

WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
November 17, 2020

Committee Members Present: Andy Boyar, Ginny Dudko, Al Henry, Fred Peckham.
Committee Members Absent: Pat Jeffer, Evan Padua.
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Shannon Cilento, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton
Guests: Eric Baird- Senior Wetland Biologist, JHA Companies, Wayne
Holmes- Boy Scouts of America- Ten Mile River Scout Camps (via
phone), Roger Saumure- Shohola Township Alternate (via phone).

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 17th, 2020. Chairperson Boyar called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A motion by Henry, seconded by Dudko approving the October 20th, 2020 meeting minutes carried.

Old Business

Ten Mile River Access Boat Ramp Structural Engineering Plan: Eric Baird, Senior Wetland Biologist at JHA Companies, reviewed the structural engineering design plan for a boat ramp at Ten Mile River (TMR) Access with the committee. The plan is to build a stable concrete ramp for larger trailered boats to the river from the existing parking area. It would be a 40-foot long ramp structure, a gravel driveway to a pre-cast concrete ramp system. Baird said JHA Companies' biggest concern was the bottom area not being stable with mostly a muck bottom. He said to launch a boat, you need a depth of about 40-feet of water. Dudko asked how much would be in the water? Baird said the height of the river (about 25-feet). Their Structural Engineer's idea was to utilize pre-formed concrete (2x6x1ft) as a sort of border around it. He's worked with it before using wood-piling as a support system under the pre-formed concrete to keep it from sinking.

Boyar said the question would be, does the structure's success depend upon how soft the bottom is? Baird said they are not at the stage to do borings. JHA Companies wanted to provide the preliminary design plan to enable UDC to seek grants for construction permitting. He assumed that the borings would be 6-8 feet. Part of the preconstruction planning would be to do a boring in that location. Henry said when the group walked the site it's downstream of where they initially discussed. Baird said moving the boat ramp on the design plan 20-feet up or downstream won't change much. It would take him a half hour to re-draw it. Hamilton asked what the width of the ramp would be? Baird said they are going with an 8-foot, two-vehicle structure. Hamilton asked what is the purpose of the 2x6x1ft pre-formed concrete that goes around the structure? Baird said for protection to hold the stone in so it's not washed out underneath. Baird said any questions that are more technical he will forward to the Structural Engineer and get back to the UDC. Henry asked if the temporary cofferdam was for the de-watering area? Baird said correct. When he did the preliminary design plan, he tried to get an idea of all the construction costs and get as thorough a cost estimate as possible. He said this is merely a full ENS Plan, short of a construction sequence at this point. Hamilton said they are preformed concrete sections; nothing is poured in place? Baird said he was correct; they would be grouted in place but that would be the only in place wet-work. Hamilton said they have de-water the area for the cofferdam? Baird said yes, otherwise trying to dig in water doesn't normally go well. Hamilton asked if they would have to dewater the cofferdam to do the borings? Baird said they can probably do the borings at the water's edge and not have to put the machine in the water. Boyar said doing borings at low-water is one thing; the height of the Delaware River varies drastically. He asked if the access site should be looked at in the Spring when the river is at a raging peak with possible ice coming down to address the concern of ice damaging the structure? Baird said he would forward that question to the Structural Engineer. Baird said his opinion is that's a pretty heavy-duty structure to be able to take a great deal of force coming at it. A 2x6x1ft concrete block can take a pretty good chunk of ice. The concrete block will be anchored in place with support underneath it.

Henry said Baird had referenced 8-foot for width but in the preliminary design plan it said 12-foot. Baird said he believes in the original plan he had 8-foot. Henry said this is something to consider because if you are launching your boat you want to be able to step onto the ramp and access your boat. Henry feels 12 or 14-foot would be good.

