normal in the Peace/Myakka basins in the months since the storm. Other comments were related to the large amount of marine/waterway debris still present, salinity levels are still elevated in many areas, and a member mentioned that there is an acetone treatment to dissolve Styrofoam that is being assessed by FDEP. Next, Dr. Chris Anastasiou presented the 2022 SWFWMD Seagrass Mapping Results, which included -2% in Charlotte Harbor (all-time historic low) and -4% loss in Lemon Bay. TAC members asked about impacts related to Piney Point, to which Chris stated most impact was in Hillsborough Bay with a 30%+ loss in 2022.

The next presentation was by Melynda Brown, who presented on 2021 Seagrass Propscar Mapping within the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves. From 2003 to 2020, the total acreage of scarring decreased by 36%, 26,941 acres to 17,113 acres respectively. It was also noted 10% of the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves is scarred 18% of Matlacha Pass and Pine Island Sound. Gasparilla Sound – Charlotte Harbor showed a 70% decrease in scarring, but primarily due to seagrass loss during the 2020 assessment. Pine Island sound had the highest total acreage of scarring with 10,649 acres moderately scarred, Cape Haze had the highest percentage (52%) of severely scarred beds, and Lemon Bay showed the least amount of overall scarring. Then, Sarina Weiss of the CHNEP presented the 2021 SFWMD Seagrass Mapping Results and Water Atlas Seagrass Page updates. Between 2014-2021, Pine Island Sound gained 1,373 while Matlacha Pass lost 3,664 acres, San

Carlos Bay lost 1,064 acres and Estero Bay lost 840 acres. A TAC member asked if citizen data seagrass survey data is or can be incorporated on CHNEP Water Atlas, which CHNEP staff responded that though it is not currently, it likely could be. The final guest presentation was by David Ceilley on the Large-scale *Vallisneria americana* Restoration in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary. This outlined historical *Vallisneria* coverage and changes over time, in addition to recent and current restoration efforts by the Angler Action Foundation to replant over 53 acres to get to a critical mass where it can withstand grazing pressure and persist. TAC members inquired about length of time exclusion cages are needed to establish plant, to which the response was approximately 6 months. Then the Nicole Iadevaia of CHNEP gave a presentation on the Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Quality Assurant Project Plan (QAPP). TAC members suggested keeping on-going revision history docs to track changes over time, to revisit optical model and what is needed to update it, as well as concerns with uploading data to state WIN database. After that, Nicole gave the Technical Projects Update, which will be same provided to the Management Committee. The TAC members then gave their respective updates and the meeting adjourned at 2:01 pm. There were no recommendations formed by the TAC pertaining directly to Management Committee agenda items this cycle.

## **6. CAC REPORT**

Harry Phillips, Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Co-Chair will be providing a verbal report from the April 26, 2023 meeting. First, the CAC members welcomed the newly appointed CAC representative from Charlotte County, Phyllis Wojcik. Phyllis' application was received during the previous cycle and was taken up for approval by the Policy Committee in their January 2023 meeting. The CAC had Co-Chair elections in which committee members nominated and voted unanimously for Harry Phillips for another term. Three new CHNEP conservation grant applications were reviewed with funding requested amounts, and recommendation by CHNEP staff for CAC review, discussion, and feedback. All of the grant applications were recommended for funding provided that the applicants could address requests for further information or additional deliverables from CHNEP. These included an application for underwater marine debris reporting and removal in Lee County, a waterway cleanup and citizen science event on Charlotte County, and water quality monitoring in Roberts Bay. The CAC heard a presentation from Ms. Julie Morris on behalf of the National Wildlife Refuge Association and the Florida Conservation Group about the proposed Southwest Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Area. If successful, a new conservation area would allow the USFWS to work with willing landowners to protect the lands most important to our water and wildlife in one of the most biologically diverse regions in our country. The CHNEP submitted a technical comment letter in support of this effort with recommendations to reference the CHNEP Habitat Restoration Needs Report. Committee member discussion was focused on the importance of showing support for this effort and educating landowners about this great non-regulatory opportunity.

