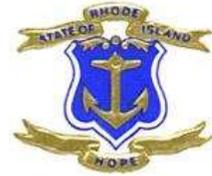




The Rhode Island Rivers Council
c/o RI Water Resources Board
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DRAFT FOR REVIEW – Minutes of RIRC Meeting
Wednesday August 8, 2018, 5 pm
Bristol County Water Authority
450 Child Street, Warren, RI 02885

ATTENDANCE:

A. Members Present:

Veronica Berounsky, Chair
Alicia Eichinger, Vice Chair
Walter Galloway
Eugenia Marks
Elise Torello

B. Guests Present:

Keith Gonsalves, Ten Mile River Watershed Council
Ann Morrill, Kickemuit River Council
Ken Morrill
Ken Booth, Bristol County Water Authority
Pam Marchand, Bristol County Water Authority
Eivy Monroy, NBEP
Richard Grant, Narrow River Preservation Association
Robin Hagar Aguiar, Kickemuit River Council
Beth Forshee, Kickemuit River Council
Jenny Paquet, RIDEM Water Resources
Doug Stevens, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council
Judy Colaluca, Save The Lakes
Michael Bradlee, Friends of the Moshassuck
Dave Urban, Kickemuit River Council
June Harrison
Subhadra Newton
Linda Brunini, Kickemuit River Council
Steve Roth, Kickemuit River Council

Call to Order: Dr. Veronica Berounsky, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and asked for introductions

Video Presentation of Kickemuit Fish Ladder: 5:18 p.m. detailing the importance of Alewife to the ecosystem (an important feeder fish for both fresh and salt water predators), the history of

damming the river and adjacent rivers, and the installation of the fish ladder system, to assist with alewife migration from breeding grounds to bay and vice versa.

Linda Brunini: Denali fish ladder allows for a slow climb, incremental runway installed in 2006: DEM stocked juveniles from other river sources, through successive years in order to begin to create imprinting within the stock, and as it co-mingles with wild schools, the hope is to establish a self-sustaining brood of alewives for the health and benefit of the river and ecosystem. Linda is not sure if stocked fish are yet making it back in a sustaining manner. Alewife were restocked this year.

Question/comment: There is a concern if the dam upstream scheduled for removal will affect water quality. And the mention of another dam further upstream (that also may be removed?)

Following the video presentation was a short discussion and then a walk to the fish ladder.

6:06 p.m. Return to the Meeting Room and reconvening

Review and Approval of June 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve minutes, seconded. Motion passed unanimously

Narragansett Bay Estuary Program Report: by Eivy Monroy:

Looking for new Director: Interviews have happened. Hoping to have news to report by October RIRC presentation

RFP for Restoration Project

October 1st Meeting and Event: Watershed Report. Partnering and Meeting at Battleship Cover in Fall River from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There will be two Workshop Sessions:

1. Water Quality
2. Panel Discussion focused on Future Funding

Water Resources Board Report by Eugenia Marks

The discussion continues about the reorganization of the Water Resources Board (WRB) and their next meeting is on August 17th. The meeting is to discuss the Reorganization that will/may affect the RI Rivers Council. WRB needs to get appointments to fulfill their Board – hard to have a quorum at meetings now. August 16th: Drought Steering Committee meeting. View of precipitation indicated long-term deficits though the Summer (Submitted Chart). There was a departure of 1 – 3 inches of precipitation for May and June. USGS Data Map indicates “below normal” rainfall, compared to August 7th of this year.

Ken Booth: “Can you keep track of water table?”

Eugenia: “Yes.” USGS keeps track

Bay, Rivers, Watershed Coordination Team Funds Report by Dr. Berounsky

Final reports for the 2nd (and final) year of the Bay, Rivers, Watershed Coordinating Team fund were due July 16. These are the reports on the water quality sampling that was carried out as part of the URI Watershed Watch Program and the funds actually came through DEM directly to URI (so watershed councils didn't not have to submit any bills), This is an extension of the due date because URI Watershed Watch Program has not yet gotten their reports out to the Watershed Councils.

Officer Reports:

6:12 p.m. Elise Torello reported on current financial status

Written Reports of Activities Received from Designated Watershed Councils:

-Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone – no report

www.blackstoneriver.org/blackstone/

-Buckeye Brook: No Report

<http://www.buckeyebrook.org/>

-Kickemuit River Council: by various members

Dave Urban mentioned the fundraiser and Merchant Table with Tee Shirts, Magnets, etc. for sale!!

