

WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
March 15, 2022

Committee Members Present: Ginny Dudko, Andy Boyar, Al Henry, Fred Peckham (Zoom), Pat Jeffer
Committee Members Absent: Evan Padua
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Kerry Engelhardt, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton (Zoom)
Guests: Bill Dudko- Deerpark Alternate

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 15th, 2022. Chairperson Dudko called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Approval of February 15th, 2022 Meeting Minutes (2:23 time on recorded meeting): A motion by Boyar, seconded by Henry approving the February 15th, 2022 meeting minutes carried.

Old Business

2/17 DRBC Water Management Advisory Committee Report (3:00): Ramie attended the 2/17 virtual meeting. An in-depth report of the hydrologic conditions was given where they mentioned trends and patterns. On 1/19 there was a Nor'easter that hit the area, and it was the first time when looking from a NASA satellite that the entire river basin was covered with snow. Their Spring forecast calls for a chance of above-normal temperatures and equal chances of above or below-average precipitation.

The DRBC has a new 60th Anniversary timeline available online at: www.timeline.drbc.gov.

They gave an overview of a storage study that began back in May 2021 that explores the feasibility of additional freshwater storage to meet future water availability, climate adaptation, drought management, and flow management needs in the Delaware River Basin. A final report will be out this summer.

They discussed their 2060 Sustainable Water Supply project which is an analysis of groundwater availability. They expect to have a technical report out in early 2022. The next WMAC meeting is 6/16.

2/25 Delaware River Sojourn Steering Committee Report (7:40): On 2/25, the Upper Delaware River Sojourn group met. That included Engelhardt, Sara Velazquez from Delaware Highlands Conservancy, and Ingrid Peterec from the NPS. Velazquez confirmed there will be a geologist presenting on Saturday evening, June 18. On Sunday, June 19, DHC and the UDC will be tabling. They discussed the designation of Lord High Admirals for each day. For Sunday, they will have county legislators from both states for co-High Admirals. Tony Waldron from PA was chosen and Engelhardt suggested Sullivan County Legislator Nadia Rajs from NY.

Since Engelhardt has never paddled the Delaware River, Velazquez and Peterec suggested she paddle at least one day of the event and the National Canoe Safety Patrol will be helping with land support.

They had a full committee meeting via Zoom on 3/8 and hope to have registration open before the end of March.

2/28 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Minutes (11:00): Ramie provided a copy of the 2/28 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Minutes for members' review. There has been a lot of transition on the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway (UDSB) board lately, including losing both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chair who is Ginny Dudko. She and Bill Dudko are switching roles as representative and alternate, and officers must be voting representatives. The Town of Highland opted to remove Chairperson John Pizzolato as their representative. Now he's becoming a non-voting member for the Greater Barryville Chamber of Commerce. Pizzolato suggested a new appointee that the Town approved, Lacey Gutekunst Madden. UDSB opted to stick with the officers as they exist now because the annual meeting with an election of officers is on April 25. The committee will promote several anti-littering projects, one of

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which is Earthly Goods “rag bags” which are biodegradable, 10 by 13-inch trash bags. They will have the UDSB logo and read “Please Keep the Byway Clean”. Five thousand were ordered in conjunction with 10,000 UDSB placemats as well as anti-litter signage for eight communities. All of these initiatives, in addition to their \$500 level sponsorship of the Upper Delaware Litter Sweep, will be announced in April “Earth Month” press release.

The UDSB agreed to cosponsor an inaugural Upper Delaware River Shad Fest with The Delaware Company. This event on the weekend of May 20-22, 2022 will help showcase the cultural and historic significance of the shad. The dates are centered around World Fish Migration Day and also coincides with the reopening of Fort Delaware Museum of Colonial History in Narrowsburg which The Delaware Company will newly operate. Ramie noted that the Delaware River is the last commercial shad fishery. Activities will take place throughout the byway communities between Hancock and Port Jervis.

The next UDSB meeting will be in person on 3/28.