Then, the CAC engaged in Hurricane Ian Discussion Follow-up, where Ms. Hecker updated CAC members on CHNEPs effort to work with the Regional Planning Councils to build tools for local governments and to increase resiliency and responsiveness during 'environmental disaster' events in the form of a Natural Resource component for potential adoption into County and City Emergency Response Plans. CAC members thanked the CHNEP for taking on this important project. Additionally, the CAC heard from CHNEP staff on upcoming CHNEP outreach opportunities. The CHNEP will be hosting a marine debris cleanup with FWC in May, as well as the triennial CHNEP Watershed Summit on June 21st & 22nd. The CHNEP Calendar Photo Contest is underway. Discussion was focused on the role of the CAC in helping CHNEP staff to plan, advertise and promote the upcoming Watershed Summit and the Calendar Photo Contest. Ms. Debi Osborne with

the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast (CFGC) then provided committee members with an update on the Myakka Headwaters Preserve Project. The CHNEP is working with SWFWMD and CFGC to fund and manage a project to remove exotic species and install native plants in selected critical areas on the property. Discussion was focused on the whether or not the property is open to the public. Finally, the CAC heard the CHNEP Program and Technical Project update presentations that are also coming before Management Committee, as well as shared updates with each other on their respective counties and communities and natural resource related activities and projects. There were no recommendations formed by the CAC pertaining directly to Management Committee agenda items this cycle.

## 7. CHNEP UPDATE

The following represents program activity highlights since the beginning of the last Management Conference cycle to the beginning of this one.

### Program Administration

- CHNEP met with Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) team as they surveyed areas that were heavily impacted by Hurricane Ian. This group included representatives from multiple federal agency staff.
- CHNEP held discussions at the Technical and Citizen's Advisory Committees to gather information on partner response, problems encountered, and lessons learned following Hurricane Ian. This and other information is shared on the newly created [Hurricane Ian](#) landing page on the CHNEP website, which is intended to be an educational resource for both partners and the public.
- Planned and executed both the Management Committee Meeting (1/13) and Policy Committee Meeting (1/26); including lining up presenters, drafting agenda packets, creating PowerPoints, drafting minutes, etc. CHNEP held discussions at the Management and Policy Committee Meetings review information on partner responses, problems encountered, and lessons learned during Hurricane Ian recovery. At their respective meetings, CHNEP Management and Policy Committees spoke with Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) team who were in attendance (this group included representatives from multiple federal agency staff posted in Southwest Florida to surveyed areas that were heavily impacted by Hurricane Ian and provide informational resources). Members of the committees gave feedback on resources needed to aid recovery time and had several questions for the IRC team. These questions were compiled by CHNEP staff and then sent to the IRC. CHNEP compiled the [responses from the IRC](#), including information on federal resources and contacts, and sent back out to the CHNEP Management Conference committee members in February.
- CHNEP coordinated with the Central Florida Regional Planning Council to create maps that would inform the CHNEP Equity Strategy for EPA BIL funding project planning. The draft Equity Strategy and maps were sent to EPA for review at the end of February.
- Opened call for abstracts for 2023 Southwest Florida Climate Summit and 2023 Watershed Summit.
- CHNEP advised the Southeast Coastal Acidification Network (SOCAN) and the Gulf of Mexico Acidification Network (GCAN) on creating a stakeholder feedback survey to inform the acidification community on stakeholder monitoring needs.

### Finance and Grant Management

- Revised CHNEP Conservation Grant Applications which are now available on the web: <https://www.chnep.org/conservation-grants>.

- Amended FY23 budget and associated Work Plan narrative figures.
- Adjusted and completed FY24 & FY25 County Budget.
- Input and Calculated Payroll Data through Pay Period 12 and reconciled.
- Submitted EPA BIL Grant to County/Legistar for Approval.
- Met with County Procurement regarding procedures for future projects.
- Worked with County Attorney's Office (CAO) and submitted Legal Services Request (LSR) to recreate interlocal agreement for execution by Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (SWFRPC).
- Completed Manatee County ILA and submitted to County Administrator for approval.
- Submitted FY23 SWFWMD to Legistar for board approval.
- Submitted FY23 Quarter 1 FDEP Report.
- Submitted FY23 Quarter 1 SWFWMD Reports for all fiscal years open: FY19, FY21, and FY23.
- SWFWMD FY19 Final Reimbursement packaged and submitted.
- Researched and submitted request to South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) for updated match expenditure information.
- Reviewed "Partnership Agreement" for County Fiscal Support and suggested pertinent changes based on current processes established with County support staff so far.
- Worked with County fiscal staff to continue updates to County financial coding (ledger and project strings) and into CHNEP's spreadsheet of budget details by account for FY23.
- Sent out award notices and instructions to Received 7 Conservation Grant Applications received and approved in December for the FY23 program.
- Processed all final FY23 quarterly invoices for Q1 as well as additional invoices for ongoing deliverable-based technical and outreach projects.

