

UPPER DELAWARE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 2, 2017

The Upper Delaware Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, March 2, 2017 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Jim Greier called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and roll call followed.

In attendance: Town of Hancock-Fred Peckham, Town of Fremont-Jim Greier, Town of Cochecton-Larry Richardson, Town of Tusten- Susan Sullivan, Town of Highland-Jeff Haas, Town of Lumberland-Leigh Sherman, Town of Deerpark-David Dean, Damascus Township-Jeffrey Dexter, Berlin Township-Alan Henry, Lackawaxen Township-Doug Case, Shohola Township-Aaron Robinson, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania-Tim Dugan, National Park Service-Carla Hahn. Staff in attendance: Executive Director-Laurie Ramie, Resource Specialist-Pete Golod, Secretary-Cindy Odell. Also in attendance: Ginny Dudko, Town of Deerpark Alternate. Absent: Town of Delaware, Westfall Township, State of New York, Delaware River Basin Commission. Media: Dave Hulse, Peter Becker. Guests: James Leone, Don Hamilton, Harold Jones, Jim Barth.

Upper Delaware Region Geologic Resource Mapping Inventory Update by James Leone, Project Geologist with the New York State Geological Survey: Greier introduced Leone. Leone noted that Dr. Andrew Kozlowski, Glacial Geologist and Senior Scientist from the New York State Museum and New York State Geological Survey (NYSGS), presented to the group on January 7th of last year where he reported that the N.Y. State Geological Survey had been asked by the National Park Service to conduct geological mapping to understand the natural history of this part of New York State. It was noted that scientists from the New York State Museum have not been down in this area to conduct work for approximately 100 years. It was also reported at the January 7, 2016 meeting that when the project is complete, the Park Service will take the geologic mapping from the New York side and the Pennsylvania side and stitch them together so that there is one map for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River which will be available as both a hard copy and electronically. Leone showed a PowerPoint presentation to the group. Work accomplished to date includes gathering information from prior work such as maps and publications for the area and acquiring LIDAR, which stands for *Light Detection and Ranging*, a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges (variable distances) to the Earth, for the region. Last spring and summer staff and interns began their “boots on the ground” mapping and sample collecting. They also began drafting a map based on the existing data collected, LIDAR data, and the data collected from the field. Leone provided a list of the prior work that has been conducted in a resource list. Those works include Glacial Geology of the Hancock Area done in 1984 by Matthew Gubitosa for his State University of New York (SUNY) at Binghamton Master’s Thesis; the surficial geology of the North Branch Callicoon Creek Valley by Mark Fogarty; Ground Water Resources of Delaware and Sullivan Counties by Julian Soren of the U.S. Geological Survey in 1963 and 1961; and bedrock mapping conducted by Rickard, Fletcher and Ver Straeten. Leone showed several maps and explained them to members. He spoke of the issues with using cropped statewide maps, noting that the biggest issue is that they are too general. He showed a map of Point Mountain stating that it is an Umlaufberg. Leone referred to it as a bedrock island surrounded by unconsolidated sediment and explained how it may have been formed. Leone showed a Bedrock Map and stated that Slide Mt., Walton, Middlesex, and Oneonta are the names of the formations in the area. They are all of the Devonian Age dating back

between 385 and 360 million years old. He added that Bluestone can come from any of these formations. Leone showed the maps of Wayne County, Pennsylvania done by Duane Braun for the Pennsylvania Geological Survey. Those maps are available at <http://www.gis.dcnr.state.pa.us/geology/index.html>. Leone said that he spent a week with Braun in May of last year at which time Braun gave him a sense of what to look for on the New York side of the river. He showed copies of digital versions of Braun's maps and explained them to members, noting that he carried the color schemes used by Braun over to his maps as well and explained that Pike County's maps have not been digitized yet, but are available on the above website. Leone spoke of the fieldwork conducted in Narrowsburg noting the discovery of striations, which are any of a number of scratches or parallel grooves on the surface of a rock, resulting from the action of moving ice, as of a glacier, showing northeast to southwest movement. Leone showed a picture of stratified sand beds discovered in the Town of Hancock and explained the layers seen. He spoke of a sand deposit found on Tar Hollow Road in Hancock noting what is interesting about the bed is that it is located 105 feet above the present river. Leone showed more slides containing pictures from field work being conducted in the Kellams Bridge area. He spoke of the importance of being in the field to see certain areas as they are not always as they appear on the maps. Leone showed pictures of the different bedrock in the area. He explained Diamicton "Till" also known as glacial till is poorly sorted sediments containing clasts of varying size comparing it to the "crunchy peanut butter on the bottom of a glacier that is getting smeared along as the glacier is advancing southward." Leone showed a slide of a map of Bouchouxville Trail in the Town of Hancock. He spoke of the bump features or ridges on the map that they suspect represent post glacial erosion where the snow deposited and melted leaving small elongated hills. Leone showed a map which depicted the spots where data points were collected. When asked how many sample points there are, he said they typically try to sample 50 spots per quad and that there are probably close to 200 spots. Leone showed the draft map that has been developed as of January 2017. He said he hopes to refine the map more with further drilling and geo-probing.

