

Management Committee Meeting Notes
Thursday, April 21, 2022
Meeting conducted remotely due to COVID-19



Attendees:

Mark Tedesco, EPA LISO
Nikki Tachiki, EPA LISO
Cayla Sullivan, EPA LISO
Esther Nelson, EPA LISO
Mel Coté, EPA R1
Leah O'Neill, EPA R1
Bessie Wright, EPA R1
Casey Abel, EPA R1
Alexander Carli-Dorsey, EPA R1
Rick Balla, EPA R2
Jim Hagy, EPA ORD
Cassandra Bauer, NYSDEC
Samarra Scantlebury, NYSDEC
Sue Van Patten, NYSDEC
Mary Arnold, NYSDEC
Victoria O'Neill,
NYSDEC/NEIWPCC
Kristin Kraseski,
NYSDEC/NEIWPCC
Jennifer Street, NYSDOS
Gary Wikfors, NOAA

Nancy Seligson, CAC/NY
Holly Drinkuth, CAC/CT
Paige Allison Meyer, CCE/CAC
Brian Thompson, CT DEEP
Kathleen Knight, CT DEEP
Harry Yamalis, CT DEEP
Christopher Bellucci, CT DEEP
Kevin O'Brien, CT DEEP
Kelly Streich, CT DEEP
Katie O'Brien-Clayton, CT DEEP
Matthew Lyman, CT DEEP
Rebecca Shuford, NYSG
Elizabeth Hornstein, NYSG
Lillit Genovesi, NYSG
Sarah Schaefer-Brown, NYSG
Sara Powell, NYSG
Jimena Perez-Viscasillas,
LISS/NYSG
Sylvain De Guise, CTSG
Alicia Tyson, CTSG
Jessica LeClair, CTSG

Mark Parker, CT DEEP
Mary Becker, CT DEEP
Paul Stacey, Footprints in the Water
Richard Friesner, NEIWPCC
Jordan Bishop, NEIWPCC
Susan Sullivan, NEIWPCC
Jim Ammerman, LISS/NEIWPCC
Robert Burg, LISS/NEIWPCC
Danielle Alexander, NYCDEP
Jonathan Hoffman, NYCDEP
Penny Vlahos, STAC/UConn
Darcy Lonsdale, STAC/SBU
Suzanne Paton, USFWS
Audrey Mayer, USFWS
Nancy Ferlow, USDA-NRCS
Thomas Morgart, USDA-NRCS
Jonathan Morrison, USGS
Todd Randall, USACE-NAE

Introduction: Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00am in Microsoft Teams. He opened the floor for personnel updates. He highlighted the focus of today's meeting is to review and approve the proposed FY22 budget package and identify next steps. He mentioned that due to lack of guidance on requirements and aggregate overmatch uncertainty, LISS may have to re-think decisions following this meeting. There were no changes to the agenda or January 20 meeting notes.

- Sylvain DeGuise: Mentioned that Judy Preston retired April 1, and recruited Jessica LeClair as CT Sea Grant Outreach Coordinator.
- Jennifer Street: Introduced herself from NYS Department of State as she was recently asked to join the LISS Management Committee (MC).
- Casey Abel: Mentioned that Mark Parker (CT DEEP) is retiring at the end of the month.

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Update provided by Penny Vlahos:

- Penny Vlahos: Met online on February 18, and discussed the LIS Research Conference that will be held May 18 at Housatonic Community College (no virtual option at the moment) and the LIS Research Grant Program RFP. Presentations were from Jamie Vaudrey on CT National Estuary Research Reserve; Jim Ammerman on the EPA-NOAA pilot application using daily satellite data on temperature, salinity, and chlorophyll; and Nancy Balcom on the LIS Marine Debris Action Plan. She added that STAC is looking for NY co-chair nominations as Darcy Lonsdale is stepping down.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Update provided by Nancy Seligson and Holly Drinkuth:

- Nancy Seligson: Met online on March 10. Highlighted that CAC developed their 2022 Priority Letter (see attached) which recognizes the increase in funding, and therefore the increase in responsibility. Priorities include: 1) Establish prioritized actions to increase impact and drive CCMP implementation; 2) Strengthen investments and capacity in Communication, Outreach and Engagement strategies for greater collaboration and local implementation of CCMP actions; and 3) Evaluate and adapt LISS

organizational systems to connect our communications, ongoing programs, and activities more effectively to accomplish our CCMP goals and achieve our ecosystem targets. Suggested to have organizations provide a brief update on ongoing projects to synthesize and communicate work better.

- Holly Drinkuth: Explained the chart included in the letter, which identifies gaps and needs, opportunities, and recommendations for each CCMP theme.
 - Mark Tedesco: Highlighted that the LISS SharePoint Tracking and Reporting Tool utilizes grantee progress reports can address some of these priorities.
 - Paul Stacey: Mentioned a project underway by CT CIRCA which addresses Clean Water and Healthy Watershed needs in the CAC 2022 Priority Letter. He added that Chet Arnold will present this project at the upcoming LIS Research Conference. He also mentioned that NEIWPPCC has a [tool](#) to evaluate nitrogen trading.

FY2022 Budget Discussion – Mark Tedesco

- Mark Tedesco: Introduced the proposed FY22 Budget Approach in which there were no changes to the base or supplemental packages except a select few proposals (these proposals were redistributed and highlighted in the new spreadsheet). Changes to proposals were directed by feedback from two Implementation Team meetings, workgroup meetings, and many follow-ups. He emphasized that the budget will not be balanced down to the full amount available as more than \$100,000 will be held for fiduciary reserve to provide flexibility. He added that there is still uncertainty with program requirements (i.e., Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)) and aggregate match requirements).
- Leah O'Neill: Provided an overview on the FY22 Budget. She highlighted that the funding is slowly becoming available to each region and that is why it is important to hold fiduciary reserve funds. She added that EPA is receiving updates daily on award processing guidance and requirements (i.e., Justice40, Build America Buy America, BIL, and regular annual appropriations). She highlighted aggregate match requirements must be met before any awards can be made; and added that EPA is anticipating BIL match will be waived, but still awaiting guidance.
 - Sue Van Patten: Asked if recipients have to provide match in later years under BIL funds.
 - Leah O'Neill: Responded EPA is awaiting guidance, but anticipating match will be waived for the first year; however there may be a higher threshold for range justification in future years.
 - Nancy Seligson: Added that the CAC 2022 Priority Letter highlighted efforts to reauthorize the LIS Restoration Act and recommend match requirements be reduced.
- Mark Tedesco: Walked through the FY22 Budget Approach: Base Budget is proposed at \$25 million in continuing commitments, but some agreements can be adjusted year to year if need be (i.e., LIS Futures Fund, LIS Research Grant Program). The calculated required match compared to the projected actual match is in deficit, and need to commit overmatch to the base programs (\$6.2 million in overmatch). There is currently \$7.3 million available for supplemental funds (not including BIL). He went over the proposed BIL budget, where \$21 million will be allocated to projects meeting the administration's priorities such as coastal resiliency, land protection/acquisition, and infrastructure improvements. He added that some projects may carry into future years to show commitment to priorities.
 - Mel Cote: Added that the MA DEP proposal to upgrade the Chicopee wastewater treatment plant is a good example of the type of project that will help meet the goals of the Justice40 Initiative for FY22 and future years.
 - Mark Tedesco: Mentioned that it is ok if current approach does not meet Justice40 in the first year; but need to track and report how investments are meeting Justice40 – both the project's location and project's benefits to underserved communities (including downstream). He highlighted he NYSDEC's Water Quality Improvement Program and CT DEEP's living shoreline and angler survey proposals may also contribute to Justice40.