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Boyar asked if the concrete sections interlock? Baird said he would check with the Structural Engineer. They are recycled concrete. Ramie said through these drawings JHA Companies is telling UDC it is feasible to put a boat launch there if it was constructed through this style? Baird said yes, the next steps will be to associate costs with the construction. Ramie said the third part of the contract is to discuss the permitting requirements. Baird said in the next three-weeks he would have the cost estimates. He has the request into NY DEC for permitting. They said they are 4-8 weeks back-logged. Hamilton said doesn't the feasibility of this depend upon the borings? Baird said it does a little bit but there's also pounding the wooden pylons in and the depth they are in. Even if they haven't hit something that is routinely solid there is enough size-ability to prevent shifting. Hamilton asked the slope. Baird said it's almost a 14.41% downslope from the driveway that flattens out to a 4% slope. He said 15% is about as steep as you'd want to make a driveway. Hamilton asked if that was the upper part of the concrete ramp? Baird said about half the ramp (20-feet) would be on the steep part and most of the gravel driveway. A profile of that was provided on the preliminary design plan. Ramie said in regarding to the permitting, in addition to the NYS DEC, UDC also assumes U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be involved? Baird said he's waiting to hear back from NYS DEC on whether they would utilize a joint permit system. Hamilton said that the NPS would also have to review the project. Discussion continued. Henry asked if they considered using rip rap where the preliminary design plan shows gravel. It would be good to have a cost comparison. Baird says if you want to use a R-7 or a R-8 size rip rap he will put that question up to the Structural Engineer. Hamilton asked if it's possible to use shelf-rock that's consistent with the local geology here? Baird said if a quarry will blast it for you yes. Another hat Baird wears is as the president of Broadhead Trout Unlimited. They've done a lot of habitat work and part of that involves getting boulders. He said that's difficult because the quarry has to specially blast them for you and it's hard to get them delivered. Broadhead T.U. has done a lot of big bolder structures in Tannersville and Cherry Valley. Ramie said once Baird gets those questions back from the Structural Engineer, she will disseminate the responses so we can move forward with the project. The WU/RM Committee thanked Baird for answering questions.

10/21 DRBC Water Management Advisory Committee Meeting: Ramie said the UDC has a seat on the Water Management Advisory Committee. A virtual meeting was held on 10/21 with 32 participants. They go over hydrological conditions as we do but with even more depth provided by a DRBC staff member. They mentioned the precipitation trends had been below normal for most of 2020 but at Port Jervis at 10/21 they were 3.08 inches above average entering the fall months. In terms of hydrology, two tropical storms made landfall in the Delaware River Basin this season, Tropical Storm Fay on 7/10 and Tropical Storm Isaias on 8/3. There is a link where you can get updated, stream flow readings: [hydrosnap.drbc.net](https://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Francis-E-Walter-Dam/Reevaluation-Study/). DRBC staff also said the winter outlook will be a La Niña winter, which means trending drier than average with warmer spells from November to January.

Army Corps of Engineers Chief of Hydrology and Hydraulics Laura Bittner provided a report on the Francis E. Walter Dam Reevaluation Study sponsored by the DRBC and the NYC DEP. Ramie said their focus is on flood risk, recreational use, water supply, and to identify potential infrastructure and operational improvements. They started the three-year study in September 2019 and expect to produce a report in 2022. They have a 27-member environmental working group that is overseeing the milestones for that study. The next steps will be to complete a Water Needs Analysis and to screen and evaluate alternatives. Some examples of what they may recommend through their study are increasing storage, modifying the towers, raising the dam, building levees, altering releases, or the option of changing nothing. Boyar asked where the Francis E. Walter Dam is located. Henry said it's on the Lehigh. More information can be found at: <https://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Francis-E-Walter-Dam/Reevaluation-Study/>.

Michael Thompson from the DRBC reported on an analysis they're doing for public water supply projections. Thompson said the question they are looking at is whether there's enough water to meet the future demand during a record drought. They are looking through to the year 2060 and collaborating with their state partners (NY, NJ, PA, and DE) to get that data. Ramie said there are 332 public water systems that are being studied. The way they define a public water system is that it is piped water for human consumption with at least 15 service connections or regularly serving 25 individuals. The next WMAC meeting will be 2/25/2021. Saumure asked do we know how many of the 332 public water systems pass the Delaware River? Ramie said they are all within the Delaware River Basin (NY, NJ, PA, and DE); this does not include NYC diversions.