Regional and multi-jurisdictional organizational meetings CHNEP staff participated in

- Hosted CHNEP Winter Management Committee Mtgs. (4)
- Hosted Myakka Headwaters Preserve Site Visit w/partners and Contractor
- ANEP External Affairs Committee Meetings
- ANEP Directors Meetings
- ANEP Executive Committee Meetings
- Attended the Restoring America's Estuaries (RAE) Coastal & Estuarine Summit in New Orleans, LA
- Everglades Coalition Conference
- American Water Resources Association's 32nd Annual Southwest Florida Water Resources Conference
- Southwest Florida Seagrass Working Group Meeting
- Barrier Island Parks Society (BIPS) Marine Pollution Forum
- Caloosahatchee River Estuary Storage and Treatment (CREST) Project Phase 2 Groundbreaking
- Everglades Restoration Science Coordination Group (SCG) Post-Ian Technical Workshop
- Myakka River Management Coordinating Council (MRMCC) Meeting
- Artificial Reef Meeting/ UF
- FWC/CHNEP Snook Management in Charlotte Harbor
- SWFL Climate & Community Summit
- Heartland Regional Resiliency Action Plan Stakeholder Virtual Kick-Off Meeting
- Everglades Restoration Working Group/Science Coordination Group Meeting
- Regional Ambient Monitoring Program (RAMP) Meeting
- CHNEP/CFRPC Natural Resource Emergency Plan Element Discussion



- CHNEP/CFRPC Resiliency Coordination Meeting
- SWERT Steering Committee Meeting
- SWFRPC Federal Economic Recovery & Resiliency Workshop (3/14)
- Caloosahatchee River and Estuary and Everglades West Coast BMAPs Annual Meeting
- SWF Regional Ambient Monitoring Program (RAMP) HAB Subcommittee Meeting
- Association of National Estuary Programs (ANEP) and EPA Conference and meetings with CHNEP region federal legislative representatives
- Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative Meeting
- CHNEP Water Atlas Meetings with USF
- SFWMD Science Coordination Group and Working Group
- Post Hurricane Ian Southwest Florida Water Quality Sampling Coordination Meetings
- EPA NEP Environmental Justice (EJ) Forum
- SOCAN Stakeholder Working Group Call
- Science and Environment Council Meetings

#### CHNEP staff presentations

- Presented at the [American Water Resources Conference](#) on *Data Acquisition/Collaboration for Water Quality Post Hurricane Ian* and hosted an educational booth.
- Presented at the [Southwest Florida Climate & Community Summit](#) hosted by Growing Climate Solutions, FGCU Water School, Conservancy of Southwest Florida, and Everglades Foundation presenting on CHNEP's climate-related scientific and educational initiatives.
- Presented at the Barrier Island Park Society Marine Pollution Forum on: *Collaboration/Outreach Water Quality Data Post Hurricane Ian*.
- Presented '*Moving Water to Restore Rivers Wetlands and Estuaries in Central and Southwest Florida*' at the Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) Coastal & Estuarine Summit in New Orleans, LA.
- Presented '*Uniting Partners and Resources to Protect Central and Southwest Florida's Future Water, Wildlife, and Habitat: A Habitat Restoration Needs Plan for the Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership Area*' at the Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) Coastal & Estuarine Summit in New Orleans, LA.
- Presented on *Regional Watershed Changes: Restoring for the Future* at the 2023 Southwest Florida Climate Summit.
- CHNEP staff submitted an abstract for the Greater Everglades Ecosystem Restoration Conference (GEER) to be held in April and was selected to give a presentation on *Moving Water to Restore Rivers, Wetlands and Estuaries in Southwest Florida and the Caloosahatchee Basin*.
- Sponsored and attended the 38<sup>th</sup> annual [Everglades Coalition Conference](#) "A Watershed Moment for America's Everglades", hosting an organizational booth.
- Prepared a presentation and with water quality updates on CHNEP estuaries within Sarasota County for the Sarasota Water Quality Summit, which was held in December.