3/3 Upper Delaware Recreation Plan Update (16:39): Engelhardt said the review group was originally supposed to receive the draft plan on 2/10; however, that did not happen. There were public meetings scheduled on 3/3 to discuss the plan. Since it hasn’t been released, it was more of a presentation on what the Recreation Plan hopes to accomplish. She attended the in-person meeting in Hancock with Peckham, and the public was asked for input. There was a second meeting via Zoom that evening but it conflicted with the full Council meeting. Some issues brought up by the public were that signage should be improved where public accesses are because people wander onto private property. There are not a lot of access points on the river and they are poorly maintained. They considered if more access points were added would it help the crowding situation by spreading people out or would it bring more people to the area and encourage even more usage.

3/9 NPS Water Safety Committee Meeting Report (31:00): Hall-Bagdonas attended the 3/9 Water Safety meeting via Microsoft Teams. The Water Safety Committee members looked over the 2021 Annual Water Safety Partners meeting agenda to discuss what should be on the 4/29/22 meeting agenda that will be held by conference call at 10 a.m. Some topics that they may discuss this year are lessons learned from last year and spot checks at liveries. Ranger Ron Babus will be emailing liveries to see what else should be covered.

Work requests are in to install loaner life jacket stations before Memorial Day weekend. They are going to request permission from Rick Lander to put one at Lander’s field. They removed the loaner station from Mongaup because they weren’t being returned and will be placing one at Lackawaxen. They are workshopping ideas on creating return boxes.

National Canoe Safety Patrol (NCSP) updates were given by Vice Commodore Jacqui Wagner. NCSP met with NPS and evaluated patrol logs and talked about parking for NCSP patrols. Wagner shared that Commodore Larry Palmer has a detached retina and could not attend the Water Safety meeting.

The group heard steps and points to consider in making PFDs mandatory wear for companies operating under the Commercial Use Authorization licenses. Some are: what authority does the superintendent have; briefing the UDC and getting feedback; the process to change the regulation; what will the impacts and implications be; what would this look like operationally for enforcement; what kind of public notice should be given; state rules and regulations; boating laws; swimming laws; Coast Guard rules and regulations; the Superintendent’s Compendium change and research from others parks and rivers.

NPS is working on getting a “No Glass Bottles” sign for Skinners Falls, other liveries and stores.

“Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day” is 5/20 and NPS will be reaching out to WNEP for publicity. UDC will also promote the event on their social media pages.

Committee members asked Hall-Bagdonas to convey to the NPS Water Safety Committee the WU/RM Committee’s thoughts on river etiquette education and messaging for safety slogans that should involve liveries.

Ten Mile River Access Update (44:46): Hamilton said Upper Delaware NPS has been in communication with the new owners about the Ten Mile River (TMR) Access co-management agreement. They were supposed to meet with

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them yesterday but their executive director was under the weather and the meeting has been scheduled to later this week. NPS has submitted last year's agreement to the Northeast Region to review for any necessary feedback.

Other (45:45): Ramie had observed a prior Delaware River Emergency tabletop exercise. The EPA recently put out a survey to solicit input for availability during the week of May 9th or May 16th. The primary goal of that session will be for each county, state, and federal emergency management agency to identify key areas of the river that are most concerning their respective agencies if impacted by a spill due to the potential presence of sensitive natural and cultural resources, water intakes, areas of high recreation activities, etc. They also seek to identify key individuals who may be tasked with compiling or updating that information, and whether there are any restrictions placed on sharing that data. Ramie will report back to the committee with updates.

New Business

Mongaup Access Parking Lot Expansion Feedback (51:32): Provided in the packets were notes that Ramie took from the site visit back in April 2021 as well as the site plan illustration of the new parking lot where they took out the center berms and replaced them with boulders to create extra parking spaces. At the most recent UDC meeting, Mike DiSarno from NYS DEC reported they completed Phase I and are looking for feedback. Dudko said the pandemic crowds may dissipate. Henry recommends they leave the Mongaup Access at Phase I this season. He suggested having the Town of Lumberland reach out to whoever owns the Eagle Creek property across NYS Rt. 97 currently to see if they would put up No Parking signs. Discussion continued. Ramie will prepare a response to NYS DEC with the UDC's comments. She said it's important to also thank the DEC for taking this quick action in response to concerns that the UDC and others raised over capacity and safety at this popular river access.

