

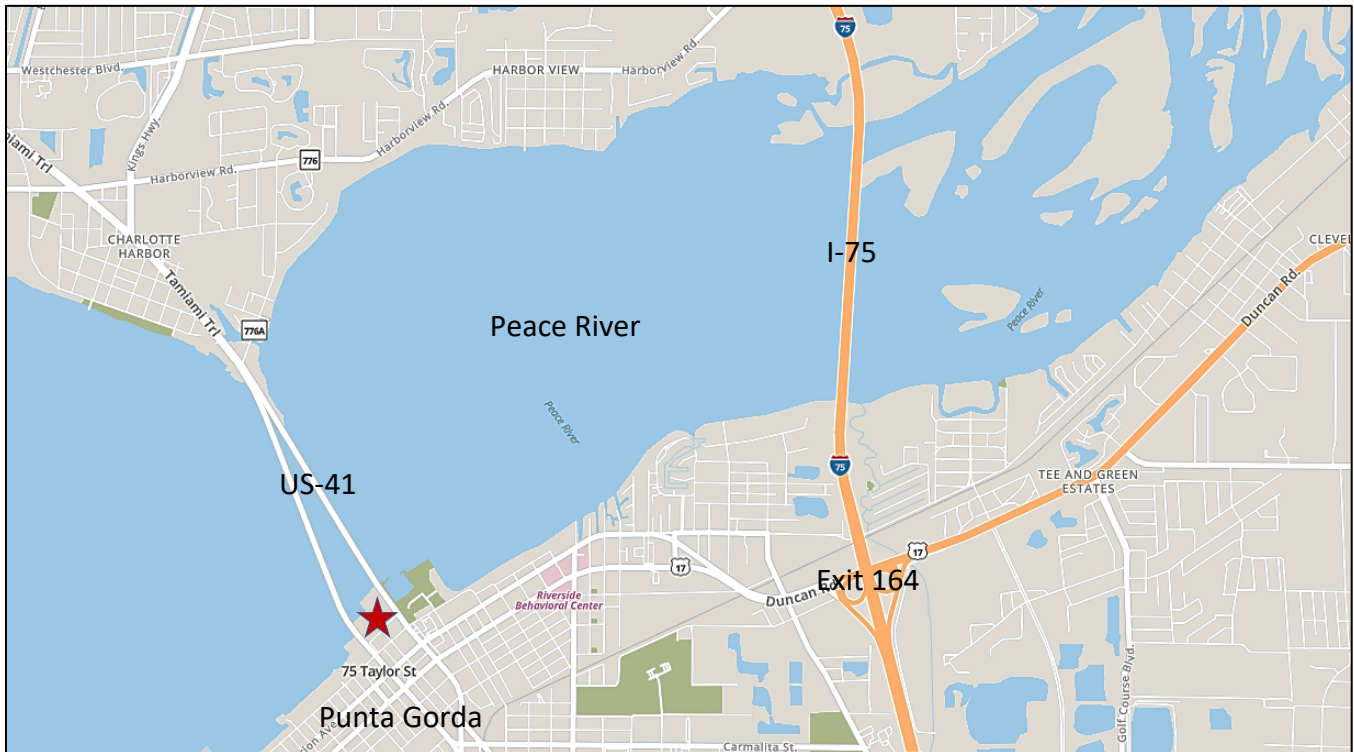


CHNEP Policy Committee Meeting
Thursday May 25th, 2023, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center
75 Taylor St, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Introductions — Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair
2. Agenda Additions or Deletions — Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items — Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair
4. Management Committee Report — Melynda Brown, Interim Management Committee Co-Chair
5. CHNEP Update — Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP
6. Consent Agenda — Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP & Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair
 - a) Policy Committee January 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - b) Amended FY2023 Work Plans & Budgets
7. FY2024 Work Plans & Budgets — Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP
8. *One Water: Theory vs. Practice* Presentations and Interactive Committee Discussion — Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP & Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair
 - Mike Britt, One Water Project Manager, City of Winter Haven
 - Brandon Moody, Water Quality Manager, Charlotte County
9. CHNEP Technical Projects Updates and New Tools — Nicole Iadevaia, CHNEP
10. Policy Committee Member Updates — Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair
11. Public Comment — Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair
12. Future Meeting Dates and Topics — Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair
 - Upcoming Meeting: September 21, 2023
13. Adjourn — Jennifer Carpenter, Co-Chair

DIRECTIONS TO OUR MEETING LOCATION



If Traveling With GPS: 75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, Florida

From North (Tampa, Sarasota)

- Take I-75 South
- Take Exit 164 (US-17-Punta Gorda)
- Take left onto US-17(towards Punta Gorda) for 2 miles
- US-17 becomes West Marion Avenue
- Turn right onto Taylor Street
- Event Center will be 2 blocks ahead on the left

From South (Ft. Myers, Naples, Southwest Florida Airport)

- Take I-75 North
- Take Exit 164 (US-17-Punta Gorda)
- Take left onto US-17(towards Punta Gorda) for 2 miles
- US-17 becomes West Marion Avenue
- Turn right onto Taylor Street
- Event Center will be 2 blocks ahead on the left

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

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84956521231?pwd=eXAvM2IibzI5SnRJSStoZFpqcVVFdz09>

Meeting ID: 849 5652 1231, Passcode: 498830

Call in number: +13052241968,,84956521231#,,,*498830# US

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

The CHNEP Policy Committee 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 Policy Committee member would like to make an addition or deletion to the agenda, this item is the time to suggest such. Members will be asked to vote to approve the final meeting agenda.