#### Publications and Outreach Initiatives

- Planned and hosted the [2023 Southwest Florida Climate Summit](#), which was held in-person in Fort Myers, FL on March 15 & 16, 2023. Gathered scientists, local community leaders, citizens, and key leaders in climate solutions to discuss expanding capacity to respond to climate challenges and building increased community resiliency. Created and facilitated an interactive question and answer sessions after each presenter session for audience to interact with the presenters. Sent out personalized invitations to federal and state senators and representatives.
- Spoke on air with [WGCU to invite listeners to SWFL Climate Summit](#)

- Attended the [Chalo Nitka Festival](#) and Rodeo in Moore Haven. Distributed environmental education materials and nature calendars to approx. 200 visitors Directly interacted with around 50 families and children.
- Attended the [Civilian Conservation Corps Festival at Highlands Hammock State Park](#). Distributed environmental education materials and nature calendars to approx. 100 visitors Directly interacted with around 50 families and children.
- Attended the [Swamp Cabbage Festival in LaBelle](#) with Environmental Defense Fund. Spoke to over 150 attendees
- Attended Water, Wings, and Wild Things festival in Polk County providing an educational lesson and resources to over 2,000 2nd graders in attendance along with their parents and teachers.
- Hosted January [ReNEW Year's Cleanup](#) at Ponce De Leon Park
- Hosted CHNEP 2022 Christmas Bird Count in partnership with Peace River Audubon Society. This is the largest and longest running community science driven effort in the county.
- Attended a Healthy Ponds Workshop hosted by the Sarasota Science and Environment Council with over 100 registered participants and provided resources to community members on the CHNEP and Florida Friendly yard practices.
- 26,000 copies of the [CHNEP 2023 Nature Calendar](#) (with educational insert on blue carbon) were printed and distributed to individual subscribers, partners at agencies and other governmental offices and non-profits and libraries within the 10-county service area. They are also shared with attendees at outreach events and community festivals where CHNEP participates.
- Sent welcome packet and educational fact sheets to newly appointed Citizen's Advisory Committee member representing Charlotte County.
- Updated and streamlined Conservation Grant applications, making available on the CHNEP landing page [CHNEP Conservation Grants](#). The CHNEP provides Conservation Grants (up to \$4,999) to community organizations for projects that address clean water, wildlife habitat protection and restoration, and outreach priorities in the CHNEP area, as outlined in the CCMP.
- Updated [CHNEP Funding Factsheet](#).

#### Outreach analytics

- 6,041 subscribers for CHNEP educational mailings.
- 2,950 unique visitors and 9,519 page visits to CHNEP website.
- 22 new Instagram followers (502 total followers)- started this year
- 1,902 Facebook followers
- 36 new Facebook Likes (1,602 total likes)
- 6,128 YouTube Views/52 Subscribers

CHNEP Executive Director Jennifer Hecker will be presenting the CHNEP Update.

**Recommendation:** For discussion only.

## **8. AMENDED FY2023 WORK PLANS & BUDGETS**

The FY2023 Work Plan and Budget was originally reviewed by the Management Committee and approved by the CHNEP Policy Committee in May 2022, and then amended in September 2022 and in January 2023. It customary to update and amend the Work Plan and Budget with any changes given actual costs, needed adjustment to accommodate project or staffing change needs, etc. Below is a summary of amendments proposed this cycle.



## **FY2023 EPA 320 Work Plan & Budget Amendments**

### Cover Page

- Updated Amended date from January 26, 2023 to May 25, 2023

### Table 1

- Reserves went up from \$25,613 to \$31,613 (due to reduced sponsorships, Conservation Grants and Policymaker Education cost actuals).

### Table 2

- Expenditure Table modified to round to the dollar, due to EPA guidance.

### Table 3

- Removed \$2,500 City of Bonita Springs contribution, which was not received and the City has indicated it does not intend to provide.
- Non-federal Fund Total updated to \$338,000 (from \$340,500) due to above.

### Table 4

- Travel table changes to update travel plans for remainder of year, while keeping same total travel budget unchanged.

### Table 5

- 2024 Calendar and 2023 Harbor Happenings changed to increase Calendar from \$27,181 to actual bid total cost of \$38,600 due to supply cost increases, and then decreased Harbor Happenings from \$22,863.15 to \$11,444 due to Host Transfer and related procurement issues reducing number of issues printed this year. The overall total budget remains the same at \$55,044.

