



**Sudbury, Assabet and Concord  
Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council  
Meeting Minutes  
March 29, 2016**

Members in attendance: M. Antes (Wayland-alt), E. Brown (Concord), S. Bursky (NPS), C. Delpapa (State), L. Eggleston (SVT-Alt), B. Fadden (Framingham), R. Hammond (Bedford), L. Herland (USFWS), J. Meadors (Lincoln), K. Pelto (State), T. Sciacca (Wayland), A. Slugg (Sudbury). A. Field-Juma (OARS) and K. Tyrrell (SVT) at 8 as requested.

Members not in attendance: n. Bryant (SuAsCo Community Council), j. Furbeck (OARS-alt), B. Gallagher (Billerica), S. Perlman (Carlisle)

Also in attendance: Jim Gish (Protect Sudbury contact at [jgish@computer.org](mailto:jgish@computer.org)), J. Fosburgh (NPS)

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair Anne Slugg.

*Minutes:* March 1, 2016 minutes were sent out with meeting materials. Motion to accept minutes as written, (Herland/ Antes). MSV with 1 abstention. L Eggleston excused herself from meeting/budget discussion.

*Sudbury Power Line Project*

Mr. Gish arrived hoping to be able to provide answer to any questions about the proposed power transmission line. A request was made to the RSC that they weigh in on this issue. Mr. Gish offered to attend another meeting as the RSC's full agenda did not allow time to discuss this issue though Mr. Gish felt it important for parties to send comments as soon as possible. Sarah offered to follow-up. A question was raised about how – or if- this project relates to Wild & Scenic values or area.

*Discussion of Funding Requests:*

Sarah disseminated a prepared spreadsheet detailing requested funding for this year. The sheet also included this information from the past three years. Sarah noted there is approximately \$10,000 more in requests than available funding.

Anne asked for consensus on approach to reviewing requested and asked to address the 'housekeeping' requests first. This approach was amenable to all.

1. All present agreed to fund the \$100 membership fee for MA Rivers Alliance.
2. RSC administration funds to cover SVT staff costs associated with duties as the RSC's fiscal agent (\$2,000). Consensus was to completely fund this request.
3. An additional \$1,000 administrative fees to produce the annual report and the web hosting/managing met with approval.
4. RSC Riverfest funding request of \$5,900 would be primarily used to cover the designer's fees for the Riverfest brochure for two years (\$5,000), (the funding request is for two years to offset the funding allocated for this year used to cover Sarah's initial few weeks as the RSC

coordinator). The remaining \$900 is to be used to support the Friday Riverfest Kick-off event and a modest amount to cover a few additional promotion items. Suggestions to discuss whether it is effective to have the full color brochure in the future. This funding was approved.

5. RSC interpretive panel design for the Bruce Freeman Trail will cost \$1,760 to pay the designer to revise an existing interpretive panel design. MA Dept of Transportation is moving forward with trail construction in 2017 and the work will include the building and installation of an interpretive panel at the Assabet River crossing. No opposition raised to the expenditure for the design work.
6. RSC River Crossing Signs. Many of the existing signs throughout the watershed are either missing or in poor condition. This request is to cover the cost of commissioning new signs to replace existing or missing signs where appropriate. RSC members concurred that these noticeable signs make an impact. One recommendation made was to investigate a more fade-resistant sign material. The number of signs needed is based on information from OARS. Libby has 8 Assabet River, 4 Concord and 1 Sudbury River unused signs stored at the refuge. A recommendation was made to replace the most faded signs with these leftovers while researching alternative fade resistant options for the next batch of river crossing signs. No action was taken on this request for funding.

• ***Sarah tasked RSC members with reporting to her the locations of faded or missing in their respective towns.***

#### Additional Funding Requests:

Mussel Study: Allison Roy, the project manager for the 2014 river study partially funded by the RSC, was contacted about possible follow-up work. Dr. Roy recommended two possible investigations. The first, an assessment of the Oxbow, would be the much more expensive undertaking. The value of studying this area is it is a groundwater dominated system, impacts from increased groundwater withdrawals in the area would be the most apparent in the Oxbow. The second, less costly, investigation would focus on the state-listed mussel found during the 2014 study. Karen mentioned some mussel work to ascertain mercury content in the mussel in the river was done by USGS with EPA in relation to the Nyanza work. This work did not investigate how the mussels are impacted by altered hydrologic regimes. She also mentioned a mussel survey was done on the Connecticut River with Natural Resources Damages funds. Jamie suggested that money be allotted for a follow-up study and that the flow committee should recommend the best investigation to pursue. Consensus reached to allocate this money for a follow-up study related to flow alteration.