Leone said future work will consist of more field investigation efforts including locating land owners to investigate additional features, finding rock outcrops with striations, and finding other glacial features to better understand the glacial history in the region; drilling and Geo-probe; continue updating the draft map; and work to improve both the New York and Pennsylvania maps for consistency with Duane Braun. He noted that areas of interest for drilling include places with thick "overburden", areas that have deposits of stratified sand and/or gravel, clay deposits noting he has not found any yet, and areas that might have thick till deposits or possible ice margins. He showed a map of an area of interest for drilling in Narrowsburg. What interests him about the spot is that it could be an old meander in the river or it could be something different because of the very straight nature of the channel. He would like to gain access in order to drill the sediments to see if they can provide some more information. Other areas of interest to pursue include the Readburn Rd in Fishs Eddy, NY, Boy Scouts of America property in the Town of Tusten, a gravel pit above Frisbee Island in the Town of Hancock, Bouchouxville Trail area, and Skinners Falls. Leone noted that the project is funded by the National Park Service. He acknowledged Duane Braun and expressed appreciation for his sharing of expertise in mapping the regional geology, and thanked interns Karl Backaus and Charles Porreca for a good deal of the leg work collecting samples.

A brief question and answer session took place at the conclusion of the PowerPoint presentation. Robinson asked if they do any chemical analysis of the samples that they take. Leone said not generally. Henry asked what the final product will be and when it will be available. Leone said that the funding runs out at the end of July. The final product will be a map similar to the draft map as of January 2017 that he showed on an earlier slide and that will eventually be posted on the New York State Museum website. He noted that there will be a narrative for each U.S.G.S. quad. Don Hamilton of the NPS asked if Duane Braun will be back working with Leone. Leone told him that nothing is set up currently. Dave Hulse asked if there are any practical uses for this project. Leone said he can tell a property owner what type of product is on their property, but can not tell them if it is economical. Jim Barth asked what the purpose of the drilling is and how far down they go. Leone told him they drill to look at the Stratigraphy which is a branch of geology which studies rock layers (strata) and layering (stratification). The different layers can tell a story of what was going on before the layers presently in place. They drill down through the bedrock noting that the deeper it is, the better. Leone said that if bedrock is suspected to be within 20 feet of the surface, they use a Geoprobe which is a hydraulic hammer. If the bedrock is below 70 feet they will drill a core with rotary equipment. The hope is to find organic material that's deep enough that they can read and obtain

carbon dates from. Leone said that they contract with environmental drillers who are used to drilling other than for water purposes. Hulse asked if during the sampling they've come up with any archeological or paleontology finds. Leone said they would love to have one of these finds, but have not, and if they did, they would stop drilling and start digging to further investigate. He added that in many cases, such finds are made by the landowners. Dean asked how much funding was received for this project. Leone said he believes they have received \$150,000 from the National Park Service. Greier thanked Leone for his presentation.

Approval of February 2 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Peckham seconded by Robinson to approve the February 2 meeting minutes was carried unanimously.

Public Comment on the Agenda: None

Committee Reports: Committee reports were provided based on the meeting minutes. They were: February 2 & 21 Water Use/Resource Management by Peckham and February 2 & 28 Operations by Greier. No Project Review report was given due to the fact that the minutes of the February 28 meeting were not yet available.

Status Reports

Delaware River Basin Commission: The DRBC was absent, however, the hydrologic report was provided. The NYC Delaware River Basin Storage as of March 2, 2017 was at a combined capacity of 84.6% with Cannonsville at 85%.

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation: No report in the absence of Representative Bill Rudge. One press release titled, "DEC Announces 2016 Bear Harvest Results" and dated February 10th was included in members' packets.

PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources: Dugan reported that the Commonwealth continues to work on its budget. The Governor has presented his proposed budget and department secretaries continue with their House and Senate hearings. He noted that the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources as well as numerous other agencies will face cuts. Within the DCNR, it looks as if those cuts will not be operational, but staffing. Vacant positions will not be filled.

