Invitation to a planning discussion for **The Tick-bite Study on Block Island**: Assessing the effects of human behavior on exposure to tick borne pathogens

Thursday May 19, 2016. Location and time (TBD)

Lyme disease affects over around 300,000 people and is the most commonly reported vector-borne illness in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is heavily concentrated in the northeast and upper Midwest and is particularly common on Block Island. Millions of individuals are exposed to ticks while working outside or engaging in recreational activities. However, little is known about how individual behavior relates to risk of tick exposure. This study seeks to fill that gap by recruiting private landowners and visitors to Block Island to participate in a behavioral study. Participants will be asked to complete a survey about their typical behaviors and general awareness of preventative measures against tick-borne diseases. Then, participants will use a smartphone application to answer brief real-time questions about their behavior and tick exposure. The application will also gather background and environmental data such as location, time, and weather. Results will inform better outreach and programming that aim to reduce exposure to ticks and in turn the bacteria that cause Lyme disease.

As a key stakeholder on Block Island, we invite you to attend a meeting to discuss the study plan and the specifics of the smartphone app we are developing. Specifically, the meeting will consist of:

15 minutes - Introductions  
20 minutes - Describe study plan  
30 minutes - Pass around survey questions and discuss  
10 minutes - Recruitment suggestions  
10 minutes - Wrap up

We greatly appreciate your participation!

Maria Diuk-Wasser – Columbia University

Pallavi Cache – Columbia University

Emily Silver Huff - ?

Andrew Huff –Michigan State University & EcoHealth Alliance

Peter Krause – Yale University (he runs the serosurveys and is well known on the island)

Karissa Whiting – Columbia University & EcoHealth Alliance