



HEADWATERS SUBCOMMITTEE Minutes - February 4, 2009

PRESENT: Ed Mellett, Northumberland; Bill Schomburg, Columbia; Gary Paquette, Stratford; Kevin McKinnon, Colebrook; Tom Caron, Canaan; Louis Lamoureux, Maidstone, Bob Postier and Marty Lomasney, Bloomfield; Adair Mulligan, CRJC

GUESTS: Joe Norton, Trout Unlimited; Dave Reilly, Columbia; Jake Mardin, Colebrook News & Sentinel

ABSENT: members from Pittsburg, Lemington, Stewartstown

1. Housekeeping: Minutes of the meeting of September 29 were approved on a motion by Bill, seconded by Gary. The Recreation Plan will soon be mailed to the 350 communities, organizations, commissioners, subcommittee members and agencies on the distribution list, and posted on the web. The Water Resources Plan is currently being designed. Staff time shortage and budget concerns have precluded CRJC from printing the subcommittee versions, but their summaries will be included in the published overviews and the full plans will be posted on the web. CRJC has applied for a Vermont Conservation License Plate grant to publish the Headwaters and Riverbend region Water Resources Plans, and is hopeful of funding because Vermont has yet to do basin planning in these two regions. The next meeting, likely to be held in March/April, will showcase the Water Resources Plan. Adair displayed DES' new handbook for sustainable development: *Innovative Land Use Planning Techniques*, and gave the subcommittee's copy to Ed and Bill.
2. Announcements/concerns: Louis reported that methane at the Berlin landfill was being burned off, and asked why this energy source wasn't being used by nearby businesses and the hospital. Members told of other areas where this is being done. It was suggested that North Country Council might help local planners find a way to accomplish this.
3. Permit issues - Voted unanimously to recommend that the river restoration projects at the lower Mohawk River and Colebrook Business Park move forward as quickly as possible, on a motion by Kevin seconded by Bill. DES Commissioner Burack has asked that his staff put this permit review at the head of the line. Adair reported that CRJC has spent a large amount of time and effort fund-raising for this project, and is in good communication with the town, DES, and governor's office, with special help from Kevin and Larry Rappaport. Funding has been received from many sources and more is being sought. CRJC is optimistic that the projects will be built as soon as conditions allow this spring. The engineered log jams will be the first use of this technique in NH; they have been used successfully in the Northwest. Gary said he has some hemlocks that could be used. Kevin noted that the log jams that were built on the Androscoggin many years ago for the log drives and are still there; this project is falling back on an old technology that worked.
4. Trout Unlimited's Home River initiative - Joe Norton reported that he has received a grant from the Mitigation & Enhancement Fund for work on Indian Stream. TU will do a high resolution aerial survey, an assessment of habitat, and prioritize a half dozen perched culverts for restoration. He has also received some funding from Orvis and the Trout and Salmon Federation. He plans to do some larger riparian buffer planting projects and has ordered equipment to do water quality studies, including for aluminum toxicity. The study will look into limiting factors for wild brook trout populations.
5. Creosote - DES has sent a "letter of deficiency" to the railroad following a complaint regarding creosote dripping into the Connecticut River from the Stratford RR bridge. The RR company has been slow in responding because a position was empty, but it has been filled and DES is following through.
6. Relicensing of Canaan Dam - VT has issued a 401 water quality certificate for the dam; Adair reviewed its terms. CRJC and others will be consulted as plans for recreation and riparian vegetation are drawn up. PSNH has been asked to look at taking over the Route 114 Bridge access. The company has appealed the part of the certificate that requires up and downstream fish passage. Joe added that the problem appears to be lack of data about fish behavior in that specific area of this river.
7. Murphy Dam Hydro development - this is now being actively explored. Will put it on the agenda for the next meeting when more Pittsburg people can attend.
8. Bloomfield representatives - Bob Postier introduced new Bloomfield representative Marty Lomasney. Bob

is retiring from the subcommittee. Speaking from his experience fishing out capsized canoeists at Lyman Falls, he asked that maps and cautions be posted at upstream river access points to warn people about the falls, and suggested a phone number for emergencies.

9. CRJC and the new Water Resources Management Plan: Adair Mulligan welcomed members of the public and gave a brief presentation to introduce the work of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions and the Headwaters Subcommittee. Their new Water Resources Management Plan calls upon NH DES to inform citizens about the updated Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act, and urges towns and landowners to carefully consider how their shorelands are managed and developed. The Commissions and the Subcommittee recommend that riparian buffers and floodplains be protected, and that Vermont, the only Northeastern state without shoreland protection, adopt such a law.
10. The Updated New Hampshire Shoreland Protection Law - Jay Aube of NH DES's Shoreland Program gave an extensive presentation about the newly updated law, the purpose behind it, the protections that apply, and what requires a shoreland permit and examples of what does not. Jay explained how to handle projects that were underway as the law changed, and offered himself as a source of information. A question and answer session followed. The evening's presentation was supported by a grant from NH DES' Clean Water Act section 604(b) funding.