Linda Brunini: Directed attention to the 3D Model of the Kickemuit Fish Ladder, and their Brochure

Eivy Monroy: How do you know where septic systems are?

Linda/June Harrison: They have addresses. They knock on doors, mailed out survey in coordination with sewerage treatment plant info, because they knew which houses were pumped

<http://www.kickemuitriver.org/>

-Friends of the Moshassuck: by Michael Bradlee read and submitted report

Update on the Frog Watch Project, and the low-impact dredging of a central gully to extend the duration of water retained in the vernal pool, where both Fowler's Toads and Grey Tree Frogs breed. There appears to be a successful extension of the water pooling, which allowed grey tree frog tadpoles to reach maturity. More grey frog tadpoles and immature frogs were spotted this season. Bullfrogs, which populate the vernal pool following their launch from the adjacent Esker Pond, were also enjoying the extended pooling, although they cannot sustain a population as a result of seasonal drying of the pool.

www.themoshassuck.org

-Narrow River Preservation Association: Richard Grant read and submitted report

Narrow River Preservation Association 2018 Summer Activities fill the bill. We started off with NRPA 31st annual Road Race (5K Walk, 5K Run and a 10K Run) on May 12th, followed by a dynamic board meeting on June 5th, on June 16th we presented the What Lives in the River Educational program to 70 guests in two sessions, the 13th annual Turnaround Mile Swim was participated by 150 swimmers on June 23rd, On July 7th and 8th we sold kayak raffle tickets at the Wickford Art Festival, on July 10th we held our summer board meeting, on July 14th we attended the refreshing, annual Environmental Awareness Day at the Narragansett Town Beach, followed on July 20th by a very rewarding Pettaquamscutt Paddle as revenue from the entire day's operation, \$3,000.00 was donated to NRPA. On the down side, the August board

meeting was postponed until 14th and the art session, Art on the River, was cancelled due to weather conditions. It will be rescheduled. Meetings and events being planned are the Annual Meeting on Tuesday October 2nd, What Lives in the River on September 15th will be part of Gansett Days Program and NRPA will end its summer activities program with a River Clean up event on September 30th and lastly with a new fund raising event, the Narrow River Kayak Fishing Challenge on October 20th.

Some highlights that are interesting. The NRPA Kayak raffle is under way with a mailing to every resident in the watershed (3800 residents), containing 3 free raffle tickets if sent in with membership form before Annual Meeting of October 2nd and this will be the first year that we have had the opportunity to sell raffle tickets at an off site location. Our first venture is at the Casey Farm Grower's Market. We hope it will be a trend to have farmers market locations selling kayak raffle tickets at several locations. We are also pleased to report that the NRPA board of directors announced it has established a fifth NRPA endowment fund at the Rhode Island Foundation in the name of Richard Barker Grant in recognition of being a board member for 48 years, many of which as president. At a recent social meeting at the Grant home, celebrating Richard's 80th birthday, gifts were monetary and were donated to NRPA for the new endowment fund. Other items include notes or general discussion on: Middlebridge Tide Chart, Shady Lea Dam removal, a proposed solar farm, W.E.R. LaFarge Park improvements, complaints about human waste and damage to the Point, Science Fair schedule, Lesa Meng College Scholarships, The Osprey Webcam consideration, Narrow River Handbook development, Narrow River Research Bibliography, Narrow-River -Notes Mailing, SciWrite for URI internship review, Outreach program, specifically a new folder for businesses in the watershed to be linked to NRPA, Sedge Island Shack information panel, representation-report from Friends of Canonchet Farm, The Narrow River Land Trust and the O'Neill Bike Path project and recent progress on the 2020 NRPA 50th year celebration . www.narrowriver.org

Pawtuxet River Authority: Chuck Horbert reported (*in absentia*) Read by Veronica
We just had our annual meeting and election of officers. All of the officers remain the same, including the recent addition of Jen Ryan as Treasurer.

