

Upper Delaware Council  
**WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES**  
May 16, 2017

Committee Members Present: Fred Peckham, Al Henry, Doug Case, Debra Conway, Jim Greier  
Committee Members Absent: Tony Ritter, Pat Jeffer  
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton  
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Pete Golod, Cindy Odell  
Guests: None

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Peckham called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A motion by Henry, seconded by Greier to approve the March 21 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

**Old Business:**

**Common Waters Partnership April 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting Update:** Ramie said that both she and Golod attended this meeting. A copy of the meeting minutes was included in members' packets. Ramie said a "Building Watershed Resiliency in the Upper Delaware River Region" one-day workshop will be held on Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Sullivan County Government Center in Monticello, NY. She said the workshop is designed for municipal officials, planners, highway managers, and other water resource professionals who are interested in developing new strategies to adapt to new impacts and build more resilient communities. Ramie said that due to the program's capacity, it's been asked that participation be limited to three individuals per municipality or organization. She said that Golod has signed up to represent the UDC. Ramie provided a brief description of the agenda and said there was still time to register if anyone was interested. She added that a similar workshop will take place on the Pennsylvania side as well.

**New York State Trout Regulations April 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting Report:** Hamilton said he attended this meeting run by NYS DEC Region 4 Fisheries Manager Chris VanMaaren along with other DEC staff, with NPS Biologist Jessica Newbern at the Hancock High School. The objective of the meeting was to discuss and receive public input on trout fishing regulations for the Delaware River Tailwaters (the East and West Branches of the Delaware River below the reservoirs, the upper Delaware River mainstem within the influence of the coldwater reservoir releases, and their tributaries). Hamilton reported that about 100 people were in attendance including PA Fish and Boat Commission staff, many local fishing guides, staff from Friends of the Upper Delaware River, and local residents.

A PowerPoint presentation on the components that influence Fisheries Management Objectives was given by VanMaaren. The components include species composition, size structure, sustainability, catch rates, and harvest rates. Management also takes into account biological data, habitat improvement, stocking, and regulations in formulating fishery objectives. Hamilton noted that VanMaaren summarized the current regulations governing fishing seasons, minimum size and creel limits, and catch rates, which all vary for different sections of the tailwaters. Hamilton stated that there is some inconsistency there.

Hamilton said that DEC talked about some studies that they're going to be involved in.

Hamilton said that the meeting was opened up to comments. About 23 people provided comments. Many of the comments favored expanding the catch-and-release "no kill" fishing to more of the system, and making the slot limit consistent to 14 inches and one fish throughout the rest of the system. Currently, it is 12 inches and two fish in the East and West Branches, with the exception of the no-kill section of the West Branch, and 14 inches and one fish in the mainstem.

Hamilton noted that NYS DEC is accepting additional comments in writing through May 31<sup>st</sup> to Chris VanMaaren, DEC Region 4 Fisheries Manager, 65561 State Hwy 10, Stamford, NY 12167, or via email to [fwfish4@dec.ny.gov](mailto:fwfish4@dec.ny.gov).

Peckham said he attended the meeting as well and stated that he was unhappy with what he thought was a lack of advertising of the meeting. He shared his impression on why comments are being sought on the current regulations. Hamilton told him there is an opportunity for anyone to make comments

to the NYS DEC through the end of the month. Ramie asked Hamilton if he could clarify if there are specific proposed changes to the regulations or were they just soliciting feedback on what changes there should be. Hamilton said it is his understanding that they were just soliciting feedback. Henry suggested clarifying whether there are any trout regulation changes contemplated by New York State on the Main Stem Delaware River. Golod said that he spoke with Chris VanMaaren of NYS DEC who offered to come and share his PowerPoint demonstration that was given at the Hancock meeting with the council. Hamilton reiterated that his understanding of the reason for the Hancock meeting was to discuss what the current regulations were and to get input from people regarding what their hopes are for regulations in the future. He does not believe there is any proposed regulation change on the books at this time. Peckham asked Golod and Hamilton to check. A brief discussion about the consequences of the inconsistencies of the regulations on the river took place. Hamilton reiterated that NYS is getting input from the public, but they currently do not have any changes proposed. A motion to invite NYS DEC Region 4 Fisheries Manager Chris VanMaaren to speak to the full Council was made by Conway, seconded by Henry and carried. Ramie said we will see if he is available for the July meeting.

