

Upper Delaware Council
WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
July 18, 2017

Committee Members Present: Fred Peckham, Andy Boyar, Doug Case, Pat Jeffer, Jim Greier, Al Henry
Committee Members Absent: Tony Ritter
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Pete Golod, Cindy Odell
Guests: Kelleen Lanagan

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Peckham called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

A motion by Greier, seconded by Boyar to approve the June 20 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Ramie introduced Kelleen Lanagan who is working with the National Park Service on a special project. Lanagan said she is working for the NPS out of Washington, D.C. as a Wild and Scenic Youth Engagement Research Fellow and in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) Act in 2018, they would like to introduce more youth to the wild and scenic rivers.

Secondly, Ramie announced that she received a phone call from Superintendent Kris Heister earlier this evening who shared the good news that the U.S. Department of the Interior has signed off on the Upper Delaware Council's Cooperative Agreement with the National Park Service, meaning that we should soon re-gain access to the balance of our federal funding due through Sept. 30 for Fiscal Year 2017.

Old Business:

Upper Delaware Scenic Byway June 26 Meeting Minutes: A copy of the June 26th meeting minutes was provided in members' packets. Ramie reported that Town of Tusten UDSB Representative Ed Boyer tendered his resignation on May 24, but has agreed to continue serving through the last meeting in December 2017 unless the Tusten Town Board finds a replacement before then. There is currently a vacancy on the Scenic Byway Committee for the Town of Lumberland as well.

Ramie reported that the Byway approved three Butterfly Habitat Promotion applications. They add up to \$1,137 expended out of the \$5,000 pool. The approved applications are: Delaware Youth Center, \$35 to fund curriculum materials for seed ball making classes on August 9 and 11 for the summer youth program; Delaware Highlands Conservancy, \$777 toward a project to attend three festivals to offer seed ball activities and distribute UDSB literature; and the Greater Barryville Chamber of Commerce partnering with the Hayraisers 4H Group, \$325 for a local artist to create a sculpture that can be cast multiple times for use to identify pollinator gardens along the Byway. Ramie noted that all three of these applications met the spirit and intent of the grant funding.

Ramie reported that the Town of Highland Board approved a resolution dated June 13, 2017 approving the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Inc.'s request to take full ownership of the Monarch Butterfly Brochure with assumption of all rights and responsibilities. The impetus for this request was that the supply of brochures has dwindled and a re-print is recommended. Costs are being sought from printers for this purpose, she added.

Ramie noted that the mobile website is still under development. She said a review of all the images on the website had to be done. A subcommittee was formed and met on July 3rd to accomplish this. The question of where the website will be hosted still needs to be addressed and Byway representatives have been tasked with collecting business listings for the 70 miles of Byway involved to populate the website, Ramie added.

DOT Representative Kris Gilbert provided a new plan for the NYS DOT Route 97 Attraction Sign program. It is almost ready to go out to contract for the production of the signs, Ramie noted. Some of the outstanding questions that remain for follow up include where the public is being directed, how to indicate that certain attractions are seasonal, and how to handle certain sites with archeological and historical sensitivity. It is hoped that by the July UDSB meeting, the information will be ready for final review.

The Byway committee agreed to write a letter of support for Sullivan County's NYS CFA grant for the Highland Fishing Access construction, Ramie reported.

Ramie said that the Byway Enhancement Concept Plan identifies 38 views that should be protected. The Byway has decided to address this by potentially holding a photo contest to document these viewsheds to set a baseline for what would be erased or improved if certain developments transpired. The National Park Service has offered to assist with this since they did two photo contests for their Centennial program last year.

The next meeting of the Byway is scheduled for Monday, July 24th.

Common Waters Partnership July 12 Conference Call Update: Ramie said she sat in on this call. She said that the great feedback from the June 7th Building Resiliency workshop held in Monticello, including the field trip to the Neversink Preserve, was discussed. The workshop spawned a lot of interest in how to carry the message of climate adaptation to a wider audience. Wayne Conservation District will host a similar workshop on the Pennsylvania side this fall.

Ramie said that a Forest Adaptation Guide is being developed to offer guidance for healthy forest management. The Guide will describe how climate change will impact forests over the next 30-80 years through more precipitation, rising temperatures, increasing threat of pests and diseases, and offer tips. Separate guides, expected to be available in August, will be done for New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey so they can include targeted resources for those state regions. There will be a webinar to introduce the Guide when it becomes available.