- Nancy Seligson: Added that the CAC Priority Letter recognizes the need to increase staff in EPA to coordinate and manage projects and their reporting requirements.
 - Mark Tedesco/Mel Cote: Responded that EPA is working to fill positions in both Region 1 and 2 that became available with BIL funding.
- Jimena Perez-Viscasillas: Encouraged the MC to think about partners when moving forward with Justice 40 projects.
- Suzanne Paton: Emphasized the focus on living shoreline and land acquisition should be on marsh habitat, and both efforts should be on both sides of the Sound (CT and NY).
- Mark Tedesco: Walked through the proposed FY22 Supplemental Budget where he provided an overview of changes made since last distribution. He reviewed each proposal recommended for funding and their approaches, and then opened the floor up for discussion and questions.
 - Sylvain DeGuise: Asked if there was an effort to consolidate partners as there are a number of coastal acidification monitoring proposals, and if the different strategies by organizations was similar enough to be reported and assessed together.
 - Penny Vlahos: Responded that there was a lot of effort to coordinate analytical methods across partners and ensure methods and reporting is similar to make comparisons.
 - Nancy Seligson: Asked to elaborate the need for the USGS living shoreline proposal.
 - Jon Morrison: Responded that USGS revised the proposal in response to the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Extension Professionals and Habitat Restoration and Stewardship Work Group's concerns and priorities. The revised proposal will focus on the first phase to enable usability of datasets.
 - Mark Tedesco: Added the importance of utilizing interagency agreements as there are no match requirements and it is a useful vehicle to meet state and local partners' needs.

Stretch Break at 10:30am

Continued FY2022 Budget Discussion

- Mark Tedesco: Reopened the floor for discussion and questions.
 - Nancy Seligson: Asked if environmental impacts associated with projects can be identified.
 - Mark Tedesco: Responded that Cayla Sullivan will highlight how the Tracking and Reporting Tool can address this need and produce visualizations to understand impact.
 - Paul Stacey: Highlighted that the proposed approach is heavily focused on monitoring, planning, and assessing which will not make high environmental impact; and in the future, there is a need to be upfront about these impacts to increase implementation.
 - Holly Drinkuth: Highlighted that the proposed NYSDEC Water Quality Improvement Program and LIS Watershed Septic System Replacement proposals will facilitate implementation and environmental impacts.
 - Mark Tedesco: Responded that these proposals are currently under BIL, but if they are deemed successful, they can be added to regular to the regular LIS appropriations.
 - Mark Parker: Suggested that the proposals could link back to the Ecosystem Targets to facilitate tracking progress.
 - Cayla Sullivan: Responded that the Tracking and Reporting Tool does this by linking Implementation Actions addressed by projects (via progress reports) back to the Ecosystem Targets (see attached presentation for visualization examples).
 - Richard Friesner: Asked if there are more reporting requirements; and if there are, is anyway to streamline it to make it easier.

- Mark Tedesco: Responded that there is more reporting required for the BIL, but frequency and format is to be decided. Added that EPA LISO is not increasing the reporting requirements under the regular appropriations, and will try to make the current reporting as useful possible.
- Mark Tedesco: Highlighted that one option is to approve the proposed package, with the caveat that there is still follow-up needed; and there is a quick turnaround to process proposals into grant and interagency agreements.
 - Leah O'Neill: Highlighted next steps include taking today's recommendations to build the budget, but need to review the match to ensure it will be met. Added that as the work plan is developed, need to include Build America Buy America, BIL, and Justice40 requirements. Encouraged proposers to start developing final work plans and reach out to her or EPA Project Officer with any questions. The goal is to submit awards to grants.gov by the first week of June.

Mid-Year Report Updates Reminder – Cayla Sullivan

- Cayla Sullivan: Provided a reminder that mid-year/semi-annual progress reports are due April 29 to EPA LISO. She presented on how to use the Tracking and Reporting Tool to track investments related to Ecosystem Target progress and status (see attached presentation).
 - Sylvain DeGuise: Asked what LISS should prioritize going forward: 1) Investments in gaps (ecosystem targets not being met), or 2) Investments in strengths to further advance goals. Suggested that this information should be presented 2-3 months (October MC Meeting) to develop a strategy to guide budget process.
 - Holly Drinkuth: Highlighted that the progress reports (i.e., projects) are measuring outputs, not environmental outcomes/impacts.
 - Richard Friesner: Mentioned that the Tool is only EPA-funded projects and management decisions should take into consideration the bigger picture (i.e., leveraging efforts).
 - Paul Stacey: Suggested to make clear distinctions between ecosystem target and goals (i.e., Extent to Hypoxia).
 - Mark Tedesco: Asked how LISS can help provide feedback to improve the Tool.
 - Cayla Sullivan: Encouraged MC to explore the Tool to identify limitations or gaps and provide recommendations for visualizations.
 - Mark Tedesco: Added to contact Indicators Team to provide suggestions on bettering communications about environmental indicators and Ecosystem Targets.

