



**Sudbury, Assabet and Concord
Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council Meeting
December 4, 2018**

RSC Representatives present: Anne Slugg-Chair (Sudbury), Sarah Bursky, Co-Chair (NPS), Elissa Brown (Concord), Ron Chick (Framingham-Alt), Christine Dugan (Lincoln), Bill Fadden (Framingham), Ralph Hammond (Bedford), Alison Field-Juma (OARS), Marlies Henderson (Billerica), Eileen McGourty (USFWS), Karen Pelto (MA DEP), Tom Sciacca (Wayland)

RSC Representatives absent Mary Antes (Wayland-Alt), Jim Lagerbom (SVT-Alt), Jim Meadors (Lincoln-Alt), Joseph Piantedosi (Bedford-Alt), Kate Tyrrell (SVT)

This meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Anne Slugg.

Ms. Bursky announced some changes in RSC membership. Ms. Tyrrell works on financial matters for the SVT. She is currently seeking to find a replacement to the RSC from the SVT whose expertise is in land conservation. Ms. Hire's employer believes that her RSC involvement represents a conflict of interest because of her environmental law practice. Consequently she will no longer be representing Concord. Ms. Brown will become the Concord Alternate once a replacement for Ms. Hire is found. The Mass DER has decided to put less emphasis on Wild and Scenic River participation and so Ms. del Papa will not be attending RSC meetings but remains our representative for now.

Ms. Henderson motioned to accept the minutes of the last meeting. Ms. Field-Juma seconded and the motion passed with one abstention.

Grant funding

Ms. Bursky said that the RSC's Grant Review subcommittee discussed a Mass Rivers Alliance grant proposal to offer a one day workshop for municipalities, watershed associations, and community groups to share BMP's for managing stormwater runoff. The subcommittee spoke highly of the Mass Rivers Alliance in general but did not recommend funding this proposal as there are respected stormwater coalitions already offering these types of workshops. Ms. Slugg moved to accept the grant review subcommittee's recommendation not to fund this project. The motion was seconded by Ms. Henderson and passed unanimously.

The RSC discussed a grant from Mr. Kevin Martin to find and measure Big Trees on public lands along the SuAsCo rivers. GPS coordinates as well as other useful information such as the trees' wildlife value would be recorded in a pamphlet made available to the public. A motion not to fund this proposal but rather to recommend that Mr. Martin submit an alternate proposal to hold a Big Tree Riverfest event to be funded by the RSC was approved unanimously.

A discussion followed on the paucity of community grant proposals submitted by member towns. Ms. Slugg suggested investigating the possibility of awarding funding to environmental consultants who would carry out projects in member towns. Ms. Slugg said that the RSC has \$4,000 in community grant money remaining from last year as Wayland's project could not be started. Ms. Bursky suggested redirecting unused 2017 grant money to print and distribute copies of our recent Conservation Plan

update, including two per member town. She also said that we have a printing need for more copies of our family river guide.

Ms. Bursky said that the Great Egg Harbor Wild & Scenic River in New Jersey hosts an annual meeting which individuals can attend. She suggested that we hold aside some funds for any RSC members who would like to attend. Mr. Hammond motioned that carry over money and not more than carry over money should be used for two printing projects and travel for RSC members to the 2019 Great Egg annual meeting. Ms. Field-Juma seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Bursky said that some town representatives were scheduled to meet with their town boards to discuss the new Conservation Plan update. Ms. Bursky encouraged the other representatives to speak with their town boards or committees and to think of new contacts in their towns with whom they could discuss the Conservation Plan update.

Outreach Year in Review

The idea of holding Riverfest events every two years instead annually was discussed. It was decided that we should hold the 2019 Riverfest as it coincides with the RSC's 20th anniversary. The date of June 22-23 was chosen over Father's Day weekend because the solstice event is a significant Riverfest event. The idea of Riverfest becoming a biennial event will be placed on the agenda for the Strategic Planning meeting.

Ms. Bursky asked for opinions on which RSC endeavors made the most impact this year. She believed that holding the 50th anniversary event and adding a social media account were successful efforts. It was agreed that the Earth Day parade in Concord is too small an event for the RSC but that we should consider marching in Concord's Patriot's Day parade in 2019 as it draws a large crowd. Ms. Field-Juma added, however, that local partner groups were very glad to have us at the Earth Day Parade. Ms. Slugg said that she thinks our River Ranger book, which is specific to SuAsCo, is useful. Ms. Brown said that our river maps are popular.

Ms. Bursky suggested that members consider prioritizing and adding ideas to our draft strategic plan. Suggested examples included studying endocrine disrupters and environmental impacts from artificial turf. Ms. Slugg said that she would send out a reminder to RSC members to review this document.

Mr. Sciacca commented that a long standing outreach effort in Wayland has been incorporated into the 3rd grade curriculum. Every 3rd grader spends a day at the Wayland Historical Society learning about the house and the town. He said this might be a useful inspiration for an RSC effort. Ms. Brown said that Concord students visit the Concord wastewater treatment plant as part of DPW day. Ms. Field-Juma said that OARS has a water-wise event at a Boys and Girls club. Ms. Bursky suggested that we consider the creation of new subcommittees at our January meeting. These could include an education subcommittee and an expanded flow subcommittee.

Ms. Bursky said that she would send out an annual letter as a guide for town representatives to submit to their towns' annual reports.

Ms. Bursky said that CISMA retains its own governing council but is now located at SVT. The SVT will provide funding to CISMA for invasive plant management for one year and will donate staff time as well. Kristin O'Neill will replace Ryan Brown as CISMA coordinator.

Member Updates

Ms. Field-Juma said that 10 years ago Wayland agreed to pay OARS to do its water quality monitoring in response to a lawsuit and that OARS has been doing that work ever since. This monitoring currently includes Chlorophyll A which is an expensive test. OARS will ask DEP if it will drop that parameter.

Mr. Fadden said that a stone bridge owned jointly by Wayland and Framingham is in need of repair and will almost certainly include dewatering. If that project involves diverting the river it ought to include a review by the Army Corps of Engineers. He said that this project is being transferred to the DPW and that the RSC should track its progress.

Ms. Field-Juma said that this past summer over 44,000 river herring were recorded on camera traveling up the Merimack River on one of the biggest herring runs in the state. She also said that in 2018 herring entered Spy Pond for the first time in 100 years, traveling via the Mystic River.

Ms. Bursky said that both the Pawcatuc River in Rhode Island and the Nashua River in New Hampshire will get a Senate hearing this year as part of their federal designation processes.

Ms. Slugg reminded everyone about the holiday party on December 14th at Mr. Chick's house.

Ms. McGourty motioned for adjournment. Ms. Henderson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Christine Dugan