We are monitoring the recent issues that were publicized concerning Tiogue Pond in Coventry and the elevated bacteria counts. We are awaiting the results of testing, but so far we think that the spikes in levels noted were outliers and not reflective of normal conditions. We believe the Towns response in trying to keep everyone off of the lake was a bit of an overreaction. The PRA is interested in pursuing some longer term improvements to the pond, part of which will need to be consolidation of ownership of the dam, which actually spans several parcels, all with different owners. If that can be accomplished, the dam could be modified and improved to allow for better management of lake levels and more consistent conditions for water quality. Also discussed was possible dredging to remove significant sediment deposits that have occurred in the pond over the last couple decades due to prior problems and violations associated with upstream development. Ultimately, we would like to assist the lake owners and landowners develop a Lake Management Plan.

The trespassers on our Norwood property have vacated the premises, but they have left a significant mess behind. Access is extremely difficult, especially now with very thick vegetation. We will plan a cleanup in the fall when access may be easier. In the past, neighbors to the property have not wanted to see any development of trails on this property. We believe that this has encouraged the type of trespassing that we have now had to deal with since no one is using the property. We may try to meet with the neighborhood to see if there has been any change in opinion and to propose the idea of a small walking trail available to the neighborhood as a means

to discourage squatters.

We are getting ever closer to having the contractor ready to start repairs to our Pontiac Canoe Launch. Once started, there will be an announcement temporarily closing the access.

We have significantly underestimated the difficulties in finishing the memorial at Veteran's Square for Guy Lefebvre. I have handed responsibility for getting the stone carved to Stan Brittsan, our Vice Chair. I am confident he will follow through.

We are monitoring work that BASF is starting at one of the former Ciba Geigy parcels in Cranston on the river. The project will involve removing significant quantities of contaminated soils, consolidating other less-contaminated soils further away from the river, capping of the entire site with a soil cap, and revegetation of the whole parcel with native vegetation. A short loop walking trail is also included in the proposal, with a small overlook of the river.

Finally, we will be pursuing a survey of property we own at the Harris Dam with the goal of eventually making improvements to allow recreational access to this property.

Walter Galloway added an historical note, that the land around Ciba-Geigy, and adjacent watershed, through core sampling showed the HIGHEST levels of dioxin in the Country in the late 70's. The industrial plant was referred to as "Plant X" in the associated report.

<http://www.pawtuxet.org/>

-Salt Ponds Coalition –written report submitted and presented by Alicia Eichinger
SPC released our second video under the EPA Grant. It is a brief look at the nutrient loading that geese contribute to the ponds and how we try to use egg oiling to ameliorate the issue. It can be viewed on both our Facebook and Instagram pages. Claire is continuing to film a few other videos as well and will edit them in the fall.

Water quality monitoring is continuing to go well – so far we have had great weather most sampling weeks.

SPC is currently working on an e-version of our summer newsletter in lieu of a print version. It is something that we want to test to see if our members are receptive.

SPC's summer programming season is in full swing. We have completed 12 safaris, had to cancel 2 due to weather, and have three remaining for the season. This includes our public programming as well as camps and Boy Scout troops. We have had one paddle on Point Judith with 25 paddlers in attendance, this weekend we have a paddle on Quonnie, and one more to go in Winnapaug in September. We have also done water quality education at the URI Sailing Center, and were at Narragansett Environmental Awareness Day.

SPC is working with a URI Watershed Watch student to help update our status and trends report, and to see how our AHI Index might be adapted to compare the ponds to other salt water bodies in the state.

SPC hosted our annual fundraiser at the Weekapaug Yacht Club – this was a change from previous years where it was a smaller pizza party hosted by one of our members. This year, we were able to do a silent auction with roughly 50 items as well as a raffle. We were able to net a profit from the event, and with some tweaks look forward to doing something similar next year.

SPC and residents from the community of Harbor Island in Point Judith Pond met with CRMC and the Town of Narragansett to come up with a plan to address the issues of the causeway that connects Harbor Island to land (aka – there are water quality issues on either side of the causeway because of a lack of flow and the causeway has begun to see some flooding during storms and king tides so there is an issue of resiliency in the face of sea level rise). The meeting was overall positive, and we are looking into what the next steps would be.

www.saltpondscoalition.org

-Ten-Mile River by Keith Gonsalves

They were “on vacation” the past month. Reported that Nature Conservancy which owns the development right of a Golf Course (Scheduled to close) will prevent commercial development of that land. Keith also mentioned two fish counts (electro-sampling) , at two sites, (Hunts Mills and in Attleboro). Keith also mentioned the book tour for author Marjorie Turner Hollman’s recent publication, “Easy Walks and Paddles in the Ten-Mile River Watershed,” that details an extensive list of “easy walks” in East Providence, Pawtucket, Plainville areas. Talked to seniors at a recent event about book and walks. Turner Reservoir has a sign reporting blue-green alga; Keith is concerned about the fairness of the sign posted by the Health Board and has concerns about their diligence with following up with further testing. Keith has been in touch with the Providence “Waterfire” people and is hoping all the RIRC watershed councils could be invited to paddle together (maybe with fish lanterns) sometime next year, or even this fall. Veronica nominated Keith “Committee Chair to Explore the Feasibility of Such an Event.”