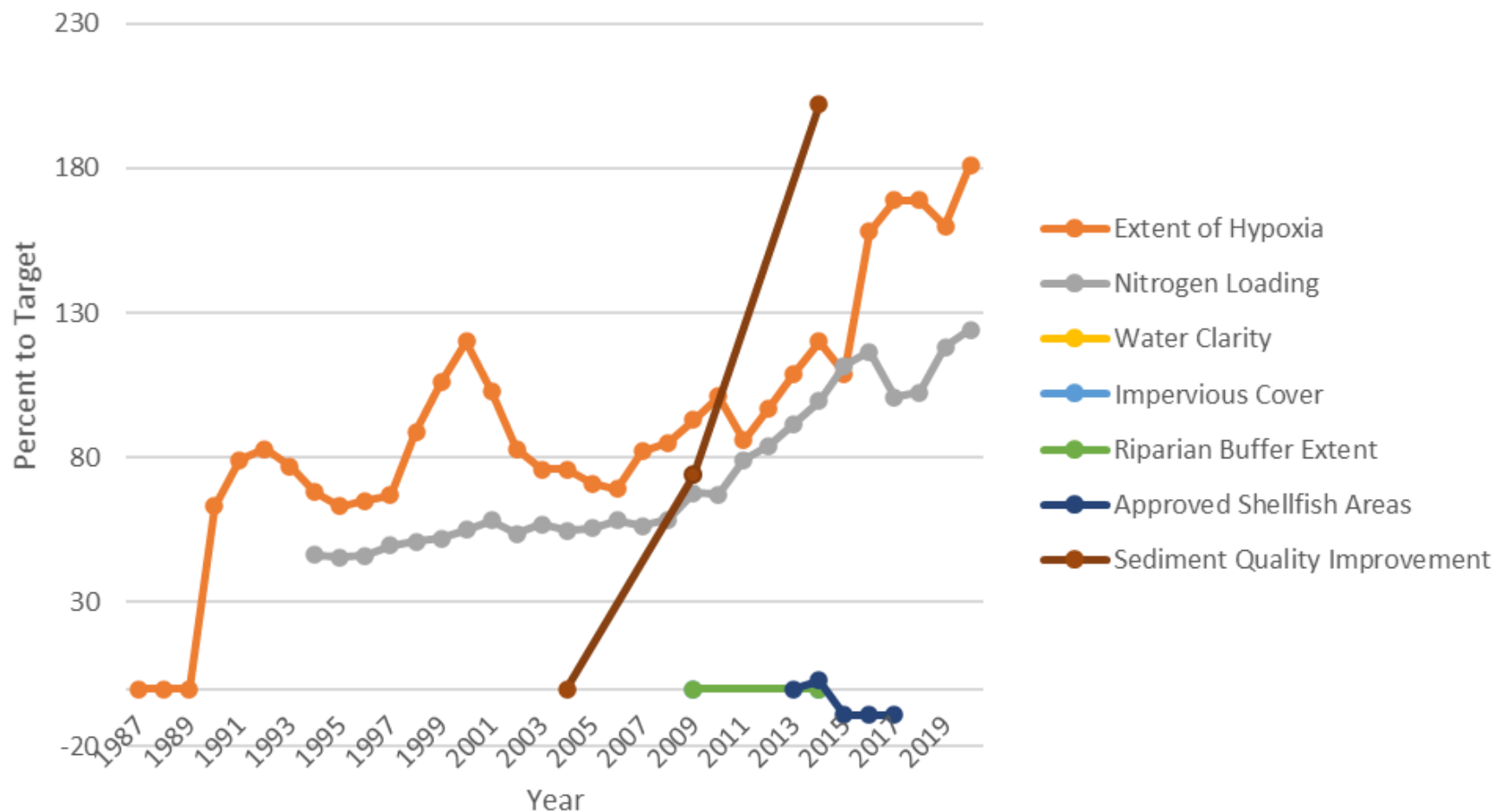
Updates

- Casey Abel: Introduced the LISS Governance Document that outlines how LISS operates (see attached presentation). She encouraged the MC to review and send comments by May 31.
- Nikki Tachiki: Provided an update on the 2022 Report to Congress: Kick-off meeting was held on March 29 and first draft of the report text to be completed by May 29. Mentioned that if any MC member is interested in volunteering as an editor to contact her.
- Mark Tedesco: Proposed an in-person two-day October MC meeting to kick-off FY23 work plan and budget planning. EPA LISO will follow-up with a poll for potential dates (Wednesday/Thursday or Thursday/Friday) and location (Port Jefferson, NY or Bridgeport, CT).
- Mark Tedesco: Mentioned that LISS, Peconic Estuary Partnership, and NY-NJ Harbor and Estuary Program are considering hosting a ANEP Conference in Fall 2023.

Next Meeting & Adjournment – Mark Tedesco

- Meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.
- Next meeting: July 21, 2022

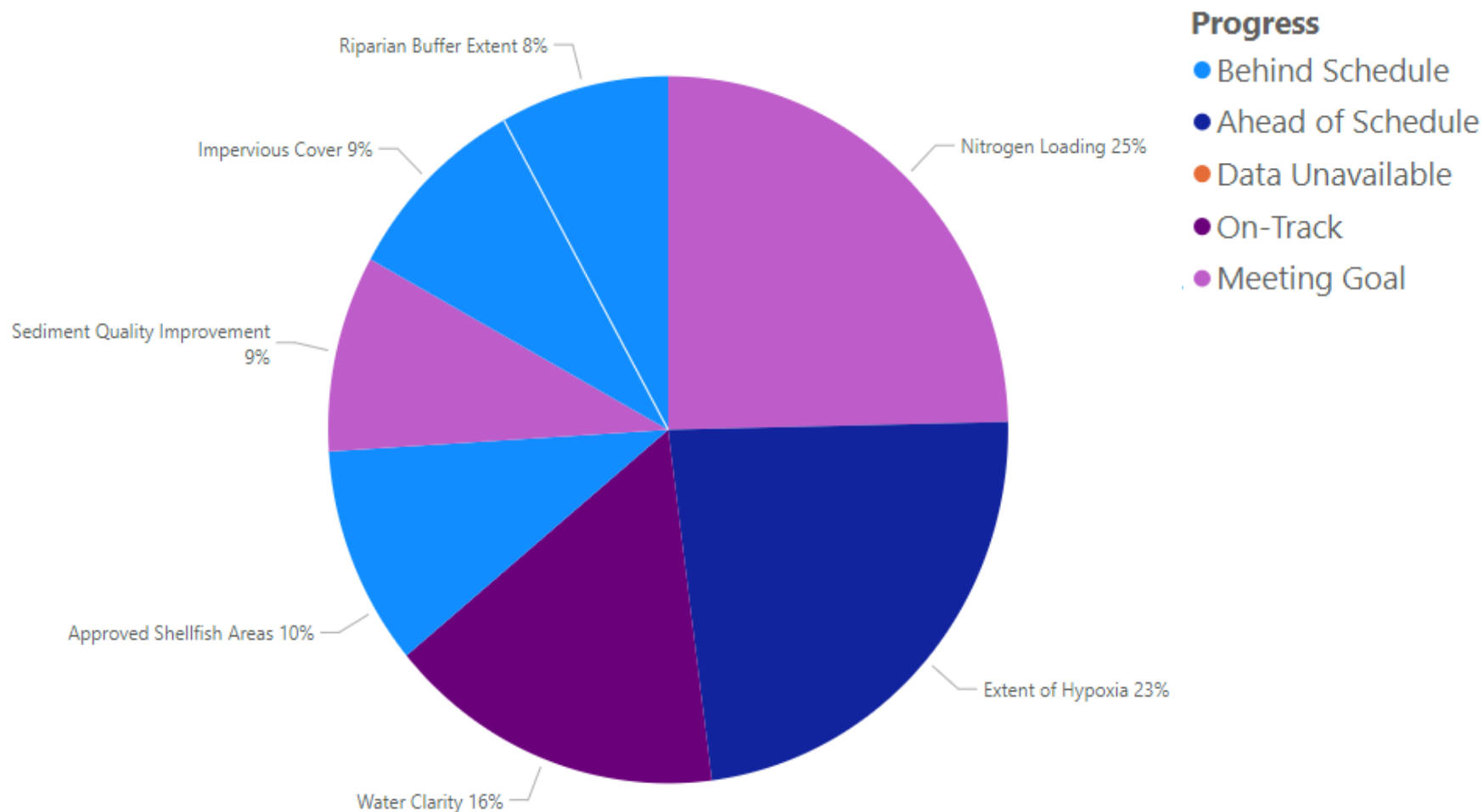
Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds Ecosystem Target Progress



