

## **RIVER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**

**January 26, 2016**

Present: Mary Antes, Wayland; Elissa Brown, Concord; Cindy Delpapa, Commonwealth; Lisa Eggleston, SVT; Bill Fadden, Framingham; Alison Field-Juma, OARS; Libby Herland, US fish and Wildlife; Jim Meadors, Lincoln; Karen Pelto, Commonwealth; Tom Sciacca, Wayland; Anne Slugg, Sudbury; Sarah Bursky and Jamie Fosburgh, National Park Service

Absent: Nancy Bryant, SUASCO Community Council; Jessica Furbeck, OARS; Betsy Gallagher, Billerica; Ralph Hammond, Bedford; Steve Pearlman, Carlisle; Kate Tyrrell, SVT

Guest: Suzanne Flint, OARS; Jennifer Feller and Robin Stuart, River School; Amber Carr, CISMA; Christa Collins, SVT

Cindy Delpapa called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. Members introduced themselves and welcomed Sarah Bursky, the new staff person, and Karen Pelto, the potential second representative from the Commonwealth. A paperwork snafu has delayed Sarah official start date. She spoke about her background and her interest in working with the RSC.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of December 8<sup>th</sup> were approved as amended (Eggleston/Brown). There was one abstention.

### **Project Partners Interim Updates and Discussion**

*OARS:* Sue Flint distributed a handout describing OARS water quality monitoring and answered questions. The handout summarized the data from up to 24 sampling sites on total phosphorus, nitrates, dissolved oxygen in the Assabet, Sudbury, and Concord Rivers over a period of 20 years. Alison handed out a summary of OARS' river policy and engagement activities from August through December.

*RiverSchools Project, Mass Audubon's Drumlin Farm:* Robin Stuart reported that the program is now being used in 10 community schools, serving 10,000 students and 43 teachers. Most but not all schools experience the field component, making the RSC grant for transportation a critical link. Project staff is codifying the lessons so teachers can use them on their own, training teachers and parent volunteers, and continuing to develop data analysis tools. With the Nyanza funding coming to its end, the challenge is to find replacement funds.

*CISMA* Amber Carr reported on the RSC-funded small grants program. Most of the funds went to SVT to support invasive plant management near a population of Britton's violets at the Elliot Concord River Preserve. Most administrative support funds pay for CISMA's website domain and grant-writing funds support the time of the coordinator to develop proposals to such funders as NF&W, NFWF, REI, MET, and the Sudbury Foundation.

*SVT*: Christa Collins said she would distribute electronically a draft update of the 2003 report on the Wild and Scenic Unprotected Lands Inventory. She also mentioned the SVT and Town of Wayland's efforts to protect 200 plus acres of farm land in Wayland and SVT's work to protect a one-acre parcel with lots of riverfront.

### **Old Business - Bylaws**

Sarah briefly discussed her comments on the bylaws. She will review the bylaws against the Plan and the RSC will take another look before approving at a future meeting.

### **Updates**

*Assabet Avenue Drainage Project*: The town is waiting to hear from the Corps of Engineers.

*Water Management Act Renewals*: OARS has sent comment letters to DEP about water withdrawal applications submitted by Ashland, Concord, and Hopkinton. Maynard is adding a new well at a site near the refuge.

*Birch Road Wells*: Alison said the state is allocating \$1.6 million for permitting of the wells, perhaps from the environmental bond bill. Alison, Lisa, Bill, Libby, and Tom will make up a subcommittee to study the issue. Alison will email the RSC flow study to members.

*Bruce Freeman Trail Bridge*: The project is moving along having received a MEPA certificate.

*Cultural Council Requests*: The Framingham Cultural Council turned down the request to fund story teller Tony Toledo. Cindy said performances can begin in May.

*MA Rivers Alliance NPDES Delegation Meeting*: Alison is on the MA Rivers Alliance committee seeking to keep decision-making on NPDES permits with the EPA. Legislation may be proposed and pushed through transferring decision-making to DEP. If that happens, the committee wants to ensure a good process.

*MA Rivers Alliance NPDES Letter Sign-On*: The RSC has signed on to a MA Rivers Alliance letter.

## **New Business**

Tom brought a thumb drive with video taken by a drone. It was recommended putting it on Vimeo with a link on the RSC website.

Alison said there will be a public meeting on the Concord River Diadromous Fish Restoration Feasibility Study in Billerica on February 23, from 7 to 9, the same night as the next regularly scheduled RSC meeting. The RSC meeting was rescheduled to March 1<sup>st</sup> at Great Meadows.

## **Election**

The following slate of officers was elected unanimously (Brown/Sciacca): Anne Slugg, chair; Alison Field-Juma, vice chair; Cindy DelPapa, secretary; and Bill Fadden, treasurer. There was a huge round of applause for Cindy's leadership, especially over the last year without regular staff support.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.