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 REPORT

The CHNEP Management Committee’s last meeting was held on May 12th, 2023, chaired by interim Co-Chair Melynda Brown as both regular Co-Chairs had unavoidable conflicts so were unable to do so. The Management Committee first heard a CHNEP Technical Advisory Committee report on highlights of their April meeting. Presentations included Seagrass Mapping Results from Dr. Chris Anastasiou of the Southwest Florida Water Management District, 2021 Seagrass Propscar Mapping within the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves by Melynda Brown of Florida DEP, and a Large-scale *Vallisneria americana* Restoration in the Caloosahatchee River Estuary by David Ceilley – with the videos of these presentations on the TAC webpage on CHNEP.org if you are interested in viewing. CHNEP staff presentations included a CHNEP Update given by Jennifer Hecker, Sarina Weiss presenting on the 2021 South Florida Water Management District Seagrass Mapping Results and Water Atlas Seagrass Page updates and Nicole Iadevaia giving a Technical Projects Update. Annual TAC Co-Chair elections were held and Ernesto Lasso de la Vega was nominated and unanimously elected to serve a second term as TAC Co-Chair.

The Management Committee also heard the Citizen’s Advisory Committee Report on highlights from their April meeting, which included welcoming new Charlotte County member Phyllis Wojcik. The committee reviewed three new CHNEP conservation grant applications to which they provided feedback and supported funding of. The CAC also heard from CHNEP Staff on upcoming outreach opportunities to share with their networks and communities, including the 2023 Watershed Summit to be held in Punta Gorda on June 21st and 22nd. Presentations included one on a Proposed US Fish and Wildlife Service Southwest Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Area by Julie Morris on behalf of the National Wildlife Refuge Association and the Florida Conservation Group, and another on the Myakka Headwaters Preserve Restoration Project by Debi Osborne of the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast – both of these videos are available on the CAC webpage on CHNEP.org if you are interested in viewing. Committee member discussion was focused on the importance of showing support for the USFWS Proposed Southwest Florida and Wildlife Conservation Area and educating landowners about this great, non-regulatory opportunity to promote and maintain sustainable farming and rural land conservation. Annual CAC Co-Chair elections were held and Harry Phillips was nominated and unanimously elected to serve a second term as CAC Co-Chair.

Following the committee reports, the Management Committee reviewed each of the items coming before the Policy Committee this cycle. Firstly, with regards to the Amended FY2023 320 and FY2022-2023 BIL Work Plans and Budgets, the committee discussed how CHNEP funds would be

paired with Resilient Florida funds to create comprehensive vulnerability assessments in all ten counties over the next few years. The Management Committee unanimously approved a recommendation to the Policy Committee that they approve the proposed Amended FY2023 320 and FY2022-2023 BIL Work Plans and Budgets. Next, the Management Committee reviewed the FY2024 Work Plans and Budgets including for 320, Novated 320 and BIL federal grant funds. With regards to the 320 FY2024 Work Plan, discussion was about the implementation of the CHNEP Outreach Strategy, including pivoting resources from the annual Nature Festival to events in all 10-counties, including non-environmental community events to reach new audiences. With regards to the Novated 320 FY2024 Work Plan, EPA expressed its support and explained that due to a high volume of internal grant management tasks, it may take EPA several months to process this grant award. With regards to the FY2024-2026 BIL Work Plan, there was a question in regard to host fee increases as well as personnel cost increases. CHNEP staff explained that the host fee structure is still bringing savings and is beneficial in being proportionate to CHNEP's annual revenue whether that goes up or down – in being capped at no more than 10% CHNEP's total revenue. Staff also explained that personnel costs include both salaries and benefits, with salary increases by CHNEP's host HR policies at 4%/yr. max and benefit costs increases accounting for remainder of increase. A Management Committee member suggested an amendment to 320 and BIL work plans to add language to further clarify that personnel includes both salaries and benefits. The Management Committee then proceeded to unanimously approve a recommendation that the Policy Committee approve all the new Work Plans and Budgets with the aforementioned proposed Work Plans amendment. The Committee also reviewed the CHNEP Equity Strategy, which outlines how a National Estuary Program will ensure that at least 40% of its funding goes to benefitting disadvantaged communities. An EPA-approved Equity Strategy is needed to waive match for next three years of BIL funding. There was a lot of Committee discussion about the proposed methodologies, how benefits would be tracked and whether it might be beneficial to consider an economic study after BIL-funded projects are completed to quantify financial benefits. The Committee unanimously approved a recommendation to the Policy Committee that they approve the CHNEP Equity Strategy.