Progress Data N/A for Water Clarity

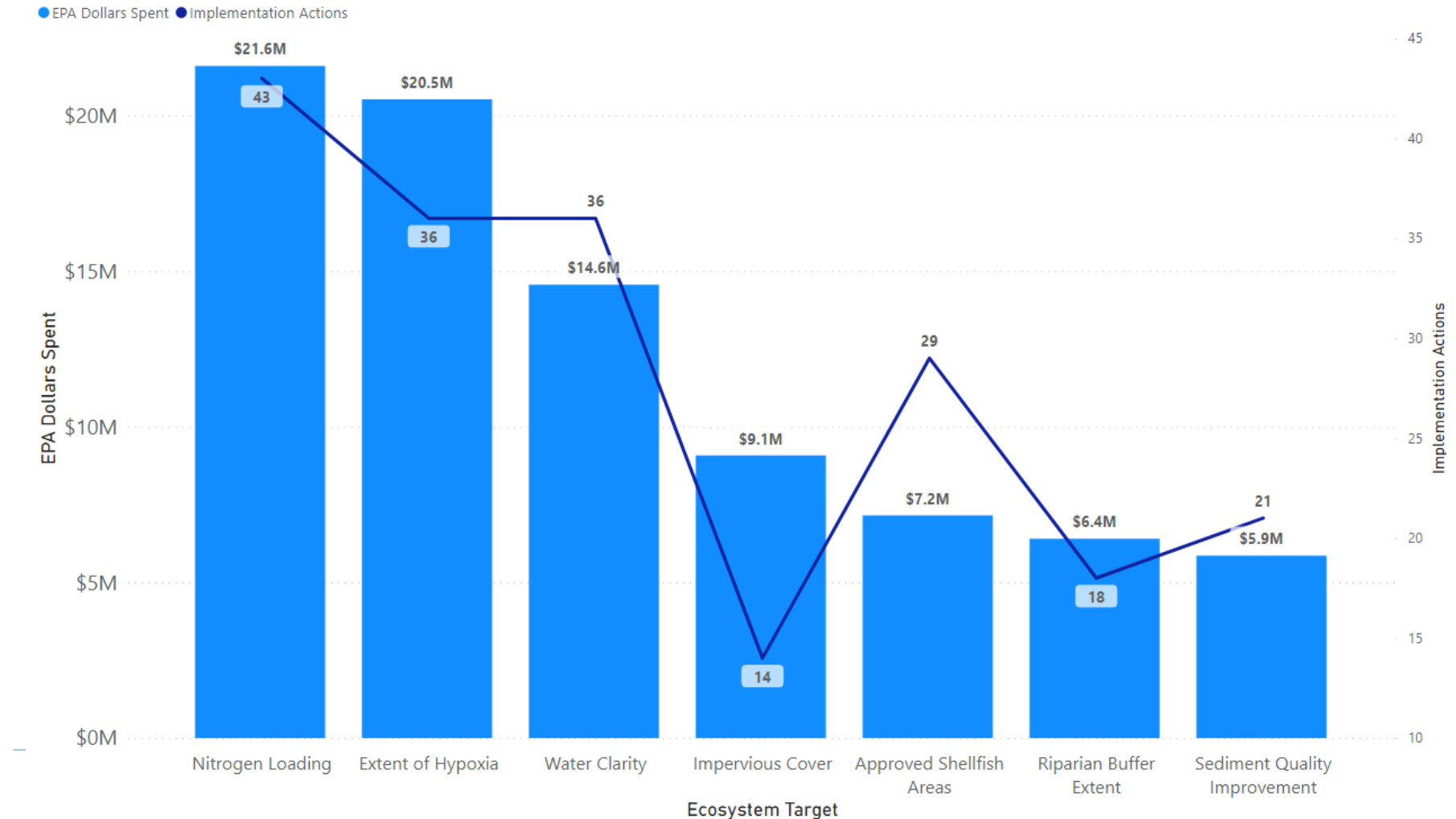
No Progress for Impervious Cover and Riparian Buffer Extent

FY20-21 Clean Water and Healthy Watersheds Investments: Number of Projects



Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds Ecosystem Target Investments

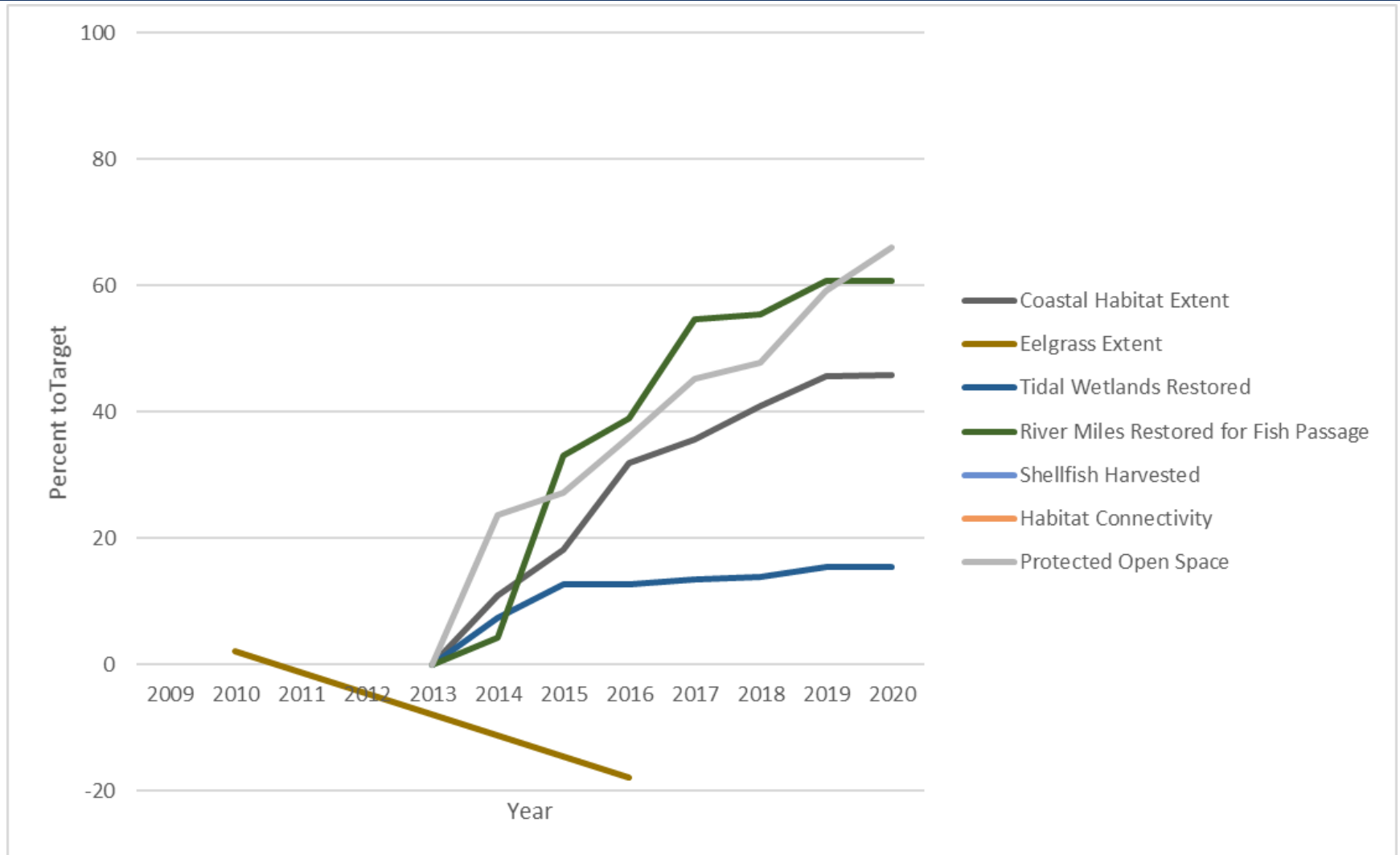
Ongoing FY20-21 Investments: Number of Implementations Actions Addressed per Theme with Dollars Spent in the center



Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife Ecosystem Target Progress