During the Roundtable sharing, Steve Schwartz of Equinunk, the coordinator for the Pocono-Kittatinny Cluster, said that the William Penn Foundation is planning the next 3-year cycle of grants for the Delaware River Watershed initiative, 2018-2020. They have hired Shippensburg University to do some modeling and the River Network to handle some of the organizational work involved. The Pocono-Kittatinny Cluster will refine its area of concentration for this round to make sure that the money is being spread out adequately.

Ramie said one of the individuals participating on the call reported that President Trump's administration does not favor the terms "climate change" or "landscape-scale" and had directed that both of those phrases are removed from federal agency websites. This was offered simply as a point of information.

Ramie said she reported on the UDC's federal funding freeze, our Renewable Energies position paper, and issued an invitation to participate in the Council's August 6th raft trip during her time.

Mike Mrozinski from Pike County Office of Community Planning reported on the status of the Pike County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Sheri Resti Thomas from Friends of the Upper Delaware River reported on the Stream Corridor Management Plan that is still in development and will be subject to another round of public meetings to solicit comments on the final draft around September. She also announced the date for FUDR's Annual "Water, Water Everywhere" conference at West Branch Angler in Hale Eddy: October 11 from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m.

Heather Jacksy from Sullivan County Planning spoke about the Highland River Access improvement project. Jacksy noted that Sullivan County has some proposals for new open space developments as public parks, motivated in part by the unhealthy statistics of county residents. One of those is on the Delaware River at the site of a former wastewater treatment plant. They are seeking grant funding. Jacksy also mentioned that the Towns of Tusten and Highland are re-doing their zoning codes.

The next quarterly meeting of Common Waters will be in-person sometime in October.

Scenic Wild Delaware River Geotourism Stewardship Council July 17 Conference Call Update:

Ramie said that Sharon Davis, the new Delaware River Program Manager for the National Parks Conservation Association, was introduced at the beginning of the call. Davis explained her responsibilities to the group and said she is learning the territories of the Upper and Middle sections of the Delaware River. Davis will be visiting the UDC at the September 7th meeting, Ramie noted.

Ramie said an analysis of the pay-off from a Google Ads campaign that targeted potential visitors to the Scenic Wild Delaware River was shared. It cost \$8,000 to run the ads from June 8th to the 30th. A 351.78% increase to the website in the number of users for the same period in 2016 was observed. Ramie said the on-line ad was due to start again on July 17th at a cost of \$3,000 for a shorter time period.

The Scenic Wild Delaware River Fall Conference is scheduled for September 28th at Woodloch Resort in Hawley, PA. Sponsorships at various benefit levels are currently being offered. The full day's

agenda will include two plenary speakers and two tracks of programs surrounding lunch. The cost of registration is \$40 by August 18 and \$50 after that by the RSVP deadline of September 14.

Ramie said she mentioned on the call the five resolutions of support for the Geotourism initiative that she turned over to Joy Oakes and Sharon Davis on July 6th. Those resolutions were provided by the Towns of Tusten, Delaware, Hancock, Lumberland, and Deerpark.

Ramie said she thanked the National Parks Conservation Association and partners for initiating the sign-on letter to Secretary of the Interior Zinke urging expediency in the review of our Cooperative Agreement. Ramie said she circulated a copy of the final letter, which included 15 signatories, earlier today.

Other: None

New Business

NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission July 5 Response: River Height Signage: Ramie referred to the copy of the letter provided in members' packets. The letter states in part that they "will support NPS's recommendation that the use of the river height signs should be discontinued. We do not plan to install them under the projects at Pond Eddy and Narrowsburg."

Delaware River Flow and Storage Report: A copy of the July 18th NYC Current Reservoir Levels was provided in members' packets. Total combined storage was at 95.4%, normal for the same date is 90.2%.

Other: Ramie stated that Jennifer Proctor and Ina Hysi from the National Park Service Office of Risk Management are planning to visit UPDE on 7/19-7/21 to look at UPDE's drowning prevention efforts and to make recommendations to enhance the program. The itinerary includes a stop at the Upper Delaware Council on July 20th at 8:00 a.m. to talk about partnerships, the cooperative management of the river and working with multiple towns and townships. Interested members are welcome to attend, Ramie noted.

Ramie said she shared a copy earlier in the day of a Letter to the Editor of the *Sullivan County Democrat* that she wrote in response to an editorial in their July 14th edition. She said the basis for the editorial was the correspondence that took place between the Sullivan County Visitors Association and the UDC about water safety messaging. Ramie said most of the information was portrayed accurately until the end where the editorial stated, "Although the SCVA could point to photos on the UDC website showing fishermen in a boat without life jackets, they pledged in the future to only use river shots that included life jackets." Ramie said that no such photos exist on the UDC website. She said the letter corrects them on that factual error.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Jeffer, seconded by Greier to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell, 7/21/17