The Committee then had a One Water: Theory vs. Practice panel and committee discussion, which is on the Policy agenda today as well. There was a lot of Committee discussion and feedback following the panel including on how to address monitoring and public education/ engagement. Charlotte County representative responded explaining that there could be more coordinated citizen science programs, using consistent methods and analysis protocols. The City of Winter Haven representative responded that they are incorporating an internship program as well as targeting and engaging with new homeowners, highest water consumers, and those concerned about their high-water bills. Other questions were on what steps have already been taken to restore and implement their One Water plan and if they have considered focusing on opportunities within utilities (i.e., restoring outfall areas). Winter Haven representative responded that several projects outlined in the 'One Water' Plan have been drafted and engineers are beginning to start work. Another member voiced their support for these plans and stressed the importance of community and county authorities to develop and implement such plans that are customized to community objectives and quality of life concerns. Finally, there was a question in regard to whether there had been any consideration of implementing any of the county's goals in a conservation land plan or strategic plan. Charlotte County representative responded that he envisions the 'One Water' planning process will consist of doing a deep dive in the planning regulations and codes to hopefully implement some goals into larger strategic plans. Charlotte County is currently looking at case studies to see what is done in surrounding communities. Winter Haven representative added that the City of Winter Haven has developed a framework for what their future comprehensive plan would look like in implementing their One Water plan and policies. Concluding the meeting, the Management Committee heard the

CHNEP Program and Technical Projects Updates, which are also being presented before the Policy Committee today.

Melynda Brown, Management Committee Interim Co-Chair, will be providing this report.

5. 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 are 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 38th 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 and be available to answer any committee member questions.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

a. POLICY COMMITTEE JANUARY 26, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

This item is to review, offer any potential revisions, and approve final meeting minutes from the previous January 26, 2023 Policy Committee meeting.

b. 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 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 the consent agenda items and be on hand to answer any Committee member questions. Policy Committee Co-Chair Jennifer Carpenter will be facilitating the votes regarding these action items.

Recommendation: Approval of Consent Agenda (including Policy Committee January 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes, Amended FY2023 EPA 320 Work Plans and Budget, and FY2022-2024 BIL Work Plan and Budget)

Attachments: Draft Policy Committee January 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Draft Amended FY2023 EPA 320 Work Plan and Budget
Draft Amended FY2022-2023 EPA BIL Work Plan and Budget

7. 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 and environmental 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 Strategy being presented to the Policy 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.

At their May 12, 2023 meeting, the Management Committee voted unanimously to recommend Policy Committee Approval of Amended FY2023 EPA 320 and FY2022-2024 BIL Work Plans and Budgets with amendment to add language regard “salaries & benefits” to “personnel”. This addition has been made in Task 1 narratives of each workplan for clarification in the draft Work Plans before the Policy Committee for approval.

Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP Executive Director, will present this and answer any questions. Policy Committee Co-Chair Jennifer Carpenter will be facilitating the votes regarding these action items.

Recommendation: Approval of FY2024 EPA 320, FY2024 EPA Novated 320, Draft FY2024-2026 BIL Work Plans and Budgets, as well as 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

8. ONE WATER: THEORY V. PRACTICE PRESENTATIONS AND INTERACTIVE COMMITTEE

A special interactive committee discussion on One Water – Theory vs. 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 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 learned 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 as well as challenges and opportunities, external communication, 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) and Brandon Moody (Water Quality Manager, Charlotte County) - 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 vs. Practice issues.

Jennifer Hecker of the CHNEP will be facilitating the panel presentations and Policy Committee Co-Chair Jennifer Carpenter will be leading and facilitating the Committee questions and discussion.

9. 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 and technical comment letters since the previous cycle. Project fact sheets are available on the CHNEP website at <https://www.chnep.org/chnep-fact-sheets>. Technical comment letters can be viewed at <https://www.chnep.org/letters-resolutions>.

Nicole Iadevaia, CHNEP Director of Research & Restoration, will be presenting this agenda item.

10. POLICY MEMBER UPDATES

Each member will have approximately 5 minutes to update the Committee on projects or initiatives 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.

Policy Committee Co-Chair Jennifer Carpenter will be leading and facilitating this discussion.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

12. FUTURE MEETING DATES AND TOPICS

The next meeting date is September 21, 2023 at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center, 75 Taylor St, Punta Gorda, FL 33950. Please note, as the federal national COVID public health emergency ended May 11th, we will resume normal in-person meetings going forward - so please hold this date on your calendar and plan to attend in-person. The agenda will be sent via email at least one week in advance. If you have ideas for future meeting topics, please send to jhecker@chnep.org.

13. ADJOURN