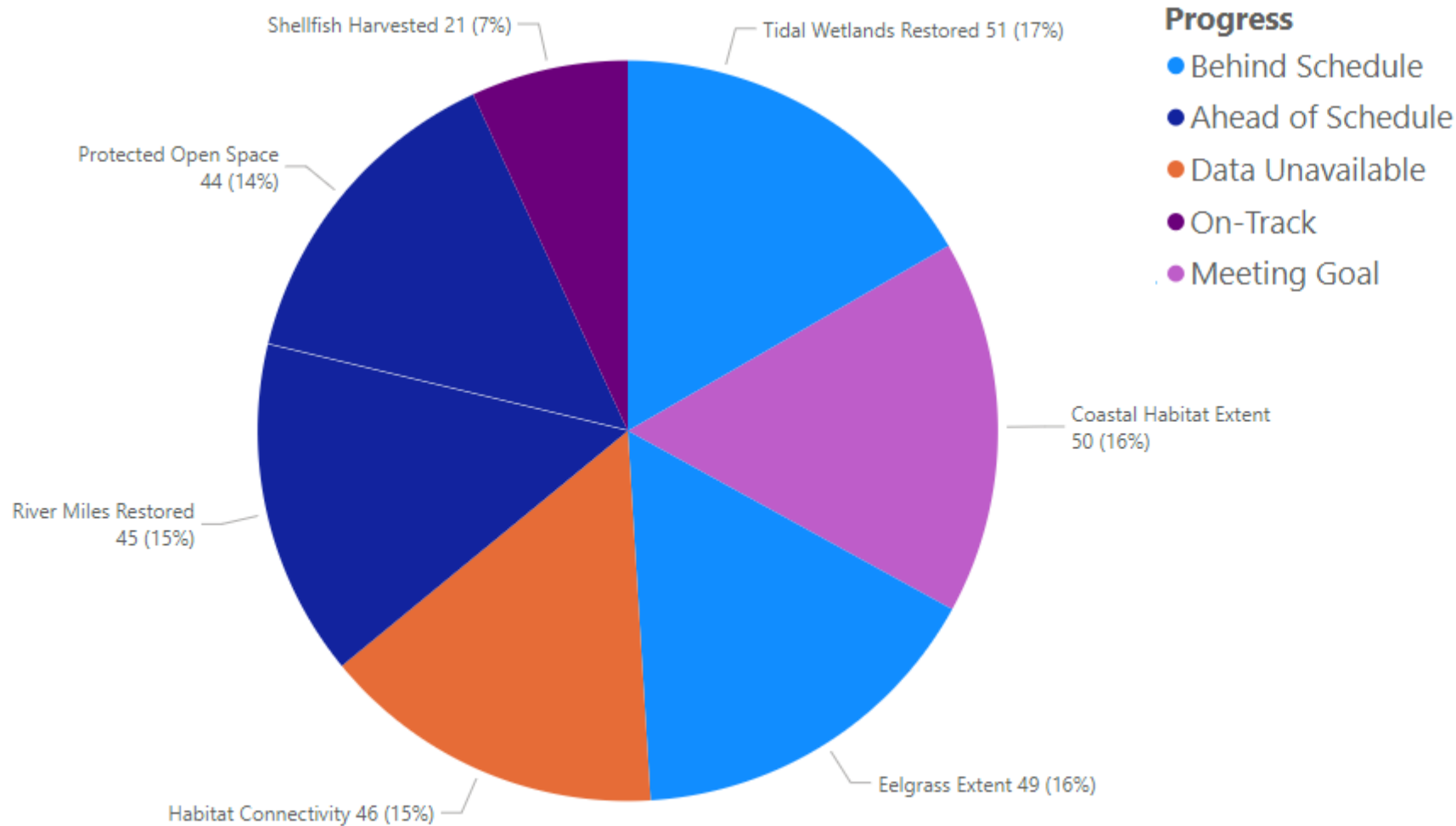


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Progress Data N/A for Habitat Connectivity and Shellfish Harvested

FY20-21 Thriving Habitats and Abundant Investments: Number of Projects



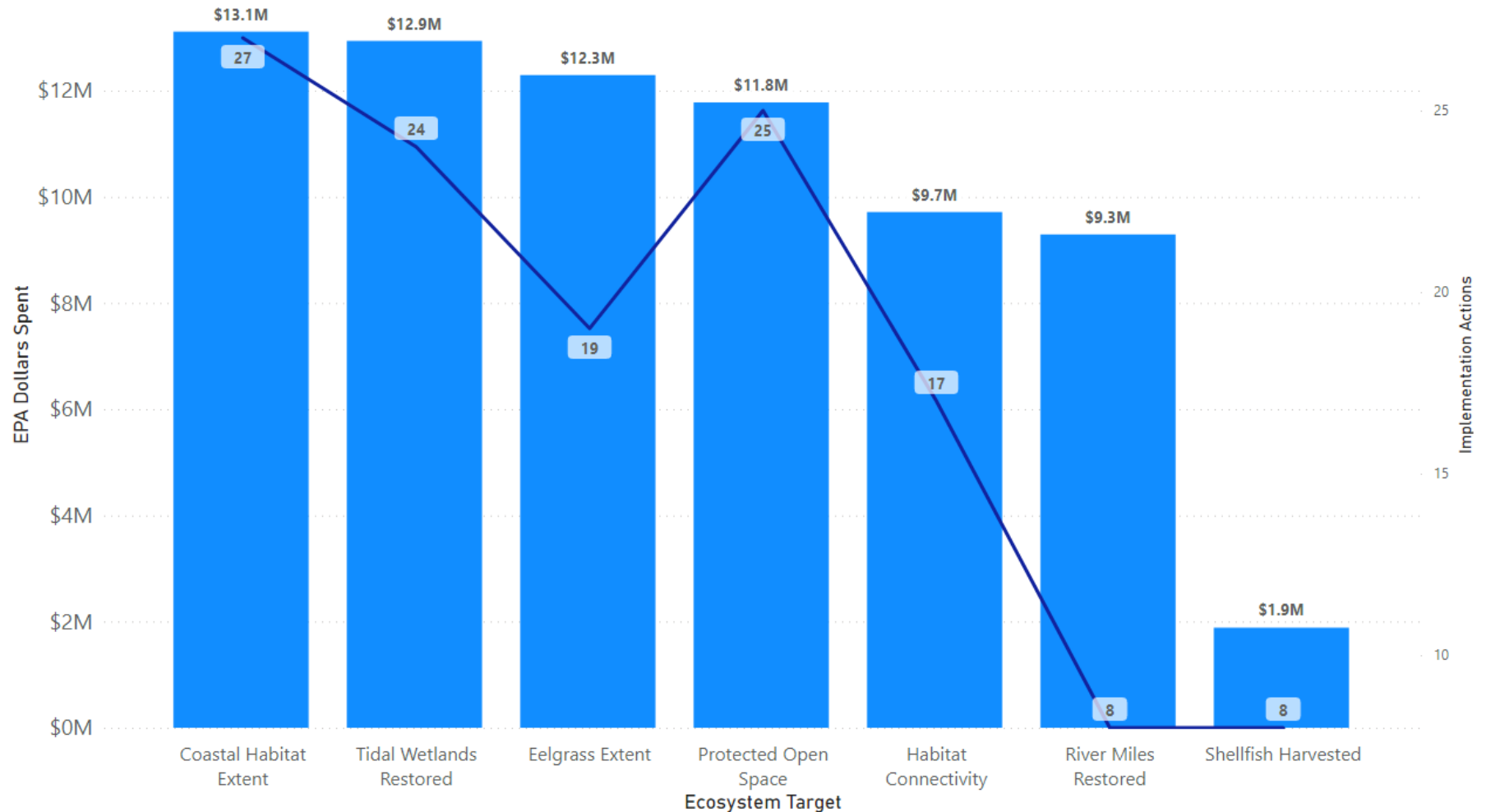
Thriving Habitats and Abundant Ecosystem Target Investments



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Ongoing FY20-21 Investments: Number of Implementations Actions Addressed per Theme with Dollars Spent in the center