**Scenic Wild Delaware River Stewardship Council April 24 & May 15 Meeting Update:** Ramie said an in-person meeting took place on April 24 at the Settler's Inn in Hawley and the monthly conference call of the Geotourism Stewardship Council took place on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

A memo was sent out on May 9<sup>th</sup> to our Upper Delaware River Valley municipalities encouraging their boards to consider adopting a Resolution in Support of the Scenic Wild Delaware River Geotourism Initiative. A proposed sample was provided and approved resolutions requested back to us by June 30 if possible. We have received two approved resolutions to date from the Towns of Tusten and Delaware, Ramie reported.

Ramie said that she, along with Elaine Giguere of the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance and Bethany Keene of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, will be meeting with a candidate for the National Parks Conservation Association's Delaware River Field Representative position in Narrowsburg on May 17<sup>th</sup> to offer impressions.

Ramie said she will be attending the "Unlock the Power of the Arts, Culture, and Creativity: Placemaking and Rural Brownfields Redevelopment Bootcamp" on May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Delaware Water Gap Bushkill Meeting Center. The training session is sponsored by the Scenic Wild Delaware River Geotourism Initiative. She will report about this training at next month's WU/RM meeting.

Revisions are underway on the Scenic Wild Delaware River Geotourism MapGuide based on feedback from the April meeting regarding what is working and what isn't working on the website, Ramie noted.

The next scheduled call of the Geotourism Stewardship Council is June 19<sup>th</sup> and plans are currently underway for a one-day conference in the Fall, Ramie reported.

**Upper Delaware Scenic Byway April 24 Meeting Minutes:** Ramie said Chairperson Pontier displayed the Partnership Award certificate that the UDSB had been jointly presented with the Town of Highland, Debra Conway, and Dorene Warner at the UDC's 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Ceremony on April 23<sup>rd</sup> for the butterfly brochure project and he spoke about the banquet briefly.

Ramie said the election of officers took place at this meeting. Officers for 2017 will be Glenn Pontier, chairperson; Nancy Furdock, vice-chairperson; and Larry Richardson, secretary-treasurer.

Ramie said a lot of discussion about Sullivan County's \$20,000 contribution took place at this meeting. She spoke of the list of projects that the Byway proposed to accomplish with the funding. A brief discussion about optimizing the scenic views along Route 97 and the Route 97 Landscape Survey done back in 2010 took place.

Ramie noted that in other business, a letter was directed to be written to the NYS DOT about the Beaver Brook Bridge in the Town of Highland to ask if there will be any additional paving done as it appeared unfinished to some. Case noted that sometimes agencies don't pave over concrete.

Ramie said an update was provided on the NYS DOT Route 97 attraction signage initiative for the Towns of Highland, Tusten and Hancock. Some of the signs could be installed as early as a couple of months, she noted. The DOT awaits permission from the Tusten Settlement Association for signage at the church before they can progress signs for the location.

Ramie said there was a letter written on March 29<sup>th</sup> to Governor Cuomo and DOT Commissioner Driscoll urging New York State to authorize a dedicated funding stream to maintain and improve the

highways that it deems worthy of special recognition under the state's Scenic Byways program. She reported on the response from NYS Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther to date.

Ramie noted that the Geotourism Stewardship Council would love to have a byway trip itinerary produced to post on the MapGuide interactive travel website. Committee members were asked to come to the next meeting with their ideas for the best places to eat, stay and things to do in their municipality so they can collectively work on an itinerary.

Henry asked what the current status is of the identification signs on the interstate bridges. He asked Ramie if she could ask Heather Jacksy for a list of where the bridge identification signs were installed and whether there are any future plans for this grant-funded program. Ramie said she would do that. Henry stated these signs are not very visible from the river.

**D&H Transportation Heritage Council April 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting Update:** Ramie referred to the written minutes provided in members' packets. She reported that Sullivan County has a new director of Parks, Recreation and Beautification. Brian Scardefield, appointed March 13<sup>th</sup>, replaces Kristin Porter and intends to get involved with the Council.

Ramie reported that only 13 of the Chapter 1: Gravity Railroad to Honesdale DVDs remain in inventory. A production update on the Chapter 2: Honesdale to Delaware River DVD was provided. The Council was successful in securing the \$2,000 production cost of the Chapter 2 DVD through donations, Ramie noted. Ultimately there will be five DVDs produced when this project is complete.