10/22 Delaware River Sojourn Meeting: Cilento participated in the Delaware River Sojourn call on 10/22. She provided a copy of a tentative schedule. UDC had participated on the steering committee in the past and at that time involvement was time-consuming. Cilento said the 2021 program has the first five days in the Upper Delaware.

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They have a NPS Clean-Up planned in Hancock at the Fireman's Access on 6/18, then four different legs of traversing down the river in the Upper Delaware. Cilento feels UDC's participation, alongside the NPS, Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR), and Delaware Highlands Conservancy, is important. She will participate in another call this month. They have open slots available for programs. There may be room for a UDC presentation since other groups are giving presentations about their work. Cilento said she thinks it would be a great way to promote and share what UDC does. It's still in the early phases because it's difficult to plan anything during COVID. She will keep the committee updated on developments. Henry recommends at the next meeting that Cilento suggest that the Delaware River Sojourn Steering Committee invite the PA Congressional District 8 representative to participate during the Upper Delaware days as well as Rep. Delgado (NY-19). Hamilton said they have often gotten legislators from both sides of the river.

10/26 Catskill Mountainkeeper Webinar: "Trash, Traffic and Crowded Trails: Tackling High Use & Overuse in New York's Forest Preserves": Ramie said this webinar was extremely well attended. The Catskill Mountainkeeper were targeting the whole Catskills and Adirondack area. Speakers included Ingrid Peterec of the NPS to talk about the increase of visitation and use. There were also speakers from the Catskill Center, the Adirondack Council, and the NYSDEC. Katie Petronis, Deputy Commissioner for Natural Resources represents the entire agency of NYSDEC. They spoke about many of the same issues WU/RM's River Traffic Public Safety Task Force has been discussing which is that there are pros and cons to what happened this summer with the explosion of visitation. The cons are what happens to the resources, traffic, trash, etc. The pros are you are potentially introducing a whole new group of people to the outdoors, on the trails, and visiting the public recreation sites. This as an opportunity for education as well as figuring out how to communicate better with people. If you are going to be using the resources to that extent you need to invest in them as well. Also, get the decision-makers on board supporting the infrastructure, maintenance, and staffing. In a ten-year span between 2007 and 2017 there was a 78% increase in hiking. Ramie said it shows even pre-COVID there was a great interest for people going out for recreation. More information on the webinar will be in the next UDC newsletter.

10/26 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Meeting: Ramie said the main focus of the 10/26 meeting was that Dudko was among three Upper Delaware Scenic Byway (UDSB) participants that took part in Scenic Byway Leader Training held by the National Scenic Byway Foundation with six sessions. One of the sessions dealt with how to develop a useful Corridor Management Plan. UDSB Enhancement Concept Plan is from 2002 and has not changed since that time. Some review of that should take place. Keys for a good management plan are that it should have buy-in from all the communities that are represented by the byway. It should be a living document that gets reviewed regularly and includes a built-in mechanism to check on outcomes from it; in this case it should summarize the intrinsic values with a description of the UDSB's vision, Mission Statement, goals and objectives. It should also state who is responsible for carrying out all of those. A timeline should also be included. Ramie said there is a need to have it reflect the communication strategies people use instead of some thick document that sits on a shelf. The document that UDSB uses now was developed to make the nomination the NYS Scenic Byway's system, so it had a purpose then. The end of their discussion was you don't have to spend a lot of money to bring in professionals when your group can come up with their own mission statement and enhancement plan. At the next meeting, they plan to go through a facilitated exercise by Sullivan County Planning to lead UDSB through the beginning process.

Complaints were registered about the Hawk's Nest. There was a bad accident on 10/10 where a motorcyclist at unsafe speeds crashed into pedestrians, resulting in very serious injuries. Ramie said you hear about incidents like that and it reinforces the need for additional attention in that area. NYDOT has reduced the speed limit through the Hawk's Nest from 55 mph to 35 mph. A traffic study had been underway before that but the speed limit change happened kind of in conjunction with the accident. That is one way the unsafe speed and the reckless driving may be curbed. UDSB received complaints from an individual who said he was part of a Facebook group called "Hawks Nest Outrage". Ramie said he wanted to address these issues along with other citizens and asked how they can work with the Town of Deerpark, the police, NYDOT, and other entities on these issues.