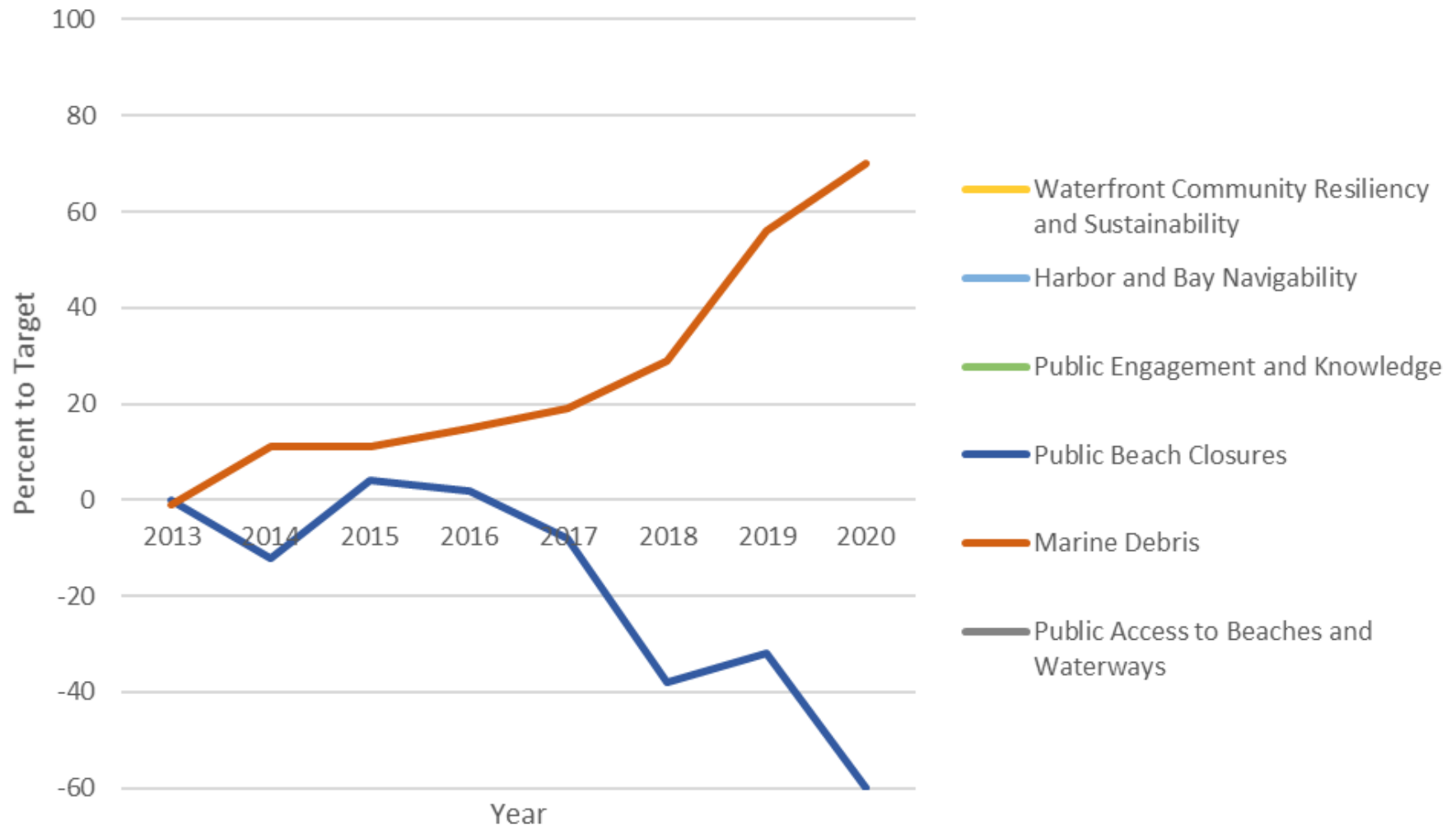
● EPA Dollars Spent ● Implementation Actions



Sustainable and Resilient Communities Ecosystem Target Progress



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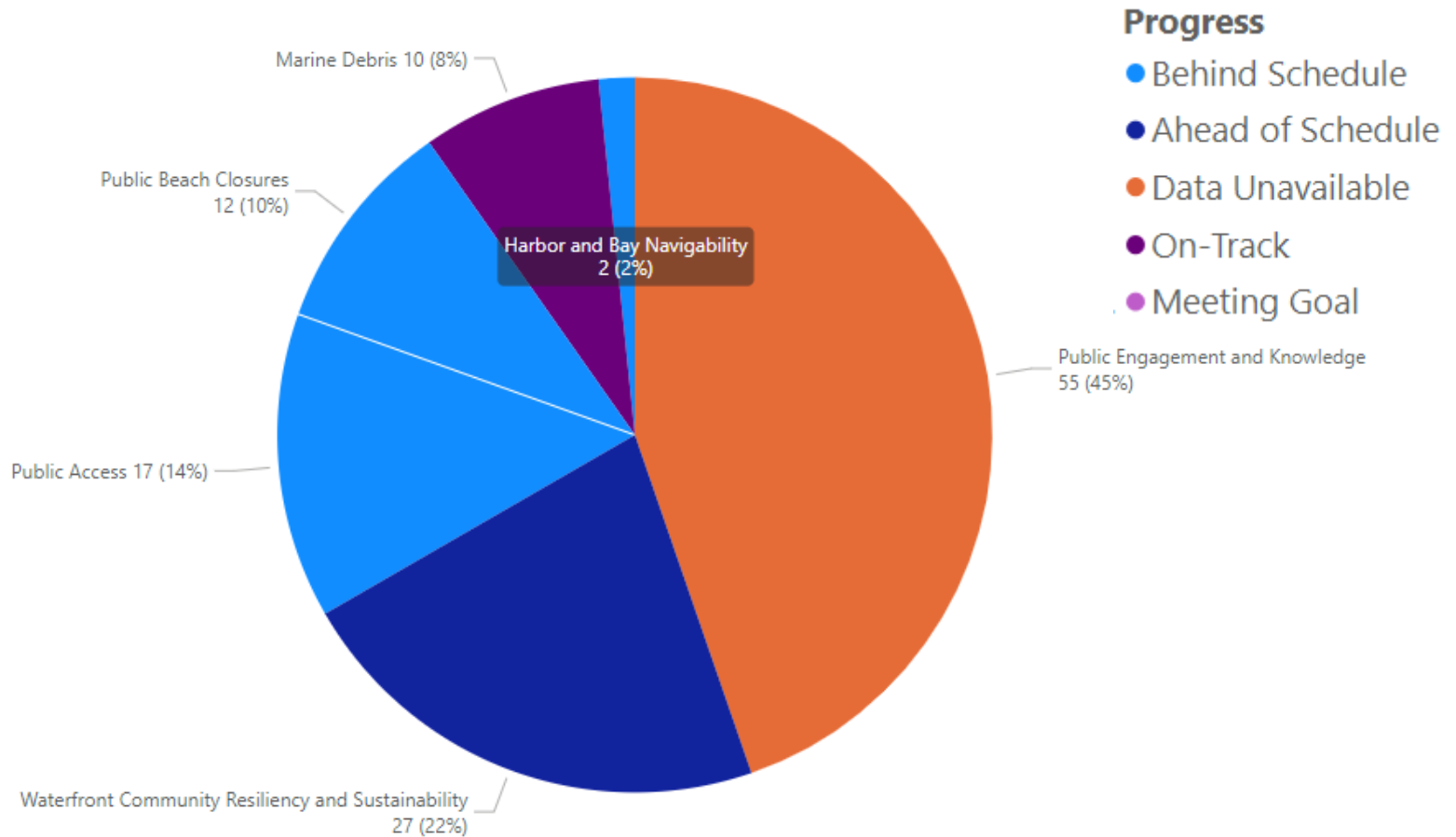