### Table 6

- Project Table was revised to remove all FY22 projects that are now closed out, Tiki Point project was consolidated and moved to FY22 BIL funding, and Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessments named such that Charlotte and Lee will be FY22 BIL and Polk and Highlands are FY23 BIL funded.

### Task 2.1

- Conservation grants reduced by \$5,500 (from \$30,000 to \$24,500) due to Hurricane and Host Transfer reducing submissions.

### Task 2.2

- Calendar increased by \$11,419 (from \$27,181 to \$38,600) due to escalation of paper and printing costs.

### Task 2.4

- Sponsorships reduced by \$3,000 due to cancelled events from Hurricane Ian.

### Task 4.5

- FY23 TBD Contingency was increased from \$10,000 to \$20,000 with \$10,000 additional local fund dollars – to account for inflation and supply cost escalations with increasing bids

### Task 5

- Removed \$7,500 from Policymaker Education which was unused, reducing from \$12,000 to \$4,500 (putting that \$7,500 towards reserves).

## FY2022-2023 EPA BIL Work Plan & Budget Amendments

### Cover Page

- Updated Amended date from September 22, 2023 to May 25, 2023

### Table 1

- Changed Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment(s) – TBD \$400,000 to Highlands County Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment \$200,000 and Lee County Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment \$200,000.
- Moved Tiki Point Living Shoreline from EPA320 to BIL \$320,000.
- Reduced Restoration Project(s) TBD to from \$742,500 to \$422,250 to accommodate Tiki Point Living Shoreline Project.

### Task 3.4

- Changed from Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment (TBD) to Highlands County Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment.

### Task 3.5

- Added Lee County Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment.

### Task 4.2

- Added Tiki Point Living Shoreline Project.

### Task 4.3

- Moved Restoration/Research Project(s) TBD from 4.2 to this task number (4.3).

Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP Executive Director, will present this. These are action items. Management Committee is being requested to vote to (1) recommend Policy Committee Approval of Amended FY2023 EPA 320 and (2) FY2022-2024 BIL Work Plans and Budgets.

**Recommendation:** Recommend Policy Committee Approval of Amended FY2023 EPA 320 and FY2022-2024 BIL Work Plans and Budgets

**Attachments:** Amended FY2023 EPA 320 Work Plan and Budget  
Amended FY2022-2023 EPA BIL Work Plan and Budget

## 9. **FY2024 WORK PLANS AND BUDGETS**

For fiscal year 2024, CHNEP has prepared three Workplans and Budgets: a master EPA320 Workplan and Budget, a novated EPA 320 Workplan and Budget, and an EPA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Workplan and Budget. This is due to EPA requiring a separate Workplan and Budget for novated 320 funds (those funds from prior grant being transferred from CHNEP's former host to present host) and for EPA BIL funds.

Additionally, in order to waive match for FY24-26 BIL funding, an Equity Strategy is required to ensure that at least 40% of the BIL funding from each of those years goes to disadvantaged communities in the CHNEP area. CHNEP used three federal disadvantaged community methodologies, all based exclusively on socioeconomic indicators (i.e., no racial indicators) to map the eligible areas. CHNEP also made the case that restoration efforts in upstream non-disadvantaged communities also benefit downstream disadvantaged communities; therefore, should be included. CHNEP has already received and addressed initial EPA regional and headquarters staff comments in the draft CHNEP Equity being presented to Management Committee.

## FY2024 EPA 320 Work Plan & Budget Highlights

- Added FY23 Previous Year Accomplishments (to date)

### Table 1

- Federal FY24 Programmatic 320 Funding increased to \$850,000 (from \$750,000)
- Added Novated FY20-22 320 Funding in amount of \$333,876, to be applied entirely to personnel – offsetting regular 320 personnel dollars which would then be allocated towards research/restoration TBD.
- Added EPA FY23 Carryover of \$80,000 (based on unspent personnel to date).
- Total Revenue increased as a result, showed balance with and without novated funds.
- Expenditure for personnel increased to \$669,810 (From 606,956, +\$62,854 to account for annual cost of staff living/merit annual increases).
- Overhead administrative costs increased to \$250,869 (from 229,649, +21,220 due primarily to host fee increases and slight increase in meeting support expenses).
- Public Outreach expenses increase to \$105,612 (from \$87,282, +18,330 due to readjusting and sponsorships and Harbor Happenings back up to pre-COVID pre-host change levels).

