

Vermont Fish Contaminant Monitoring Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Location: Microsoft Teams

[Click here to join the meeting](#) Meeting ID: 284 368 096 288 Passcode: LNCxi5

1. Commencement

Wadman commenced the Spring meeting of the Fish Contaminant Monitoring Committee (FCMC) at (10:32, June 8th, 2023).

2. Introductions

Wadman asked those present to introduce themselves, the following persons were present:

FCMC Members:

Pam Wadman, Health
Anna Gallagher, DEC
Jud Kratzer, DEC
Margaret Murphy, F&W

Guests:

Sarah Owen, Health,
Peter Emerson, DEC
Karen Knaebel, DEC
John Hall, F&W
Vivien Taylor, Dartmouth
Celia Chen, Dartmouth
Ariana Chiapella, University of Vermont
Ed Barber, Newport Daily Express
John Barrows, Don't Undermine Memphremagog's Purity, DUMP
Teresa Gerade, DUMP
Walter Medwid, DUMP
Peggy Stevens, DUMP

1. Lake Memphremagog, LM brown bullhead carcinoma study

Peter Emerson shared an update on the bullhead carcinoma study and collaboration with USGS and University of Virginia. Reported successful 2023 sampling of bullhead from 4 waterbodies and 7 sites on LM for genetic analysis.

2. Public comments for LM brown bullhead carcinoma

Walter Medwin requested access to DEC reports with LM contaminant fish, sediment and water data. Peggy Stevens read testimony, also submitted in writing expressing concern for LM fish and water quality. John Barrows reminded the FCMC of the many potential pollutant sources to LM and compared the VT fish consumption advice for mercury to the blanket “do not eat” advice given by Maine. Mr. Medwin reported that he is aware of locations of active water discharging from pipes into LM. Together the representatives from DUMP suggested that there should be a precautionary “Do Not Eat” fish advisory for brown bullhead from LM

due to the presence of cancerous lesions. Wadman expressed that the fish contamination data that has been collected so far does not support a waterbody specific fish advisory for LM. Vermont has not issued fish consumption guidelines based on aesthetics before. Health will consider and respond to comments and testimony submitted from DUMP members.

3. Fish mercury monitoring

Wadman reviewed the status of the draft fish mercury report to be finalized this summer with inclusion of 2022 LCMP results and new fish mercury data from CT River from Great River Hydroelectric.

Wadman shared visual of draft Eat Safe Fish card and plan to solicit feedback from FCMC members and partners. Also requested academic partnership to develop non-biased evaluation of fish card communication effectiveness.

Chiapella discussed progress for the Lake Champlain Angler Contaminant Exposure Risk, ACER project. Important for health equity in fishing information communication to at risk populations: ways to overcome barriers to safe eating of VT fish. Very important identification of species commonly consumed. Knaeble and Chiapella will connect to share experience.

The group discussed the mechanism for posting site-specific water body advisories at fishing locations. A formal process has not been identified. Town offices and facility engineers may have been used in the past. This process will be elucidated to initiate site-specific advisory postings at the Commerford and Moore Reservoirs of the Connecticut River, at the request of Great River Hydroelectric.

4. Fish PFAS monitoring

Gallagher shared an update on DEC's 2022 PFAS fish sampling results.

Wadman reported there are no updates from Burlington ANG PFAS investigation. Preliminary fish PFAS data received from NYDEC Lake Champlain Plattsburgh AFB Cumberland Bay, was not sufficient to require action at this time.

Vivian Taylor reported the Lake Champlain Monitoring Program large scale Lake Champlain fish PFAS analysis is underway.

5. Adjournment

Wadman adjourned the Spring meeting of the FCMC at 11:50 am.