CISMA: The CISMA group is once again requesting funds to support their small grants with a small amount for admin and meetings. Question asked if we know how effective these grants have been. Libby offered this example of effectiveness- CISMA's work on early response. These efforts have managed to stop new infestations from taking hold and spreading. Libby also pointed out the CISMA small grants fund grass roots efforts able to leverage many volunteer hours. Consensus was to keep this funding but request the small grants be used in Wild & Scenic towns preferably on projects with a focus on a Wild & Scenic river segment.

OARS Policy, Water Quality Monitoring and Recreation: Overall members liked the proposal. A concern was raised about placing additional signs along the river and whether there was permission from landowners to place signs on their property. One suggestion was to not fund the watershed roundtable

as this notable event could probably find funding from another source given its high visibility and number of groups involved throughout the watershed.

SVT Land Protection and Acquisition: Many noted the focus of the proposal was for areas not in the Wild & Scenic portions/towns of the watershed. Even the Wayland project is high up on a tributary with a less obvious connection to the Sudbury River. Some lamented the lack of specificity and detail in the request for funding.

MA Audubon RiverSchools- MAS checked with the RSC before preparing this funding request for more money than in the past. It was noted a fair amount of the requested RSC funding would support work with Hudson schools- a community that is not in the Wild and Scenic segment. Only two of the RiverSchools participating schools are in W&S Communities. The RSC recognized RiverSchools is hobbled by needing to go where they are invited /welcomed. Consensus to cut the \$4500 allocated strictly for work with the Hudson schools from the total requested amount.

General Suggestions to improve funding requests:

It was noted many of the proposals are not focusing on the Wild & Scenic segments/towns. It was recommended to strongly emphasize in the next funding round the need to have work target, or show how the funded work directly impacts, the Wild and Scenic river reaches.

Also suggested was the need to emphasize to applicants the need to have better evaluation methods. With the exception of RiverSchools, the proposed evaluations in the requests were lacking.

Alison and Kate were brought in to answer questions;

OARS:

Q. Alison was asked how often the Roundtable happens?

A. Every 2-3 years. Many small organizations, (pond associations, wildlife advocates, etc) are brought together with each group offering a short presentation. The roundtable has always been paid for by the RSC. Cost is \$100 for food plus several hours of staff time to organize and also attend. A fair percentage of attendees are from a Wild & Scenic town, (Sudbury, Wayland and Concord).

Q. Signs- how many property owners have given their permission for the signs?

A. None have been asked yet but OARS has experience in this area associated with the stream crossing sign project. The only problems encountered during this work were with state highway department and Concord. The location of the paddle will be determined and will be on a Wild and Scenic section.

*Old Business:*

Will table the bylaws discussion until April given the limited time remaining in the meeting.

Community Grant Application from One Earth asking for \$2,570 to have a nature camp for 8-10 children for a half day for one week. It was not clear from the application if this camp has been offered previously. Several RSC members considered the huge age range (grade 2-5) too broad to work well. Discussed partial funding. Motion made to fund at \$800 (Brown). No second made. Motion to approve funding for One Earth for half the requested amount- \$1,235, (Fadden/Sciacca). MSV.

Comment letter on the dam fish feasibility study was prepared by Sarah and Jamie and provided in the meeting materials sent to RSC members. Motion made to approve sending this letter, to be signed by both RSC and NPS, (Field-Juma/Brown). MSV.

*New Business:*

***Mary reminded people to send in nominations for the River Steward Award program ASAP.***

A request for volunteers for the Riverfest Party was made. Kate and Anne volunteered with Cindy taking the lead for now.

Eversource/Sudbury Power Line- discussion centered on the question of RSC standing given the proposed power line not along the Sudbury River. If RSC weighed in it would be just a comment letter though consensus was the RSC really does not have an interest in this particular project. As noted above, Sarah will follow-up.

*Funding final discussion and vote:*

OARS- Motion to approve \$22,800 of funding for OARS, (Brown/Fadden). MSV

SVT- Motion to approve \$19,000 funding for Sudbury Valley trustees, (Brown/Sciacca). MSV

RSC Community Grants. Motion to fund Community Grants at \$24,620, (Brown/Fadden). Because of concern the follow-up flow (mussel?) investigation may not have enough funding, one member asked to reach consensus on allowing a shift of funds from the Community Grants to the follow-up study upon vote of the RSC membership. It was recognized that the RSC had the right to reallocate funds and there was no need to amend the original motion. Motion called. MSV.

Mussel Study- Motion to approve \$15,000 for a follow up study on the Sudbury River, the exact focus to be recommended by the Flow Sub-committee, (Slugg/Sciacca). MSV.

Motion to adjourn made at 9:33 PM, (Delpapa/Pelto). MSV