2022 Upper Delaware Litter Sweep Update (59:10): Hall-Bagdonas reported that Wanda Gangel from the Narrowsburg Beautification Group was happy to hear that Evan and Cherene Padua will be Litter Leaders for Tusten again. Gangel said they communicated well and coordinated where there had been clean-ups to make it most effective. Our clean-ups are stretching outward and UDC has been asked to help in Hawley and Livingston Manor. Jackie Henderson, a second home-owner with a house in Sherman PA, is going to do a cleanup in Deposit and thanked the UDC while referencing Friends of the Upper Delaware River and the Hancock Chamber of Commerce. Henderson is connected to the Whitaker House.

Hall-Bagdonas read part of an email from Maura Caycho, director of Executive Operations at SUNY Sullivan: "UDC has inspired SUNY Sullivan to coordinate a litter pluck on Route 52 in Loch Sheldrake! We are doing the Adopt-a-Highway program and our first two-mile litter pluck will be on April 29th. I will see if I am able to get a group together to assist with a litter pluck in the town of Tusten as well! We really enjoyed being a part of it last year!"

2021 was the blueprint of reaching out to the DOTs. Hall-Bagdonas is using the same routes or cleanup points to provide them. In PA she is coordinating a few clean-ups in parks, where the volunteers are primarily kids. PA is easier because routes are found on the Adopt-a-Highway program and we have our contact, Mike Coppola from Keep Hawley-Honesdale Beautiful to help.

A Litter Leader email will be going out shortly. The last day to secure a sponsorship for the 2022 volunteers shirt is Friday, 3/18. Event promotion continues. A post was shared about the Town of Tusten's Trex soft plastic recycling program and a post will be coming out about the NPS microplastics study. We will continue to feature photos from our 2021 volunteers to encourage participation for the 2022 event. We will also encourage Micro cleanups in our parks, yard frontage and places we go everyday like our Main streets!

3/22 is World Water Day. The theme is addressing water scarcity and the need for sanitation and access to clean water globally. Hall-Bagdonas will find social media to share.

Ramie said UDC has raised \$4,930 to date for the Litter Sweep. The base cost is \$2,700 for 400 shirts. We will have funds left to buy additional supplies. Ramie said it has been very successful and we're grateful for the donations. Boyar mentioned the importance of sharing this event through local newspapers, including paid ads.

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Responses to Upper Delaware River Litter Bag Station Concept (1:10): As decided at last month's meeting, Engelhardt sent a letter to Mike DiSarno (NY DEC); Joe Holdren (PA Fish & Boat Commission); and Chief Ranger Keith Winslow (NPS). DiSarno got back to her and indicated that it would be a great idea; however, his concern is people would bag their trash and leave it at the riverside expecting it to be picked up. He doesn't have the staff available to pick up garbage. He thinks the project could move forward as long as there is a designated person or group responsible for the maintenance of the river boxes and collection of garbage left at each site. He provided Engelhardt with information on signing a volunteer stewardship agreement. She feels that was a positive response. DiSarno didn't have any recommendations on possible funding sources and she is waiting to hear back from NPS and PA F&BC.

Engelhardt thanked Hamilton for forwarding an email from the Flathead Rivers Alliance seeking recommendations on vendors that can do branded, reusable river trash bags. They want to make sure they're not contributing to the microplastics issue with the bags.

Delaware River Flow & Storage Report (1:14): The 3/14 DRBC Hydrological Conditions Report noted combined storage is at 98.2%.

Other: In the meeting packet Ramie provided a 3/11 email from Friends of the Upper Delaware River about the NYCDEP conducting repair work at the Cannonsville dam beginning 3/14 and lasting through Wednesday, 3/16.

Hall-Bagdonas said she is going to be working with Kelly Buchta from Dette Flies and Chris Calebrese from Delaware River Club on a 4/23 Litter Clean-up in Livingston Manor. Hall-Bagdonas asked for permission to use UDC's logo on promotion if asked for it and was granted approval by consensus.

Engelhardt was asked to look into the water and sewage management plans for the RV model units for the Camp Fimfo development project as the site plan goes through the planning review process, with the next Town of Highland Planning Board meeting set for 3/23.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A Motion by Jeffer seconded by Henry, to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. was carried.