

# Lake Champlain Sea Grant Strategic Plan 2018-2021

February 8, 2017

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## I. Our Planning Process

Lake Champlain Sea Grant (LCSG) faculty and staff undertook an extensive strategic planning process to identify priority areas for research and outreach for 2018-21 and beyond. Between April and June 2016, working with a professional facilitator, we conducted a series of four focus groups to gather input from a diverse group of stakeholders. In addition, we conducted a survey of 229 other stakeholders in the Basin representing a broad cross section of interests, from tourism and business, to education, environment and religion.

A total of 49 partners and stakeholders participated in focus group meetings that helped us define research and outreach priorities. These individuals represented 29 organizations, including 8 of the 13 colleges and universities in the Basin. The first focus group brought together our Program Advisory Committee (PAC) members, with additional stakeholders invited to represent arenas in which we expect to engage more deeply in the future (e.g., diversity, resiliency to extreme events). This group helped us define key areas for outreach and opportunities for future efforts. The second focus group meeting engaged faculty, staff and researchers from colleges and universities from across the Lake Champlain Basin to identify key research opportunities and gaps. The final meeting included other key partners and stakeholders who shared



Coherent Area Program. LCSG recently received strong encouragement from a review committee organized by the National Sea Grant Office that concluded that LCSG was well poised to seek institutional status in the National Sea Grant College Program. Since its inception, LCSG has worked with nearly 200 partner organizations and reached thousands of stakeholders to address coastal and freshwater issues.

### III. Lake Champlain Sea Grant Vision

### IV. Lake Champlain Sea Grant Mission

Our audience is business, state, and local le

We conduct outreach and research to improve and sustain aquatic health and community resilience to environmental change in the Lake Champlain Basin.

#### Respect

We embrace diversity across cultures, races, religions, and personal choices, and cultivate an atmosphere of respect for not only people, but the environment.

#### Personal Development

We maintain and expand our personal professional competencies by engaging in lifelong learning.

We are attentive to the importance of maintaining work-life balance to sustain development and implementation of creative and highly engaging programs.

## VI. Cross Cutting Principles

We apply the following cross-cutting principles to enhance our capabilities to meet future needs:

#### Cultivate partnerships

We develop meaningful partnerships through thoughtful integration of expertise, assets and capabilities of a diverse set of collaborators within the Lake Champlain Basin, across the nation, and beyond.

#### Enhance Diversity & Inclusion

We seek and welcome diverse perspectives, and work diligently to extend knowledge and resources to diverse audiences to help achieve our vision and mission.

## VII. National Focus Areas

As a Coherent Area Program with funding at the current base level, Lake Champlain Sea Grant will narrow its focus to two of the four National Focus Areas: Resilient Communities and Economies and Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development. If awarded institutional status accompanied by additional funding, we intend to focus on one additional National Focus Area: Healthy Coastal Ecosystems.

## VIII. National Focus Area Goals

### A. Resilient Communities and Economies

- Goal 1: Water resources are sustained and protected to meet emerging needs of the communities, economies and ecosystems of the Lake Champlain Basin.
- Goal 2: Coastal communities and economies are resilient to changing environmental conditions.

### B. Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

- Goal 3: An environmentally literate, engaged and diverse public is informed by lifelong formal and informal opportunities and implements innovative solutions to improve community well-being in the face of a changing Lake Champlain Basin.
- Goal 4: A diverse and skilled workforce is

## IX. Outcomes and Performance Measures

*R*            *C*                            *E*                            (*RCE*)

**ACTION:** Inform community members about how actions impact water quality and availability.

### Desired Outcomes

- Community members understand watershed functions and the services they provide that support communities and economies.
- Community members understand how actions will impact water quality and quantity, and are able to make informed decisions.

**ACTION:** Collaborate with stakeholders to develop and share best management practices (BMPs) and measures to protect and manage water resources.

### Desired Outcomes

Communities implement best practices that minimize pollution to tributary streams and rivers, inland lakes, and to Lake George and Lake Champlain.

Communities have access to sound science, data, tools, and services to understand and anticipate changes in water quality and quantity.

Communities have access to science, tools, and technologies to understand, anticipate, protect and sustain water resources and make informed decisions.

**ACTION:** Use innovative tools to increase the public’s awareness of changing conditions and the potential impacts their communities, economies and ecosystems may encounter.

Desired Outcomes

Communities, individuals and businesses in the Lake Champlain Basin, including the underserved, are adequately prepared to anticipate and adapt to changing conditions and hazards over time.

Through innovative training programs, business, local, and state leaders, and the communities they serve throughout the Lake Champlain Basin understand how innovative technologies, such as green stormwater infrastructure, and best management practices can improve resilience of communities over time.

**ACTION:** Utilize comprehensive planning and adaptive management strategies to enhance community resilience and adapt to hazards and changing environmental and socioeconomic conditions.

Desired Outcomes

- Communities have access to information needed to understand the factors impacting ecosystems and participate in adaptive management planning.
- Communities employ adaptive management strategies and apply tools to engage diverse members of the community to improve resilience and community sustainability.

1. Number of communities that adopt/implement sustainable economic and environmental



education programs.

*E*

*L*

*D*

*(EL D)*



**ACTION:** Prepare a responsive and diverse workforce to advance and benefit from sectors that

**ACTION:** Sustain the habitat, the biodiversity, and the abundance of coastal ecosystems, fish, wildlife, and plants.

Desired Outcomes

- Biodiversity, habitats, and ecosystem functions and services are restored and sustained.

**ACTION:** Support a sound science-