The TMRWC has been on a book tour throughout the watershed, visiting towns and city donating copies of our book "Easy Walks and Paddles in the Watershed, we have been to libraries from Plainville to East Providence.

We have been displaying our map which is a big hit and conversation starter. With summer weather and lower water levels we have been addressing blow downs, I am not aware of the water testing with watershed watch <http://www.tenmileriver.net/>

-Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association: as presented by Elise Torello

WPWA received, processed, and uploaded to our database all of the 2016 water quality data. All of WPWA's water quality data through 2016 is available to the public on easy-to-access PDF reports through a Google Map on WPWA's website. Also, we are working on the Wild and Scenic River Wood-Pawcatuck National Parks Service report for congress.

<http://www.wpwa.org/>

-Woonasquatucket River Watershed: written report submitted by Kassi Archambault, presented by Doug Stevens

Greenway Maintenance & River Rangers

The WRWC hired a team of nine (9) summer Junior Rangers to work with our three Senior Greenway staff. Our newest stewards help run Clean Days, and are improving and maintaining the Greenway.

Clean Days on the Greenway Series

The WRWC has hosted or participated in 16 events so far. We have engaged 674 individuals, approximately 187 from Olneyville.

Volunteers gave 4056 hours so far this year at a value of \$97,923.

Water Quality/River Monitoring:

Herring Return Count: Thanks to John Hake, herring counters have been counting for the whole season. We eagerly await the return numbers for 2018.

Water Quality Monitoring: Water quality monitoring is underway. Doug Stephens is still coordinating this project. Thank you, Doug!

Electrofishing Monitoring: One site has been monitored on both the Moshassuck River and Ten Mile River. The second site on the Ten Mile River will be monitored on a Saturday in September. The Woono River will be monitored this Friday and Monday! Can you join?

DATES: Friday August 10th in Smithfield, and Monday August 13th in Providence

WHEN: 9:00 -11:00 am

RSVP for location details! Call WRWC or email Kassi, karchambault@wrwc.org

Green Infrastructure:

We are pleased to have signed an agreement with RIDOT to develop green infrastructure projects over the next 5 years in the Woonasquatucket Watershed! There are many green infrastructure projects underway, including Citizen's Bank at Olneyville Square, Greystone Mill Social Club, King Street and Sheridan Street and Pleasant Valley Stream multiple homeowner retrofits.

Education Programs:

Education Director, Kassi, is running summer programming with the YWCA community center to design and paint mini murals over storm drains. Another end of summer field day will be planned for Riverside Park.

Red Shed:

Summer Bike Camp has been going well! Two more weeks of camp are left, with awaiting list for each week. Bike Camp Cookout on August 17th will celebrate the last day of camp with summer campers, current week campers, River Rangers, and supporting organization and funders.

Every week includes:

- Scenic group rides on the Woono Bike Path
- Bike Mechanics lessons
- Smart Cycling instruction
- Environmental education and stewardship
- River paddles with skilled instructors

The Red Shed Bike Shop is open Wednesday and Friday from 3:30- 8:00 pm and Saturday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Hours will change once camp finishes on August 17th. Visit wrwc.org for updates.

Recreation Program:

Almost all paddle trips are full. Downtown Providence and Georgiaville Pond paddles have been the most popular. Two paddles are left for the season, including our Board/Staff Paddle where you may learn more about the organization, and possibly even join our board or a committee! Check out the full paddle schedule on events pages on WRWC.org and on our Facebook page.

EVENTS -ALL EVENTS LISTED at <http://wrwc.org/events.php>

Upcoming:

a. *Electrofishing* – See above

b. *Woono River Ride* – Saturday, September 15th

<http://www.wrwc.org/>

Committee Reports:

“No Reports”

6:54 p.m. Final Words:

Judy Colaluca mentioned the award recently received by Bob Nero. Sue Gannon, Katie D’Goosh, and spoke about the Boat inspection program for weeds.