Dugan hopes there will not be a big Gypsy Moth problem in the Commonwealth in 2017. There are a few small spray programs in place, he added. The gypsy moth suppression program is conducted by the Bureau of Forestry with the goal of preventing defoliation so that trees do not become stressed and succumb to disease and other pests.

Dugan said he hopes for a wet spring to keep spring forest fires at a minimum and the Gypsy Moth numbers down as well. He reported there have been over 40 spring wild fires throughout the Commonwealth so far this year.

Dugan stated that water levels look pretty good on the surface, but ground water issues continue to exist.

Dugan reported that some funding has been set aside to treat Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). The hope is to continue to stave the infestation off in some places. He believes that EAB will be officially confirmed soon in counties where it hasn't been yet.

Regarding the Commonwealth budget, Dugan noted that there is discussion about early retirement packages for employees with many years of service.

Henry asked for a good source for information regarding the Emerald Ash Borer. Dugan told him that the Bureau of Forestry site on the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources website has a lot of information in the subject. That website is

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/insectsdisease/eab/index.htm>. Henry asked if any ash trees survive when hit with the EAB infestation. Dugan said there is a less than 1% survival rate. He noted that research is being conducted further west after an infestation has moved through. They are finding small pockets of trees that seemed to have been passed over, staved off the EAB, or have some sort of resistance

to it. Dugan said on state lands, the Commonwealth is treating some Ash trees and cutting others down to salvage them. Robinson asked if the infestation trend is continuing or if it has slowed down. Dugan said it has slowed, but that is more so due to the Ash dispersion. The EAB has moved quickly through the areas that have a large population of Ash. Hamilton asked what the closest EAB is to this area. Dugan said he would have to look at an updated map, but he reported that his staff just submitted a sample from Monroe County. He said it is not official yet because it hasn't been confirmed by the Department of Agriculture. It has been in Luzerne and Susquehanna Counties. Dugan said that once EAB has moved into an area, you will start to notice a lot of woodpecker damage.

Golod asked if the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is an issue in the Commonwealth. Dugan said it is a serious pest of Eastern hemlock. This insect was first reported in southeastern Pennsylvania in the late 1960s and has spread to both ornamental and forest hemlocks. The Commonwealth has been monitoring it since the 1970's. Over the last 10 to 15 years it has become more of an issue due to the milder winters. Some biocontrols have been released and have been self-repopulating so there are some predatory beetles that attack the pest, he added. They also treat some trees with systemic pesticides and do continue to plant Eastern Hemlock.

National Park Service-Upper Delaware: Hahn referred to the copy of an email to NPS staff from the new Secretary of the Interior Ryan K. Zinke provided in members' packets. The email gives a little bit of insight as to who Zinke is. He was confirmed on March 1st and arrived for his first day of work at the Interior Department in Washington aboard an Irish sport horse, Hahn noted.

Hahn said that UPDE is getting ready for the summer season. She said there has been an ease of the hiring freeze that has been in place in regards to positions in law enforcement, fire suppression, and seasonal staff. Hahn said she will have a GIS intern for the summer and Natural Resources will be getting a Biological Science Technician and potentially an intern. Jamie Myers has transferred to Interpretation two days a week and Susie Kaspar is now a permanent employee who will work four days a week.

Hahn reported that the maintenance department is gearing up for in river work on the Roebling Bridge. This year's work will include repairs to the ice breakers.

Hahn stated that there are many infrastructure projects scheduled to begin this month in the river valley. These improvements may affect residents and visitors, but it is good to see these improvements happening, she added.

Hahn reported that the GIS project is moving forward. Letters will be going out to the counties, towns and townships explaining the project and asking them for their assistance in ensuring that both the town/township and county records are up to date and that they match for map consistency. Hahn said that a handout was provided to the Project Review Committee members at the February 28th meeting addressing the questions of some of the members about the project. Sullivan thanked Hahn for answering the questions of the Project Review Committee members. Greier reiterated that thanks and suggested that document be sent out to all Council members.

UDC Executive Director's Report: Ramie reported on Bill Rudge's behalf that he responded on February 15th to Mike Barth's question of how often an evaluation of the deer populations in Wildlife Management Areas 3M, 3C, 3K takes place. Rudge's email reply read, "Mike: I looked into our evaluation of the deer populations in Wildlife Management Areas 3M, 3C, 3K. As you may know, in the past we have assembled a Citizen Task Force for one or more areas to gain input about deer impacts and recommendations for change in local deer abundance. That process has not always proven effective and we are in the process of developing a broader public survey to gather input on deer impacts and desired changes in deer abundance at the WMU aggregate scale. We hope to have that process in place to influence Deer Management Permit allocations for 2018. I will keep the UDC informed when we start the survey process."

