



Sudbury, Assabet and Concord
Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council
March 28, 2017 Meeting Minutes

RSC members in attendance: Anne Slugg (Sudbury- Chair), Mary Antes (Wayland-Alt), Sarah Bursky (NPS), Cindy Delpapa (State), Christine Dugan (Lincoln), Bill Fadden (Framingham), Alison Field Juma (OARS), Ralph Hammond (Bedford), Marlies Henderson (Billerica), Libby Herland (USFWS), Jim Meadors (Lincoln-Alt), Karen Pelto (State), Kate Tyrell (SVT)

RSC members not in attendance: Elissa Brown (Concord), Jim Lagerbom (SVT-Alt), Tom Sciacca (Wayland)

Also in attendance: Ron Chick (Friends of Saxonville)

Chair Slugg called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM followed by introductions.

February minutes: Correct mention of fishable swimmable as a goal and not an achievement. Motion made to accept the 28 February 2017 meeting minutes as amended, (Slugg/Pelto) MSV with 2 abstentions.

Legislative breakfast and policy updates: The recent Legislative Breakfast was well attended. The RSC members attending found it useful to learn legislators' opinions on issues and their answers to specific questions. Representative Chris Walsh gave an interesting overview of the Transfer of Development Rights. The Governor's recent filing of a bill to have MA DEP assume sole oversight of the NPDES program was a topic of great interest to many attendees. Several legislators expressed concern about the potential loss of federal funds if the Affordable Care Act is repealed. Some useful 'take-aways' included knowing legislators appreciate hearing positive support from constituents on legislation to balance those in opposition and constituents would benefit from weighing in on the local level as their municipal leaders belong to influential municipal organizations.

The MA Rivers Alliance is hosting an Annual Lobby for the Rivers Day at the statehouse on March 30th. Environmental advocates are being asked to request meetings with specific legislators/legislative aides to discuss key environmental issues.

A Field Juma reported on her trip to Washington DC with Julia Blatt of MA Rivers Alliance. They met and shared priorities with an American Rivers policy staffer. A meeting was also secured with Bob Ratcliffe and Joan Harn of the National Park Service in addition to meeting with most of the MA Delegation where they asked for support for Wild & Scenic rivers and the Environmental Protection Agency.

USGS meeting and other studies: Two USGS researchers met with the RSC about the USGS flow modeling of the Sudbury River followed by an interesting discussion of the project. USGS provided several ideas for additional long term studies and recommended the RSC establish clear restoration goals. B Fadden

suggested a study focusing on the redirection of flow associated with a post 1957 hurricane 'remedy' as the cut robs the Oxbow of water. The study would investigate the possibility of restoring the original river path. B Fadden remains concerned about the volume of water released from the Saxonville impoundment not meeting the target of 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD). B Fadden asked for support to jointly request DCR and MWRA to verify the daily release volume and to bring up the flow to 1.5 MGD if the flow is below this target. B Fadden offered to edit his existing draft request and share with the RSC. S Bursky suggested the release volume could be a strategy in the updated Conservation Plan.

The Flow Committee looked at two different possibilities for the funding allocated by the RSC last year for additional investigation on the Sudbury River. E Nedeau, a mussel expert, was contacted and he is able to undertake a study in the few months remaining before funding runs out. S Bursky will send around the proposal to the RSC. The Flow Committee will be the liaison with E Nedeau and oversee the work.

B Fadden reported there is suppose to be a report to Framingham Town Meeting on the Birch Road well field reactivation. The report may contain response to comments received and potentially a new pumping regime.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. *B Fadden will update and disseminate a request to DCR and MWRA about Saxonville impoundment flow releases.*
2. *S Bursky will send around the Sudbury River mussel study proposal to the RSC.*

Conservation Plan and Retreat Update : The Conservation Plan Committee completed their initial review of the on-line survey and will use the results to inform the retreat and the Conservation Plan. The survey results clearly showed many RSC members feel parts of the plan are outdated and there are several emerging issues not in play when the plan was written. The survey also highlighted the RSC's great strength is also our great challenge- municipal participation is strong but does not reach into the community at-large. A Slugg circulated a confirmation sheet for the 14 April retreat- about 30 people have been invited to the retreat.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. *S Bursky will send out an electronic copy of the current Conservation Plan to the RSC.*
2. *RSC members review the plan before the retreat.*

August annual field trip: M Henderson would like to keep the trip centered in Billerica and has offered to coordinate a canoe/kayak outing likely keeping to the tradition of a late afternoon trip in August during the week- perhaps during the full moon this year. There are several possible paddles and options to rent or borrow boats.

Riverfest: An impressive and diverse array of events are set for Riverfest. The event planning kick-off meeting will be 26 April and will include a discussion of how to promote events and event hubs. RSC reps are asked to invite people to attend. The kick-off event will once again be at SVT Wolbach Farm. Suggestions on potential food donations (appetizer and desserts) should be sent to S Bursky and A Slugg. M Henderson was slated to lead a canal walk on 23 April and could repeat it for Riverfest. She noted the Canal Museum wants the tow path along the canal off the Concord River named after Henry David Thoreau despite HD Thoreau writing of his dislike for the dam and wish for it to be removed. River Stewards nominations are due by the 18th to M Antes. Several nominations have already been submitted.

Action Items:

1. *Invite interested people to the Riverfest kick-off event on 26 April.*
2. *Suggestions for possible food donations to S Bursky and A Slugg*
 - a. *B Fadden will ask BJs, K Pelto will ask Whole Foods, A Slugg will ask Shaws.*
3. *Nominations for River Steward Awards to M Antes by 18 April.*

Old Business:

There is ~\$2000 in funds slated for new road-river crossing signs that must be spent this FY. Sudbury River needs 11 signs, Assabet River does not need any and Concord River needs 7 signs. The funds are sufficient to cover all 18 signs and will be ordered. Town reps are asked to check on the need for poles and installation hardware and report to B Fadden and S Bursky, (Framingham and Sudbury do not need poles).

ACTION ITEM:

- Town reps report to B Fadden and S Bursky on the need for poles and installation hardware for the new river-road crossing signs.

New business: The OARS annual Environmental Film Festival has sold out.

The celebration for the Refuge's new Red Maple Trail will be held 13 May at 11:00 AM. Congresswoman Clark has been invited to attend to be one of the few speakers at this casual event. Lots of volunteers helped rebuild the trail. SVT staff will lead a walk along the trail.

SVT is hosting a walk at Wolbach Farm on the same day and it includes a beer tasting. A Field-Juma is leading a walk at the Elliot Concord Preserve on 21 May on the nice trail from Shelton Road to the water. This preserve is the land purchased by SVT right along the river.

M Henderson reported about a proposal to 'clean lakes' in Billerica by applying some chemical to fight algae and she has concerns about the safety of the chemical. It was suggested the chemical is likely a copper based product which is typically applied during an outbreak of bacteria and sometimes algae.

April and May meetings we will be thinking about budgets.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30.