It was announced that Heather Jacksy secured financing to complete the construction drawings for the Highland River Access improvements. The next step is for the Sullivan County Procurement Department to proceed with contracting. Ramie said hopefully by next Spring they will be able implement those improvements at the Access.

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Work on 18 runs of guiderail in the Towns of Delaware and Cohecton was anticipated to start the first week of November 2020 and be completed by 11/30.

The Sullivan County Legislature approved a \$20,000 allocation from the room occupancy tax for the Callicoon Train Depot and Visitor Center Project. That money will go towards soft-costs such as insurance and taxes.

Ramie handed out copies of our 2020 River Valley Awards Program because the UDSB sponsored one of the nominations for Community Service for Nancy Furdock, former Village of Hancock representative and UDSB, Inc. vice-chairperson. John Ogozaleck received Special Recognition based on his initiative to mark the Highest Elevation Point along the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway with signage that he creatively decorated for holidays and occasions such as honoring essential workers and first responders during the COVID crisis.

The UDSB will be combining its November and December meetings into one meeting to be held on 12/7.

10/28 D&H Transportation Heritage Council Meeting: Ramie and Cilento attended the 10/28 meeting at the Mamakating Environmental Education Center in Wurtsboro, NY. They announced they have the most members they've ever had with 16 full memberships and 11 affiliate members. They are in the process of incorporating to have a more formal presence. Ramie is among the five trustees that did the notarization that day so it can be submitted to NYS to seek a Provisional Charter.

Another initiative they are working on is the 200th Anniversary of the D&H Canal but there is some question of what they are marking the anniversary of because there are many things that happened in the course of the Canal. A subcommittee has been formed to come up with a chronology of significant events such as construction, the end of construction, and various things along the way. Cilento volunteered to serve on that to come up with a series of events that could be celebrated at the different sites along the canal route.

The bus tour DHTHC was planning to retrace the route of the canal from Port Jervis to Spring Glen is on hold because no one knows what will happen under COVID restrictions. Even though that is delayed, filming for that section for the 4th Chapter of the DVD series will proceed since it can be done outdoors and with social distancing.

There was great discussion regarding the Neversink Feeder Dam. Orange County had authorized a study to investigate re-watering the dry Neversink Feeder Dam in Cuddebackville. It has been dewatered for a few years now but they used to float a boat called the Neversink Kate in there. They would offer people rides down that section of the Canal. She said it's been a great misery to the people of that community and people in these groups that it fell into disrepair. Fusco Engineering released its report and offered three general ideas: Make no repairs and create a D&H Canal Ruins Park at \$236,500; Rebuild some of the structures at \$2.3 million; or do a historic rehabilitation of the dam and waste weir at \$5.7 million. Ramie said the theory is Orange County won't go for the first two options; they paid for the study and that was miraculous in itself. Ramie said there are some individuals that are looking at an alternative and if the County would accept recommendations from people whose life passion is to get water back into that Canal. If anyone has any memories from the time when that part of the Canal was watered they are trying to gather those stories for a report to hand out to members of the Orange County Legislature to show that people care about this and perhaps they would look into making an investment into it.

"Teaser" videos are going to be added to dhthc.org for the historic series of DVDs. Another is a promotional video of the canal in Sullivan County using drone footage.

This group meets quarterly but will likely not meet in January 2021; if there is not pressing business the next meeting will be April 28, 2021.

11/4 D&H Canal National Historic Landmark Status Update: Cilento said in 1968 parts of the D&H Canal were designated a National Historic Landmark. That gives it certain protections and opportunities for funding. NPS is leading the charge to update this Nomination. There was no complete boundary in the original nomination; more individual sites and sections grouped in. The new boundary will be more comprehensive. There will be a lot of outreach to private property owners and property ownership clarification. Cilento said this is a three-year process and they will be having progress meetings throughout the project. The next meeting is in May 2021 when the

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nomination outline will be completed. The goal is to have the final nomination reviewed and approved by the National Review Committee in May 2023.