Ramie noted that the next business meeting of the Delaware River Basin Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, March 15th, at 10:30 a.m. at the Washington Crossing Historic Park Visitor Center in Washington Crossing, PA. As of February 22, the DRBC sent an announcement that their open public comment session has reached capacity due to the number of people who pre-registered to speak. Ramie suspects that the hot topic is the potential movement on natural gas drilling regulations. It was noted that they will also cut off attendance if it exceeds the auditorium's capacity and may limit individuals to less than the customary three minutes to speak during the allotted one-hour session.

Ramie reported that the NPS held a meeting here on February 22nd with representatives of the Upper Delaware's liveries to discuss proposed changes to the conditions of their Commercial Use Authorization permits. The UDC office was chosen as a convenient meeting space and Superintendent Heister had said that the UDC was welcome to participate, but Ramie wanted to be respectful of the liveries' rights to have candid conversations with the Park Service so she initially chose to not participate. Ramie said that the liveries requested the UDC's presence out of respect for our liaison role between the federal government and river valley interests, and the history of how the River Management Plan was developed. Ramie said she viewed this request as a real vote of confidence in the UDC and recognition of the influence that these business operators feel this organization has.

Ramie showed a copy of the 2017 Local Officials Directory now available. The booklet is compiled by Chris Hollenbeck at the National Park Service with some assistance from Odell. She said that print copies of the booklet are available upon request, but it has also been scanned and the PDF is available electronically to those looking to reduce paper clutter. Anyone interested in a hard copy or having it emailed to them should let Odell know.

Ramie said that at Tuesday's Project Review Committee meeting a decision was made to establish a subcommittee to focus on considering next steps regarding the UDC's Draft Position Paper on Large-Scale Solar Energy Systems. Any Council members that would like to participate should let Odell know, Ramie noted. The Solar Position Subcommittee will have its first meeting on April 6 in advance of the full Council meeting. The meeting was initially proposed at 6:30. Ramie asked if members would like to consider meeting at 6:00 to allow for an hour of discussion. A motion to change the time of the subcommittee meeting from 6:30 to 6:00 was made by Henry, seconded by Dean and carried. Sullivan suggested that an agenda be drafted to move the meeting along. Peckham suggested that Henry be the Chairman of the subcommittee which Henry accepted. Ramie said she has reached out to the five member municipalities that did not yet submit comments on the draft in the first round to provide input by April 5.

Ramie noted that on February 24th the UDC received a copy of a petition signed by 151 people under the summary title of "Tell DRBC: Permanent Ban of Fracking Now!!" A copy of the cover letter that accompanied the petition signed by Leah Maidenbaum of Kauneonga Lake, NY was provided in members' packets. She noted the letter is addressed to the Delaware River Basin Commission Secretary and Commissioners and the UDC. Ramie suggested that the Council send a letter acknowledging receipt of the letter and petition as a common courtesy.

Ramie stated that the UDC was not present at the February 16 DRBC Regulated Flow Advisory Committee meeting but we have been reading a lot about it since. There was controversy over New Jersey's surprise statement calling for a complete overhaul of the Flexible Flows Management Plan or hinting that they will block approval of even a one-year extension of the plan when it expires on May 31. If that happens, the water management plan automatically reverts back to a 1980's approach known as Revision 1 which would significantly decrease release levels throughout the year. Ramie said that the UDC has typically taken action to express our interest in some changes being made to the current program to improve flows to protect the ecosystem of the river here and the economy of river recreation. Ramie suggested referring discussion of this matter to the WU/RM Committee.

Henry questioned if a decision had been made about responding to the letter that accompanied the petition. Ramie said a response would not be stating any position nor would it be an endorsement of the content; it would just be acknowledging receipt of the letter and petition. Richardson stated that it is just standard business practice to acknowledge correspondence. Henry said that as long as no attempt is made to respond to any of the concerns, he made a motion to send a letter of acknowledgement. That motion was seconded by Sullivan and carried.

Ramie said we are currently soliciting nominations for award recipients for the UDC Awards Banquet. Nominations are due by March 15th. The reservation form for this year's banquet was provided in members' packets and has been posted to the UDC website, she added. A news release announcing Congressman Faso as our keynote speaker was sent out March 1 and is also posted to the website.