Ramie noted that the World Canals Conference will take place in the United States this year. It will be held September 24 – 28 at the Downtown Marriott in Syracuse, N.Y.

Ramie said that member Jane Varcoe announced that the Wayne/Pike Local History Roundtable is receiving an award for its Local History Past-Port project from the PA Route 6 Alliance at its May 18 annual dinner.

Ramie said a suggestion was made as a fundraising event to host a historic bus tour. A subcommittee has been formed to come up with the planning for such an event. Ramie agrees that there is a market out there for people that are interested in cultural tourism.

The next quarterly meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 26, hosted by the Wayne County Historical Society at the Main Museum in Honesdale, PA.

**Water Safety Committee March 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting and April 28<sup>th</sup> Partners Spring Meeting Update:** Odell reported that the March 30<sup>th</sup> meeting was held in Barryville, NY. The water safety budget for 2017 was reviewed. It was announced that the National Safe Boating Council had awarded UPDE a \$1,000 grant that it will use towards the life jacket loaner stations. Discussion about summer interns took place and the plans for the April 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Partners meeting were discussed and finalized.

The April 28<sup>th</sup> Partners Spring Meeting was held in the UDC office, Odell said. It was attended by many local liveries, Town of Deerpark Emergency Mngt. Director Jack Flynn, National Park Service personnel, and UDC staff. Superintendent Heister welcomed those in attendance, gave an overview on law enforcement staffing, and announced that the UPDE Water Safety Team is the national winner of the Achieving Relevance Through Safety, Health & Wellness Award for 2017. Chief of Interpretation Ingrid Peterec provided a Water Safety Program overview. Park Rangers Jamie Myers and Susie Kaspar provided an update on the Loaner Life Jacket Stations. The suggestion was made that the Park Service provide different color life jackets to differentiate adult jackets from kids jackets. Jim Schulte, National Canoe Safety Patrol spoke of the work of the organization. He said that swift water rescue training would be given at Luke's Landing May 5, 6, & 7. Schulte said that a lot of information is available on the organization's website <http://nationalcanoesafetypatrol.com/>. Chief Ranger Larry Neal provided a review of 2016 and an update on staffing for 2017. He reported that NPS law enforcement rangers have been certified to carry Narcan and will soon be carrying Epi-pens. Special and Commercial Use Coordinator Bonnie Sheard spoke of the new Commercial Use Authorization application. Previously, the application was four pages and was recently revised to fifteen pages. This application will be used for two years, but is scheduled to be revised again in 2019. Sheard gave several examples of events that would require a Special Use permit. She said the liveries and fishing guides can be the "eyes and ears" for the NPS and asked them to report any activity they suspect might require a permit. At the conclusion of the meeting, large vehicle magnets with the Wear It! message on them were distributed to the liveries and lunch was provided by Konrad's Kitchen courtesy of the National Canoe Safety Patrol.

Conway said that last year, Superintendent Heister had mentioned the possibility of having the liveries notify the Park Service when they were putting particularly large groups out. She asked if this was mentioned at this meeting. Odell told her it was not. Henry stated there is no provision that guides are required on river trips and he does not know of any provision that requires the liveries to notify the Park Service of larger groups. Conway spoke about an incident with a large unsupervised camp group that was put out on the river in tubes. A lengthy discussion about this issue took place.

**Stream Corridor Management Plan May 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting Update:** Golod said this meeting took place in Hancock the day before Friends of the Upper Delaware River Executive Director Jeff Skelding gave his presentation on this topic to the full Council on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Tyson Robb of the Delaware County Planning Department was one of the presenters. Robb made it a point to reinforce that the economy is connected to the streams.

Feedback from the public, organizations, and partners regarding the draft of the Stream Corridor Management Plan was discussed. Golod provided a brief summary of the feedback.