Progress Data N/A for Waterfront Community Resiliency and Sustainability, Harbor and Bay Navigability, Public Engagement and Knowledge, and Public Access

FY20-21 Sustainable and Resilient Communities Investments: Number of Projects

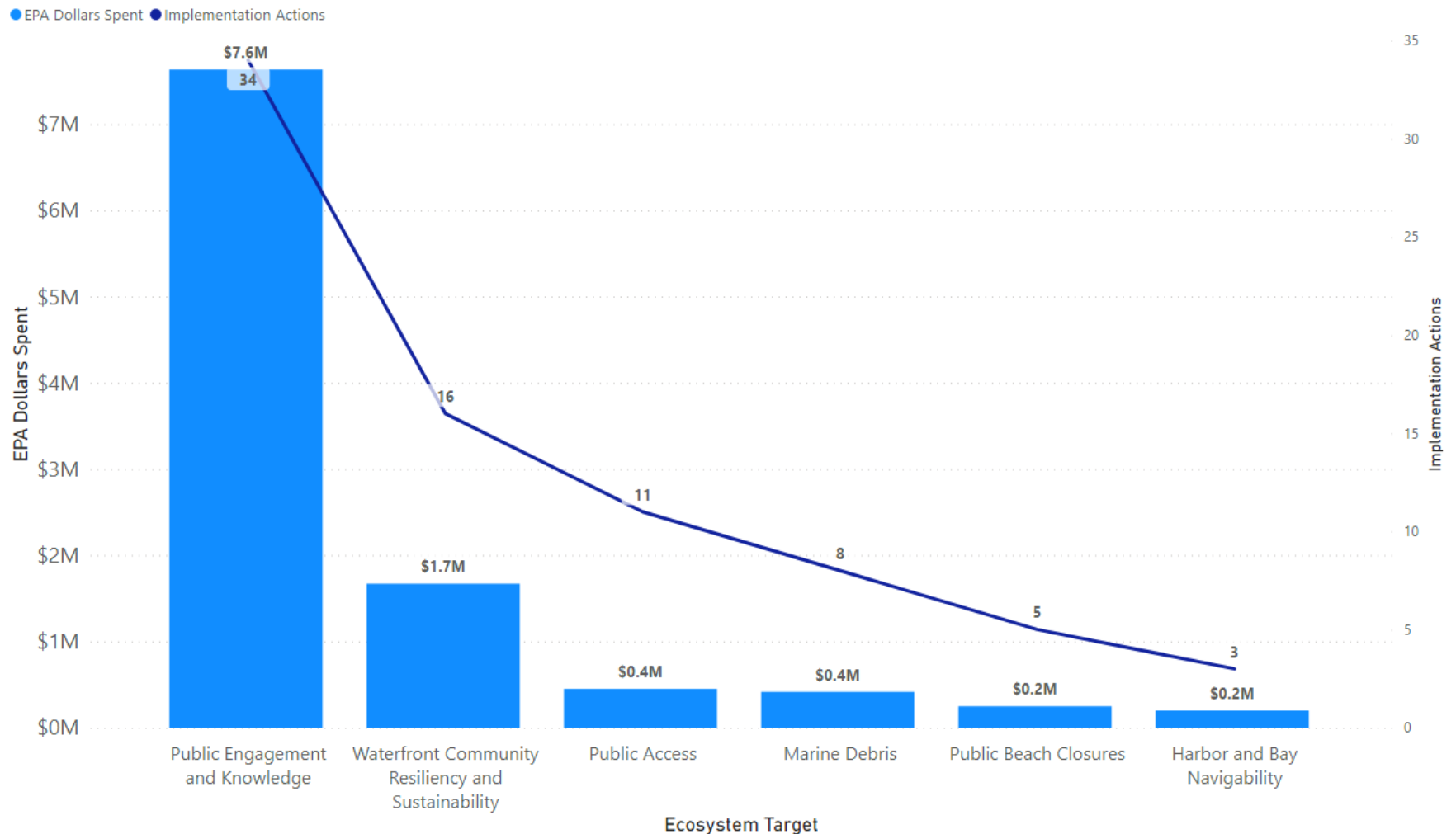


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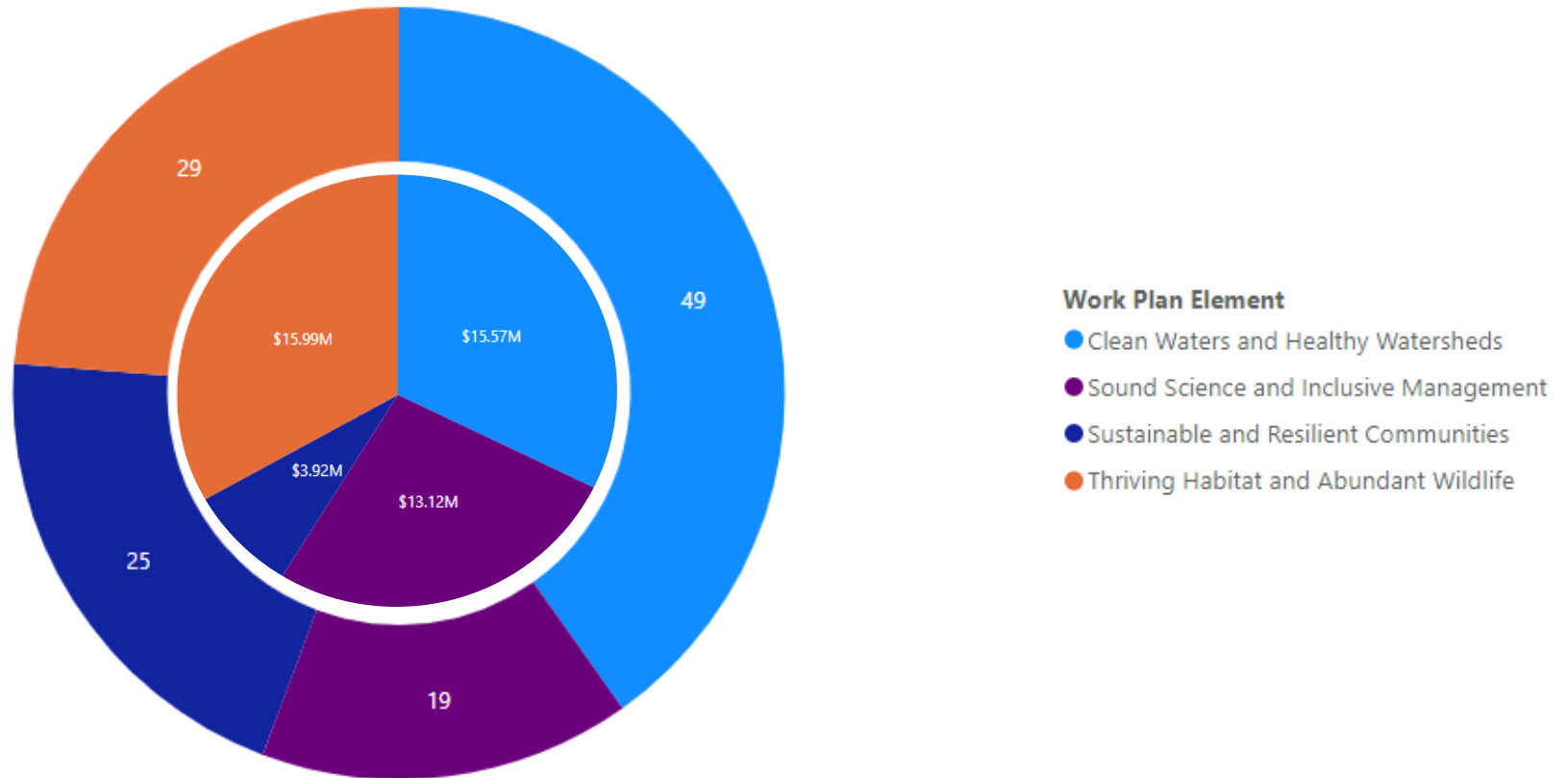
Sustainable and Resilient Communities Ecosystem Target Investments