### Table 2

- Host Fees increased to \$184,869 (from \$165,000, +19,869).
- Meeting Support increased to \$7,000 (from \$5,949, +1,351).
- Total Overhead Administrative Costs Budget increased to \$250,869 (from \$229,649, +\$21,220)
- Note that Communication Software & Fees remains \$9,000 but switched from locally funded in FY23 to EPA 320 in FY24.

### Table 3

- Federal FY24 Programmatic 320 Funding increased to \$850,000 (from \$750,000)
- Total Federal increased to \$1,759,800 (from \$1,659,800, +\$100,000)
- Total Cooperative Funding increased to \$2,097,800 (from \$1,997,800, +\$100,000)

### Table 4

- Updated with anticipated FY24 travel but overall Travel budget remains the same at \$25,000.
- Note: Staff Travel is split-funded in FY24: \$10,000 from BIL (allowed in BIL guidance) and \$15,000 EPA 320.

### Table 5

- Increased Sponsorships to \$6,500 (from \$3,500, +\$3,000).
- Decreased Calendar to \$35,651 (from \$38,600, -\$2,949).
- Increased Harbor Happenings to \$29,723 (from \$11,444, +\$18,279).
- Increased Total for Public Outreach Budget to \$105,612 (from \$87,282, +\$18,330).

### Table 6

- Updated previous year sections to remove project/project phases that will be completed prior to FY24
- Added FY24 Projects including:
  - SWFWMD-funded Upper CCHMN (\$74,000)
  - EPA 320-funded Lower CCHMN (\$13,000)

- Continued Local contingency funding to cover unanticipated costs (\$20,000)
  - 320-funded TBD Research / Restoration Projects (\$23,947, plus novated \$333,876 so could be \$357,823).
  - EPA BIL projects including CHNEP Water Atlas (\$95,000), DeSoto County Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment (\$200,000), Hardee County Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment (\$200,000), and EPA-BIL funded TBD Research/Restoration (\$404,800).
- Staff organization chart is unchanged. The only unfilled position is Restoration Specialist, which we are awaiting BIL workload to become clearer to decide whether to pursue. If filled, would be as one-year 1-year locally funded contractor position.
  - EPA 320 FY23 Carryover will be funding the CCMP Update, which was added in the Narrative Section as Task 5.1 under Policymaker Education. The CCMP Update occurs every five years, the last update was a full revision in 2019 which included the name change and boundary expansion.
  - These changes outlined below were then carried forward into the appropriate areas of the narrative task descriptions.

### **FY2024 EPA Novated 320 Work Plan & Budget Highlights**

When the CHNEP changed fiscal hosts October 1, 2022, it had a grant with three years of EPA 320 funding that had been accepted on its behalf by its prior host (City of Punta Gorda) still open. Now that FY22 expenses have been processed, the amount of unexpended grant funds has been determined (\$333,876). The CHNEP had originally planned to leave those funds with the City to be expended on the Tiki Point Living Shoreline Project. However, due to Hurricane Ian and delays in a state funding agreement that is being used as match, this project has not been able to commence in the timeframe planned. Therefore, EPA, the City, and CHNEP determined that it would be best to novate this grant, closing out the grant with the City and deobligating the funds to be immediately obligated in a new grant to the CHNEP's current fiscal host, Charlotte County. CHNEP has prepared the required Novated 320 Work Plan and Budget required to be submitted with the grant application. It outlines that all these funds, once novated and transferred, will be applied to FY24 personnel costs. That will in turn free up EPA regular 320 funds, which can then be added to TBD Research/Restoration projects.

### **FY2024-2026 EPA BIL Work Plan & Budget Highlights**

There are three years left of the 5-years of additional funding authorized by Congress through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), to each entity in the US EPA National Estuary Program. CHNEP already created a FY2022&FY2023 Work Plan and Budget, which it submitted to US EPA and has since been awarded. EPA Headquarters indicated that the next three years of funding (total \$2,729,400) can be handled in a combined application and Work Plan. As such, CHNEP has prepared a FY2024-2024 EPA BIL Work Plan and Budget. CHNEP is planning to continue to use \$400,000 of each year's funding (+\$1,200,000) to add two more county Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessments (DeSoto and Hardee in FY24, Sarasota and Manatee in FY25 and Glades and Hendry in FY26). Additionally, CHNEP will continue to issue an annual call for projects each year to use the remainder of annual BIL funding (\$404,800, = \$1,214,400 total) in addition to the CHNEP Water Atlas (\$95,000/yr, = \$285,000 total) and a portion of CHNEP Travel (\$10,000/yr, = \$30,000) related to CHNEP BIL funded projects/initiatives.