11/12 Scenic Wild Delaware River Geotourism Virtual Roundtable: Hamilton was one of the presenters at the 11/12 Virtual Roundtable. Hamilton said this was organized by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) which have held these roundtables in the past. Rich Evans, NPS Delaware Water Gap Ecologist, talked about the history of the Delaware River. Hamilton and Jessica Newbern (NPS Biologist) spoke about invasive species. There was an update given on the Visitor Use Plan for the Delaware Water Gap. He said these roundtables have been centered around Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area in the past. It was an effort to highlight the river and talk about the 2020 designation by the American Rivers for River of the Year. Ramie said it was interesting to hear them talk about what makes the Delaware River exceptional from the Upper Delaware and Middle Delaware perspective. There was a history of dams going back to Tocks Island. The presentation lasted about an hour and Ramie had forwarded the link to the roundtable presentation to members.

NYC DEP Response: Cannonsville Reservoir Hydroelectric Plant and SEI Study: On behalf of Peckham, Ramie has reached out to NYC DEP and she received an answer from Adam Bosch. On 11/9 Bosch replied: “Good morning Laurie, sorry it took me so long to reply. As you can imagine, the pandemic has created a lot of challenges and time-crunches here at DEP. Progress is quite slow on new plans for the hydroelectric plant at Cannonsville. We still need to hire a designer and don’t expect to apply to FERC until 2024 at the earliest. That’s the most detailed information we have at this point. As for the SEI Study, we have a report in hand but it cannot be shared publicly because of the detailed information about the Dam Emergency Response Procedures and other security sensitive information. This is similar to our Emergency Action Plans which also contain that information and are not made public. I can however, offer a presentation to summarize the findings and the significant actions DEP has taken over the past two-years to improve downstream notifications in the case of an emergency. In fact, the downstream municipalities and first responders along the Delaware participated in a pretty big pilot program with us that will be used to make notification changes across the entire Water Supply System for all 27 of our dams. We are not currently allowed to provide in-person presentations but I could offer a virtual one perhaps in January or February. Let me know what you think!” Ramie said a presentation is what UDC had originally requested and thinks it would be of interest to the full Council, the bigger audience. Ramie said next Tuesday at our Operations meeting she’s going to bring up our meeting schedule for 2021. She said we would love to be back at the Tusten Town Hall for free but they have their Justice Court on the first Thursday. Cilento said we can also set up a Zoom Account and people can give presentations that way; another option we can mention at the Operations meeting.

Henry said when Bosch gives the presentation, he hopes we can impress upon him the importance of letting us know that it’s not top secret what they communicated with the first responders downstream. The UDC wasn’t notified and Henry didn’t see anything about the pilot program in the newspapers.

Henry recommends that JHA Companies contacts the PA Fish & Boat Commission to ask where they obtain their material for sturdy river ramps.

Hamilton asked if the Preliminary Design Plan Baird presented was the footprint we envisioned? He said it seems like a pretty big footprint. Henry said he doesn’t know that it’s a necessarily large footprint looking at other accesses on the river but they are concerned about the stability and he looks forward to their report.

Other: Hall-Bagdonas said in your packet you will find a letter from Eagle Creek Renewable Energy dated 10/29/2020 regarding the Mongaup Falls Hydroelectric Project.

New Business

2021 Upper Delaware Litter Sweep Event Planning: Ramie said this was discussed at the full Council and we are continuing the conversation here. We have agreement that we will have a Litter Sweep in April around Earth Day and to be conjunction with the free disposal at the Sullivan County Landfill. We lost the services of our Coordinator Dan Paparella. Henry said following up on a recommendation Boyar made he agrees we should reach out to each Town/ship officials and supervisors. Henry said picking up trash is not difficult if we reach out to the right individuals and tell them the plan and date. He said Cilento and Bagdonas mentioned interest previously in helping but we should put the onus on the Town/ships. Boyar said Paparella had talked about reaching out to schools and doing posters and we may have been biting off more than we can chew. He feels going back to something more