Ongoing FY20-21 Investments: Number of Implementations Actions Addressed per Theme with Dollars Spent in the center



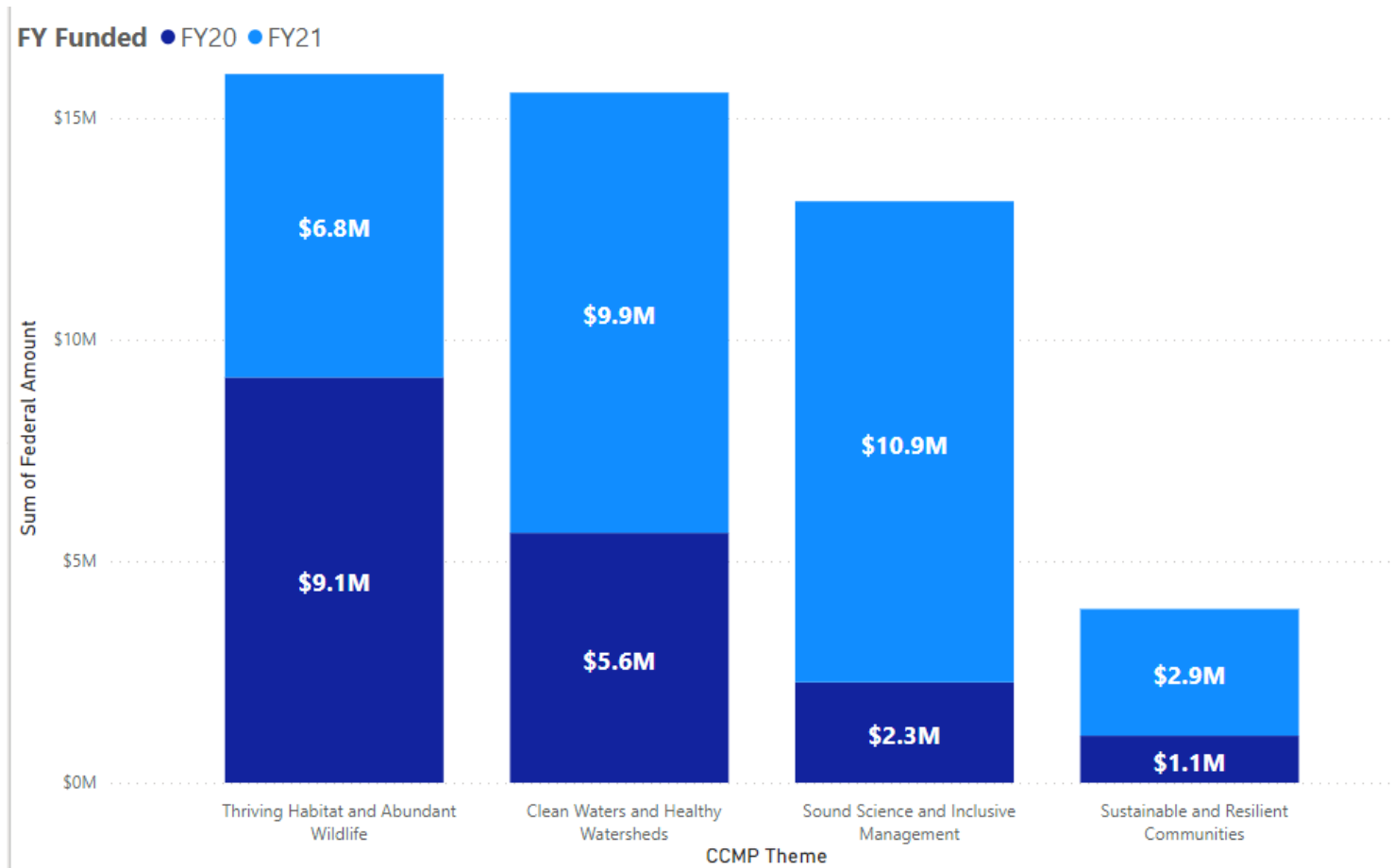


FY20-21 Investments: Number of Projects per Theme (outer circle) and Federal Funds Allocated per Theme (inner circle)





FY20-21 Investments: Federal Funds Allocated Per Theme





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Long Island Sound Governance Document

Casey Abel
EPA R1



The Need for a Governance Document

- **As the Study continues to grow, evolve, and increase the amount of funding** the need for a governance document detailing how the study operates has become crucial.
- **Other Institutions are working on/have released governance documents.** The LISS Governance Document draws on similar documents including:
 - *Government and Management Framework for the Chesapeake Bay Program*
 - *Organizational Structure and Governance Procedures of the Peconic Estuary Partnership*
 - Other NEP's CCMPs.



Development and Maintenance of the Governance Document

- **This Governance Document is and must remain consistent with all that is described and defined under Clean Water Act §320 and §119.**
- **The structure and governance of the program will change and evolve over time to better plan, align and assess partner activities and resources to meet Long Island Sound Study goals.**
- **This adaptive approach will be reflected in the document, and revisions to the document will be made as needed.**



What is in the Governance Document?

- I. Introduction
- II. Background
- III. Long Island Sound Study Vision, Goals, and Principles
- IV. Commitment to Environmental Justice
- V. Ethical Behavior Guidelines
- VI. Organizational Structure
 - a. Policy Committee
 - b. Executive Steering Committee
 - c. Management Committee
 - d. STAC & CAC
 - e. Implementation Team
 - f. Workgroups (as a whole)



What is in the Governance Document (continued)?

VII. Process for Decision Making

- a. General Guidance for Decision Making
- b. Results of Decisions
- c. Consensus-Building Process
- d. Process for Modification or Reversal of Previous Consensus Decisions.
- e. Amendment to the Governance Document

VIII. Process for Changes to the CCMP

IX. Tracking and Reporting



Management Committee Review Process

- **To adopt the governance structure, the Management Committee must hold a vote, on the document.**
- **A first draft of the Long Island Sound Study Governance Document will be sent to the Management Committee after the April 21 meeting.**
- **Please send any comments to Casey Abel via email: abel.casey@epa.gov by May 31.**
 - Prefer direct edits, but narrative comments are also acceptable
- **While reviewing please keep in mind:**
 - Potential Gaps/Areas for Expansion
 - Some sections refer to following the National Estuary Program Guidance. We do NOT repeat the specific guidance language in the document to avoid repetitive updates to the governance structure.
 - Keep it simple. While the document is a living document and should define our operations and framework for decision making, we do not want to include items in constant flux. (For example, we do NOT list each of the current workgroups, as they are brought together and disbanded, as needed.)



Timeline

- **1st Draft will be circulated post meeting, comments due to abel.casey@epa.gov by Tuesday, May 31.**
- **2nd Draft will be circulated prior to the July 21 Management Committee meeting, for additional comments, date TBD.**
- **Final draft will be presented for adoption at the July 21 Management Committee meeting.**
- **Present the MC-approved governance document, along with other LIS updates to the Executive Steering Committee. (TBD, before end of FY22)**
- **Present the ESC-approved governance document, along with other LIS updates to the Policy Committee. (TBD, before end of FY22)**