

RIVER STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

September 24, 2013

Present: Mary Antes, Wayland; Doug and Aviva Brooks, Concord; Cindy Delpapa, Commonwealth, Bill Fadden, Framingham; Nancy Hallen, SVT; Ralph Hammond, Bedford; Libby Herland, US Fish and Wildlife; Jim Meador, Lincoln; Tom Sciacca, Wayland; Anne Slugg, Sudbury; Lee Steppacher, National Park Service

Absent: Nancy Bryant, SUASCO Community Council; Lisa Eggleston, SVT; Alison Field-Juma, OARS; Betsy Gallagher, Billerica; Steve Pearlman, Carlisle

Cindy Delpapa called the meeting to order at 7:12. The minutes of July 23, 2013 were approved with editorial corrections from OARS submitted to Lee before the meeting (D. Brooks/Fadden). There was one abstention.

Concord Wastewater Treatment Plant Permit

The town of Concord appealed aspects of its wastewater treatment plant permit, including the amount of flow, pH limit (which is the state standard), aluminum limit, monitoring of di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP, a probable carcinogen and endocrine disruptor), and additional reporting requirements. Concord believes that the aluminum limit is unfair because the background aluminum is already high. The town has been working to replace its clay pipes with PVC plastic pipe, a big improvement but one that may be leaching DEHP into the wastewater. Concord is already doing a good job managing stormwater and feels that the additional reports are unnecessary or at least the reports should be for a limited time only. Concord questions whether the EPA has the right to limit flow when their job is to control pollution. Aspects of the permit that were not appealed go into effect when the permit is finalized.

The EPA has the opportunity to respond to the appeal within 30 days and others would then have 15 days to file an amicus. Hopefully we will know more at the October meeting.

Three Rivers Chorus

The Three Rivers Chorus received a small grant to purchase a piece of 'river' music from a Vermont composer. Although there was some thought that the grant funds would be returned because the chorus was not fully prepared, the chorus is now going ahead with the concert, which will be Saturday, November 2 at 8 pm at the Concord Union Church. There will be a slide show and an information table about the Sudbury, Assabet and Concord rivers including what the RSC does. Lee and Cindy would welcome offers of help with this aspect of the concert. Anne offered to participate the night of the concert. Cindy and Nancy also volunteered to help.

CISMA Activities

CISMA received \$1 million as part of the Nyanza Restoration funds to control invasive species, primarily Water Chestnut and Purple Loosestrife. OARS has been doing mapping of Water Chestnut and has found a couple of surprises, in particular a robust infestation of Water Chestnut above the Saxonville Dam.

The severe infestation in the mill pond upstream of the Faulkner Dam in Billerica has been known for a while but it is very shallow there so the harvester could not operate. Water Chestnut

have now also been located downstream of the Faulkner dam. OARS is talking to Framingham, which is not a member of CISMA, about controlling the infestation there.

Libby said that Fish and Wildlife is getting a smaller harvester and a barge that can transport the water chestnuts to a disposal area. It is a complicated process that requires the cooperation of DPWs and other groups. Nyanza funding does not provide funds for moving the harvester from place to place or a crane for putting the harvester into the water.

Mass Audubon is mapping purple loosestrife and identifying those places where the release of beetles will be most beneficial. Katrina trained interested organizations in the raising of beetles this past summer.

Updates

Parent Network Maps: Lee has gotten final edits from the committee and is now getting printing estimates. One estimate is \$3,500, including the accordion folding but without the backing, for 5,000 copies. The RSC has allocated \$2,250. It takes a special folding machine to fold the maps. It might be possible to prepare the camera-ready copy this year and print the maps using next year's funding. OARS will plan a launch party. Ralph mentioned that the Rotary Club in the six towns might be willing to contribute. Nancy suggested charging a small fee for the map since often people value things more if they pay for them. Tom suggested that the map could be a reward for becoming a Junior River Ranger.

Meetings on the Sudbury River Flow Study: After being cancelled in August, two meetings are now scheduled for Tuesday with the MWRA and Framingham. \$10,000 of the RSC funds have been earmarked for a research project to study the biologic resources in the river that could be impacted by flow. Framingham is interested in contributing labor and perhaps money for the study.

SWMI Update: The DEP proposed permitting program under the water Management Act has a complicated method for categorizing all the rivers in the Commonwealth based on flow. If a river is a category four or five, alternatives must be considered if a n increased water withdrawal is requested. The permitting process is a long one. The Sudbury-Assabet-Concord permits are all due to expire in August 2015.

Billerica WWTP Permit: The Billerica WWTP draft permit is out for comment. Its upgrades are subsumed because the Billerica House of Corrections wastewater has been added to the Billerica flow. The discharge is below the wild and scenic designation so the RSC will not formally review the project. We are now waiting for the Westborough permit to be released. Because this is upstream and has a potential to impact the wild and scenic section, the RSC will review the permit.

Baystate Roads Stream Crossing Workshops: Members are encouraged to urge their DPWs to attend the Stream Crossing workshop in Marlborough on October 29th. An RSC small grant is helping to fund this workshop.

Other: The Route 4 bridge is being worked on now and then the focus will be on the Pelham Island Bridge. Lee will be in conversation with MaDOT

New Business

Bill said that the annual OARS clean-up was a success.

The Thoreau Institute will host a talk on the Asian Longhorn Beetle at Walden Woods on October 17th. Libby said that the infestation is moving east after doing a lot of damage west of Route 140. Maple trees are their favorite host. Lots of trees have been cut and replanting has begun. The Emerald Ash Borer targets ash trees and they, unlike the Longhorn Beetle, are strong fliers. .

Libby reported that American Eel surveys have found eels in Fairhaven Bay and Heard Pond. There will be more surveys next year. There is a petition to list eels as endangered species.

Tom reported on the road leading to the proposed DPW facility in Wayland. The primary issue is the definition of "redevelopment." He said it has been estimated that 12 acres of marsh lands are cut off by the road.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03.