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simplistic may work. Boyar stopped at the Shrewd Fox Brewery because they were involved with the River of the Year and Audubon and had a program there. He was speaking with them about the UDC Litter Sweep and they expressed interest. He thinks our efforts should be questions like: when, where, and how? Also, getting a delegate from each Town/ship. If it's not the UDC representative it would be a Supervisor, etc. Boyar said Meg McGuire from *Delaware Currents* was looking for people to speak to and this would be a great topic. Henry agreed and said if UDC staff take the initiative to reach out to Town/ships and we should do so soon because they only meet monthly. He recommended sending out a press release or an email. He feels NYDOT and PENNDOT will contribute any supplies we may need. Boyar asked if we have notes from last year? Ramie said those notes can be forwarded along to Boyar. Boyar said he believes if there is enough publicity and outreach the event will be successful. Earth Day 2021 is Thursday, April 22nd and perhaps the event can run from Thursday-Sunday. Henry said Dan Card is the Supervisor at Beach Lake Waste Management. They have helped out in the past with cleanups. Henry also said Pennsylvania Environmental Council is also another good contact. Boyar said they attended our first meeting and are a valuable contact.

Invasive Species News Roundup: Cilento said there have been a lot of developments as far as invasive species go this month. She compiled it all into one digestible page. Hamilton provided an update on the Northern Snakehead to Ramie because she did an article in the Fall/Winter newsletter and they are still doing public outreach. There was a second Snakehead caught by DEC near Callicoon in September. Hamilton has heard a few rumors of anglers catching them but not further confirmations.

Spotted Lanternfly has been recently confirmed in Port Jervis and Lake Superior in the Town of Bethel. She also provided a press release about the Spotted Lanternfly by the NYS DEC and information about a webinar by NY Ag & Markets to be held 12/4 at 10:30 which is open to anyone. Ramie said if you would like a link to that event let her know. She tried to send it out to everyone but it was kicked-back from many addresses.

Cilento attended a webinar on Mile-a-minute proliferation in this area and provided documented occurrences of that from different Counties.

Cilento also attended a fascinating webinar by New York State Invasive Species Research Institute (NYSISRI) on invasive species and climate change. For example, extreme weather events have expedited spread of invasive species. Following Hurricane Katrina the forest understory was widely exposed and allowed understory dwelling invasive plants to take over habitat. If you are interested in watching the webinar Cilento can forward the link. Boyar said Heather Leach's presentation on Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) made an impact because he remembers her saying it's worse than the gypsy moth. He said you would be moved by the slides she provided of the SLF's destruction on crops. He said to hear that SLF is in this county is really disheartening.

Friends of the Upper Delaware River Volunteer Fall Trout Redd Count Report: Cilento participated in this event over the weekend. She surveyed over a mile up Basket Creek. She found some distinct Redds at the mouth of Basket Creek and a half a mile upstream, they saw a Redd with two Brown Trout. There was a good volunteer turnout and that helps Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR) with some of their asks as far as conservation goes. Hamilton surveyed Basket Creek a few years ago for a Spring count and didn't see much at that time. Cilento said a presentation was provided. Boyar asked when Brown Trout spawn? Hamilton said it's dependent on weather but October/November. Rainbow Trout are in the Spring. Cilento said it was a great event and she was able to talk to people about the UDC and what we do. Between all the volunteers 30 streams and tributaries were covered. Cilento said a report is expected after collecting all the results and she will be sure to share that.

Delaware River Flow & Storage Report: A copy of the 11/16 DRBC Hydrologic Conditions Report was provided in members' packets. Total combined storage was at 64.%.

Other: Peckham said the *Hancock Herald* is being published again.

Henry said Tony Ritter had forwarded him a picture of the NYS DEC Narrowsburg Access sign that was down. He asked if UDC staff and NPS could co-manage reaching out to Bill Rudge for requested repair.

Public Comment: None.

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Adjournment: A motion by Dudko seconded by Henry, to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Ashley Hall-Bagdonas 12/1/2020