6:55 p.m.

Chair’s Report by Dr. Veronica Berounsky, Chair.

Water Resources Board

Hoping to set up a meeting soon with Kathy Crawley of the WRB about how the transition of the WRB to the DPUC affects the RIRC. Walt Galloway has offered to also attend this meeting.

Legislative Grant

Chair Berounsky is working on the application for the \$2000 legislative grant that State Reps. Carol Hagan McEntee and Robert Craven are hoping to make available. It was submitted in June. Overview of the application:

Although the RIRC has been in existence 27 years, it has come to our attention that many people in RI (including legislators) do not know what the RIRC is, what it means to be a “state-designated watershed council”, and what activities our watershed councils lead and participate in. With this legislative grant we will produce a booklet for distribution that highlights and describes all ten of our member watershed councils and their activities and also describes the RIRC and its role and events. We will also produce a banner-map of the state of RI showing all ten of our member watersheds.

The booklet will focus on the ten watershed councils with 1 page for the map of the watershed (developed in our last legislative grant), and a second page for information about the watershed council. With this grant we will pay a consultant to work with the members of each watershed council to gather material on their watershed council such as officers, mission statements, legislative districts, activities, and photographs then the consultant will edit and write additional material as needed and design the booklet. There will also be pages at the beginning and end of the booklet specifically about the RIRC and our activities. Included in this grant application are funds for printing approximately 100 copies of the booklet for distribution, and it was also be available digitally on the RIRC website and can be distributed via email.

The banner-map to be produced will be similar to the ones produced from last year’s grant for each watershed but this time will be a map of the whole state of RI showing the watersheds of our 10 member councils. It will be approximately 8 ft tall and 2 ft. wide and free standing with a weighted base. The map rolls into the base for storage. We plan to have these product ready to show at the next RIRC Annual Meeting at the Statehouse in January 2019.

RIRC vacancies – update

Josh Butera of the Governor’s Office called Chair Berounsky in June. The appointments of Michael Bradlee, Jason Considine, and Sally Johnson are still pending. Two have had their paperwork approved, one (Mr. Considine) even received a letter of appointment from the Governor. Now Mr. Butera report that the last step – approval at a Senate Committee hearing -

is not going to take place this legislative session because with the Water Resources Board moving the Senate doesn't want to make any appointments to the RIRC (which is an affiliated function of the WRB). This is very frustrating for several reasons: making a quorum at meetings, being stretched thin for outreach events and for work trying to replace the lost state funds, and also because the appointment process had been so slow. Mr. Butera suggested calling Sen. Sosnowski after the session and try to get things set up for January. Chair Berounsky will do that this fall.

Watershed Maps-Banners

Bruce Hook is still doing a little work on some of the watershed maps-banners to see if he can find a way to make the rivers more visible, etc. More on this later

Environmental Awareness Day at the Beach

Narragansett's Environmental Day at the Beach Saturday July 15, from 10 am to 1 pm., Jenny Paquet brought the display, brochure, and DEM's 3-D watershed model that can be used to demonstrate overland waterflow. Other volunteers were Elise Torello, Walt Galloway, and Chair Berounsky. Alicia Eichinger was there for the Salt Ponds Coalition but pitched in when needed. Thank you all!

Re-nominations of State-Designated Watershed Councils:

RIRC will hold a public hearing at the start of our meeting in November. Paperwork will be due probably early October. It is likely that Rachel Calabro will oversee this effort. The 2 WCs up for re-nomination this year are:

2013 to 2018 Blackstone River Watershed Council / Friends of the Blackstone
(Original designation: 2002)

2013 to 2018 Narrow River Preservation Association (Original designation: 2002)

Save the Lakes

Round Table was June 27 and it was attended by RIRC Reps of Watershed Councils Bob Nero, Gregg Gerrit, and Chair Berounsky

Other Business:

Ann Morrill: Thanked the water company for hosting

Jenny Paquette - DEM EnviroScape Watershed Model is available for use in education and events.

Eivy Montroy: mentioned reward of Narragansett Bay Commission and solicited ideas for future work with restoration research projects.

7:06 p.m "Thanks You's" to Kickemuit and the Bristol County Water Authority for hosting today's meeting.

7:08 p.m. *Motion to adjourn*, seconded. Passed unanimously.