**Other:** Henry said that WU/RM Committee member Tony Ritter sent around a photo of a Sullivan Catskills ad in the latest edition of *Catskills Confidential*. The ad shows a kayaker with no life jacket on. Conway had a copy of the booklet and showed members that the ad was right inside the front cover. She stated that even a small reminder in the corner of the ad suggesting the people wear their life jackets would suffice. Ramie said the March 3<sup>rd</sup> letter to the Sullivan County Visitors Association encouraging that they reinforce the value of life jacket usage at every opportunity was copied to each of the Sullivan County legislators and Visitor Association board members. She noted that no response has been received from anyone. Henry made a motion to draft another letter to the Sullivan County Visitors Association objecting to their ad of a kayaker without a life jacket. He recommended copying elected officials. Conway said the publisher of the *Catskills Confidential* should be copied also. Henry asked that the letter be brought to the full Council. Greier shared his business perspective on the ad. Henry said that we can still look to invite people to recreate in the area and let them know that we care about their safety. After more discussion, Henry's motion to draft a letter to the Sullivan County Visitors Association objecting to their ad of a kayaker without a life jacket with copies to the *Catskills Confidential* publisher and elected officials for action at the June 1 UDC meeting was seconded by Case. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

Henry said there was an article in the May 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the *River Reporter* about a special zoning use permit to allow a commercial boating access at the Spring House beach on River Road in Barryville. He said the article refers to a bald eagle nest across the river and some people's concern about the noise that might result from a commercial boating access. He noted there are eagle's nests up and down the river that people don't even know exist. Conway stated the potential issue with noise and the disturbance it may cause to an eagle's nest is when there is a group of 300 or so individuals in a concentrated area for an extended period of time. Henry stated there is a railroad in that area as well. A brief discussion about the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and how it would be enforced took place. Golod said an application for this proposed project has been received by the UDC for review and will be taken up at next week's Project Review meeting. Golod shared some details about the application. Hamilton said that U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services is reviewing the issue.

### **New Business**

**Review of FY 2018 Draft Work Plan:** Ramie said this was sent out on May 11<sup>th</sup> for review. She noted that the committee's duties are spelled out and most of the tasks are on-going. Henry referred to page 7 of the work plan under "Pollution Control and Abatement" numbers 3 and 4. Number three reads, "Monitor the clean-up plan for the Cortese landfill in the Town of Tusten and ensure that the National Park Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency monitor any resource impacts. (Ongoing)." Number 4 reads, "Monitor the closed Barnes landfill in the Town of Highland to monitor any resource impacts. Support efforts to find a long-term solution for the property's maintenance in light of the depletion of the escrow account. (Annually)." Discussion about how these tasks are approached took place. Henry questioned if there is a clean-up plan for the Cortese landfill and if the UDC has a copy of it. Ramie said there is a copy in the office. Ramie provided some history on the Barnes landfill issue. Conway questioned if Sullivan County has taken the Barnes landfill property for unpaid taxes. Ramie said she is unsure. Henry, referring to number 6 on page 8, said he hopes that the Council continues to monitor any potential issues of concern

related to the operations of the Mast Hope Wastewater Treatment Plant in Lackawaxen, PA. Hamilton noted that the Park Service does receive monthly reports for the treatment plant. Ramie asked that he share them only if there is a problem. A motion to recommend the FY 2018 Work Plan to the full Council was made by Conway, seconded by Henry and carried.

**Congressman Faso May 11 Letter on FFMP:** A copy of Rep. Faso's letter dated May 11<sup>th</sup> regarding the Flexible Flow Management Program along with a copy of a May 15<sup>th</sup> letter from Trout Unlimited President and CEO Chris Wood on the same topic were provided in members' packets. Ramie said that according to Friends of the Upper Delaware River, these negotiations are still stalled. She added that as May 31<sup>st</sup> approaches, we still don't know if there will be a renewal of the current plan or if it will revert back to the plan of the 1980's.

**Kellams-Stalker Bridge Repairs:** Ramie referred to the NYS DOT handout for this bridge repair. The handout provides the schedule for the work anticipated to begin in April 2018 and be completed by June 2018 and a map of the 22-mile detour that will be in place. Henry pointed out that some initial field survey work will take place September 2017. This will require short, daytime lane closures controlled by flaggers.

**Delaware River Flow and Storage Report:** A copy of the May 15<sup>th</sup> NYC Current Reservoir Levels was provided in members' packets. Total combined storage was at 100.2%. Normal for the same date is 98%.

**Other:** Ramie suggested that an acknowledgment letter be sent to Congressman Faso thanking him for taking his position and sending the letter. A motion to send a thank you letter to Congressman Faso for his position and inquiry to the Decree Parties on the status of their FFMP negotiations was made by Greier, seconded by Henry and carried.

A brief discussion about the passing of Phil Chase took place. Conway stated there was recently a tribute to Phil Chase in the sports column of the *Times Herald Record*. She said she would forward it to Ramie.

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Henry, seconded by Case to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. was carried.

*Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell, 5/25/17*