Additionally, there is a match requirement for FY2024-FY2026 EPA BIL funding unless the EPA approves an Equity Strategy, which outlines how a National Estuary Program will ensure that at least 40% of that funding goes to benefitting disadvantaged communities. As such, the CHNEP prepared such a draft Equity Strategy based solely on federal socioeconomic indicators (i.e., not racial) and sent that to both EPA regional and headquarters staff. CHNEP has since received comments from both and addressed those comments in the revised draft being shared with Management Committee this cycle. With the majority of the CHNEP meeting federal methodology thresholds for being deemed disadvantaged, CHNEP believes 40% allocation to those areas is realistic and achievable.

Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP Executive Director, will present this. These are action items. Management Committee is being requested to vote (1) to recommend Policy Committee Approval of FY2024 EPA 320, (2) FY2024 EPA Novated 320, (3) Draft FY2024-2026 BIL Work Plans and Budgets, and (4) CHNEP Equity Strategy.

**Recommendation:** Recommend Policy Committee Approval of FY2024 EPA 320, FY2024 EPA Novated 320, Draft FY2024-2026 BIL Work Plans and Budgets, and CHNEP Equity Strategy

**Attachments:** Draft FY2024 EPA 320 Work Plan and Budget  
Draft FY2024 EPA Novated 320 Work Plan and Budget  
Draft FY2024-2026 EPA BIL Work Plan and Budget  
Draft CHNEP Equity Strategy

## **10. ONE WATER: THEORY V. PRACTICE PRESENTATIONS AND INTERACTIVE COMMITTEE**

A special interactive committee discussion on One Water – Theory v. Practice will be the focus of this meeting. One Water is seen as an innovative approach for local governments to better manage their water resources, in a way that can also improve the conditions of environmentally sensitive lands. It involves an the integration of surface/groundwater management and natural resource management, through water supply, wastewater/reuse, watershed management, and stormwater utilities working together with surface water monitoring, parks/environmental lands and other natural resource departments. A panel of experienced local government ‘One Water’ leaders will be presenting their experiences and lessons on how local governments can successfully adopt such an approach, answering Committee member questions on challenges, opportunities, and benefits in doing so. They will cover their One Water definition & program goals, their One Water operational model, internal resources and logistics – challenges and opportunities, external communication and coordination with public stakeholders, partnering with other levels of government, and also provide a successful One Water project example.

Presenters/panelists will include Mike Britt (One Water Project Manager, City of Winter Haven), Keeli Carlton (Water Conservation Specialist, City of Winter Haven), and Brandon Moody (Water Quality Manager, Charlotte County). Each representing both a coastal and inland Heartland community, these One Water experts will share their respective approaches, challenges, and successes, as well as will be prepared to answer questions from Committee members on One Water: Theory v. Practice issues.

## **11. CHNEP TECHNICAL PROJECTS UPDATES**

In addition to the items featured earlier on the agenda, other research and/or restoration projects (or phases of projects) in the program area are currently underway with CHNEP FY21-23 funds. A brief overview will be given on project progress since the previous Management meeting. Additionally, there will be an updates regarding technical comment letters submitted since the previous cycle.



Nicole Iadevaia, CHNEP Director of Research & Restoration, will be presenting this agenda item. Project fact sheets are available on the CHNEP website: <https://www.chnep.org/chnep-fact-sheets>. Technical comment letters can be viewed here: <https://www.chnep.org/letters-resolutions>

## **12. MANAGEMENT MEMBERSHIP UPDATES**

Each member will have up to 5 minutes to update the Committee on projects currently being completed to protect and restore natural resource in the CHNEP program area. This time also serves as an opportunity for members to discuss topics of interest to the Committee members.

Interim Management Committee Co-Chair, Melynda Brown, will be leading and facilitating this discussion.

## **13. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Each participating member of the public is afforded up to 3 minutes total to speak.

## **14. FUTURE MEETING DATES AND TOPICS**

The next meeting date is September 8, 2023. Please hold this date on your calendar, with location and other details including agenda being sent via email at least one week in advance. If you have ideas for future meeting topics, please send to [jhecker@chnep.org](mailto:jhecker@chnep.org).

## **15. ADJOURN**