Ramie noted that those who read the *Sullivan County Democrat* may have seen their Spring issue of the Catskill-Delaware Magazine insert. The issue contains an article by Tusten's UDC Alternate Tony Ritter called "The Guiding Life on the Upper Delaware River!". In the article he explains what this profession entails and notes how the National Park Service currently has 66 licensed guides under permit compared to the 18 that existed when he got his start in this business 23 years ago in 1994. An article by

our Town of Highland Co-alternate Andy Boyar with many photos featuring his late son Josh is included in the same issue. Ramie passed the magazine around.

Ramie referred to the calendar provided in members' packets noting that she prepared them for both the months of March and April as we are now in such a busy period of deadlines, meeting and activities. She stated we have an open slot for a presentation at the April 6th meeting and asked members to share any ideas of topics they are interested in with her.

Old Business: Greier reviewed the DRBC hydrologic report with members. Peckham noted that there is no snow pack currently. Greier said that we will have to depend on rain in order for the reservoirs to reach capacity.

Henry asked that the Land and Water Use Guidelines excerpted from River Management Plan be shared with members prior to the Solar Position Subcommittee meeting scheduled for April 6th. He referred to it as "enlightening". A motion to have the preamble and guidelines emailed out to members was made by Dean, seconded by Henry and carried.

New Business:

Draft Letter to Paul Rush, Deputy Commissioner, NYC DEP: Improvements to Public Emergency Notification System: A motion to send the letter was made by Henry, seconded by Richardson and carried.

Draft Letter to Kristina Heister, Superintendent, NPS UDSRR: UDC Recommendation for River Height Signage Installation on Bridges: A motion to send the letter was made by Robinson, seconded by Henry and carried.

Draft Letter to Roberta Byron Lockwood, President/CEO, Sullivan County Visitors Association: Water Safety Messaging: A motion to send the letter was made by Peckham and seconded by Henry. Ramie said she received an email from UDC Town of Highland Co-alternate Debra Conway who could not attend tonight which stated, "Laurie's letter is superb. It identifies the 'problem' and a possible solution for the future, i.e. checking with NPS or DEC. But this opportunity may not come around again for years as different attractions are featured on the Travel Guide over and I'm sure next year it will be the new casino. I'd like to propose we need a remedy to this cover that will be in circulation for the rest of 2017. My thinking is, it is always good policy to attach a possible solution/remedy/'fix' when registering a complaint, lest we be nothing better than whiners. Even though Tony Ritter's mock up contained a woulda/shoulda/coulda scenario, I think it is not out of the question to suggest it be taken seriously. Affixing a small pre-printed, self-label with the Wear It on the cover and possibly page 28 would carry our message in a subtle yet effective way. And, in the spirit of partnership and good will, perhaps the UDC can offer to share in the expense of the printing and/or the affixing of the labels on guides not yet distributed. I, for one, would volunteer for such assistance." Ramie added that the goal of the Water Use/Resource Management Committee was for the letter to be educational and there hadn't been any discussion about requesting reparations at this point. She told members to feel free to entertain the suggestion. A vote to send the letter as written was taken and the motion passed.

Other: Henry noted that the Personnel Subcommittee met at 6 p.m. on February 28th in advance of the Operations Committee meeting. A number of recommendations and discussions were presented to the Operations Committee, however, no formal action was taken. Henry made a motion that the Operations Committee accept and approve the recommendations of the Personnel Subcommittee as presented at the February 28th meeting and requested a vote by those who were in attendance at that meeting. The motion was seconded by Robinson and carried with Greier, Henry, Peckham, Dexter, Robinson, and Dean voting in favor.

Sullivan noted that there is a meeting scheduled for March 29th regarding the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act Program convened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Philadelphia. She asked how we as an organization plan to stay connected regarding this program without going to the meeting. Ramie said that a call-in option may be available although that has not been announced yet.

Sullivan asked if the National Park Service will be in attendance at the March 29th meeting. Hamilton said that a representative from the NPS Northeast Regional Office will be in attendance.

Robinson asked, in an effort to go further paperless, if it would be possible to have any meeting handouts scanned post meeting. Odell said she will scan any meeting handouts and email them out to interested members.

Dean thanked Hahn for the copy of the message from the new Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke. He read a few excerpts from that email, "We serve the people, not the other way around. Washington has too much power. I think we need to return it to the front lines. And lastly, sovereignty needs to mean something. I will do everything in my power to ensure respect to the sovereign Indian Nations and territories." Dean noted that sovereignty needs to go private property in this corridor. He said we all need to bear that in mind when we make decisions about private property rights in the corridor.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Peckham, seconded by Haas to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell 3/10/17