

Upper Delaware Council  
**WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 20, 2011**

Committee Members Present: Tony Ritter, George Fluhr, Andy Boyar, John McKay  
Committee Members Absent: Jay Shafer  
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton  
Staff: Bill Douglass, Laurie Ramie, Dave Soete, Cindy Odell  
Guests: Virginia Dudko, Anne Willard

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2011 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Ritter called the meeting to order at 9:45 p.m. A motion by Boyar seconded by McKay to approve the November 22 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

**Old Business:**

**Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Update:** Ramie referenced a letter from the NYS DOT in response to a letter by the UDSB inquiring if there was any regular maintenance schedule for Route 97. She noted the reply was not extremely satisfactory and that the handout was provided for members' information as it was copied to the UDC.

Ramie said the second handout is a grant support letter from the UDC to the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway for the 2012 FHWA application that was due by December 19<sup>th</sup>.

Ramie highlighted some topics from the November 28<sup>th</sup> UDSB monthly meeting. She noted there was a presentation by the NPS Chief of Protection Joe Hinkes about the need for improved emergency communications in the river corridor. He reported they are currently dispatching all personnel out of the Delaware Water Gap Dispatch Center and that any local towns can get access to the same emergency information by calling (570) 426-2457. Hinkes said the Park Service is trying to work with the local communities and the county emergency management agencies and 911 centers. The NPS GIS division is producing maps of river locations to be integrated into the counties' Computer Aided Dispatch systems and the GIS coordinator has also created a map which outlines where cell towers could go to give maximum impact while minimizing intrusion on the river valley. Boyar asked if Hinkes could be invited to talk to the WU/RM committee to lay out his vision of emergency communications during times of flooding. Ritter suggested getting him on the calendar for January or February.

Ramie noted the Pond Eddy Bridge Design Advisory Committee has a UDSB representative, Glenn Pontier, on it as the bridge connects to Route 97.

The UDSB board voted to take out ads in both the Sullivan County and Delaware County 2012 travel guides and will be incorporating the Scenic Byway's Quick Response code in those.

Ramie said the Visitor Center feasibility study is still underway. The architects are working on a preliminary design for the chosen schematic and will come up with costs figures for that as well. She said there is a meeting scheduled for December 21 to go over the conceptual design and that there will be a public meeting set up.

Ramie said the Byway board opted to cancel their December meeting and the next time they meet will be January 23, 2012.

**Pond Eddy Bridge Project Update Update:** Ramie referred to the handouts provided and explained that they are the agenda for the December 7th Design Advisory Committee (DAC) meeting held at the Shohola Township building and the minutes from that meeting. The next meeting for the DAC is scheduled for February 14, 2012 in Shohola at 6:00 p.m. and the teleconference that takes place on a monthly basis between the project consultants is happening on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Fluhr commented that if anybody has any ideas or desires concerning the Pond Eddy Bridge, to please make them known to Ramie or anyone from Shohola Township or the Town of Lumberland. Ramie stated that the Design Advisory Committee is planning on holding three meetings.

**2012 Delaware River Sojourn:** Ramie announced that the dates for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Delaware River Sojourn have been selected. They are Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, until Saturday, June 30<sup>th</sup>. That includes two days

in the upper section of the river, two days in the middle, two days in the lower and the final day in the tidewater section. The theme for next year's Sojourn will be "Adventures on the Delaware", focusing on fun and history. Boyar asked who is coordinating the event. Ramie told him it is a whole consortium and the UDC used to be on the steering committee, but had taken a hiatus this year and would again next year. She said it is chaired by Rich Egan who is from Damascus and that anyone who would like to participate in the planning is welcome on the committee.

**Other:** Boyar expressed that he was glad about the thorough vetting of the letter from the UDC to the NYS DEC in reference to the Draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (dSGEIS) on the Oil, Gas, and Solution Mining Regulatory Program that was accomplished. He hopes the revised draft will have a consensus.

**New Business:**

**River Gage Funding:** Ritter said he had been concerned that budget cuts were going to affect the flood gages in the Catskill Delaware corridor, but found out that they will not. He said the gages involved are mostly in the Susquehanna. Boyar questioned if any gages that affect the river ultimately are in jeopardy. Ritter said that the Beaverkill, West Branch, East Branch, Neversink, Main Stem are not being affected. He said the gages are all in the Susquehanna, which is unfortunate as that is where Tropical Storm Lee hit back in September. Ramie said that she had contacted Congressman Hinchey's office inquiring which gages would or would not be affected as it was Hinchey who had announced on December 16th that he had secured Congressional funding to restore the gages.

**Status of Railroad Tie Replacements:** Ritter noted that the last time the WU/RM committee met, many people at the table had been noticing a lot of activity on the railroad tracks and were wondering if the railroad company was doing maintenance in anticipation of the tracks being used for Marcellus shale infrastructure transportation. Hamilton said that he had sent an e-mail of inquiry and had not heard back. Boyar questioned if there is still a lot of activity going on. Soete said he felt it has slacked off some and McKay wondered if it could be TARP money. McKay said the ties being replaced were really in need of being replaced. Ramie noted that the committee's main concern was about the disposal of the ties being taken up. McKay said it appears the ones they are taking out currently, they are hauling away. Hamilton thought that because of the creosote in the ties they had to be disposed of at a special incinerator and had talked with a railroad employee who had said that was expensive to do.

**Other:** Soete questioned Fluhr if Scott Rando was still on the board. Fluhr said that Shohola Township's appointments are going to be made on the first Tuesday of January.

Ritter reported that the total storage for the NYC reservoirs is at 95% which is still about 21% above normal. Historically at this date, they are usually at around 75%.

Soete noted that Pennsylvania has come out with a new walleye management plan which is posted on the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission website. He feels they are trying to get away from stocking.

Boyar commented that in New York you can't stock rainbow trout in a tributary that runs into the Delaware because they don't want the stock strain of rainbows getting into the Main Stem and affecting the gene pool of the wild rainbows, but Pennsylvania stocks rainbows into the same waters.

Ritter wished everyone a safe, happy and healthy holiday and said he looks forward to working with them next year.

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Boyar seconded by Fluhr to adjourn the meeting at 10:06 p.m. was carried.