

Upper Delaware Council
WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
September 15, 2015

Committee Members Present: John McKay, Al Henry, Andy Boyar, Pat Jeffer (7:12 p.m.)
Committee Members Absent: Tony Ritter
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton
Staff: Cindy Odell, Laurie Ramie
Guests: None

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 15, 2015 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. A motion to appoint McKay temporary Chairman was made by Boyar, seconded by Henry and carried. McKay called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

A motion by Henry seconded by Boyar to approve the August 18 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Old Business:

Upper Delaware Scenic Byway August 24 Meeting Update: Ramie noted she was not in attendance at the August 24 meeting. She provided highlights prepared by the Byway secretary, who has since that meeting tendered her resignation. Ramie stated she will be assuming the secretary responsibilities again until further notice.

Ramie reported that much discussion took place about placing an ad in the 2016 Sullivan County Travel Guide. It is hoped that some sort of focus can be placed on the Park Service Centennial in the publication.

A letter from NYS DOT about a paving project along a 23-mile stretch of NYS Route 97 through Lumberland, Highland, and Tusten was reviewed. The estimated cost of the project is \$375,000. Ramie said the potholes are to be milled and paved with new asphalt. She noted the work was to begin in August with a completion date estimated to be within the 2015 construction season.

Further discussion about monarch butterflies took place. It was particularly pointed out that DOT mowed a large area between Routes 97 and 42 in Sparrowbush that had been full of healthy milkweed plants. Byway members wondered if the Park Service could speak with the DOT about their mowing practices. They wanted it stressed that the monarch butterfly habitat is being ruined by the mowing of the milkweed. Ramie noted as an aside that the Town of Highland applied for and received a UDC Technical Assistance Grant to produce an educational brochure about monarch butterflies on behalf of the Byway.

Ramie said there was discussion about the July 29th Penn DOT meeting on the Narrowsburg Bridge Rehabilitation plans. This project is of ongoing interest to the Byway, she noted.

County and municipal budget requests for UDSB 2016 contributions were sent out on August 10th. The Byway exists on the voluntary donations from the counties and municipalities.

A proposal is to be compiled to present to the Sullivan County Legislature to state the need for the Scenic Byway to have space at Fort Delaware. Ramie noted the Byway office currently consists of a couple of file cabinets in her office.

The next scheduled meeting of the Byway is September 28th.

Jeffer, as Vice-chairperson of the WU/RM Committee, conducted the rest of the meeting upon her arrival.

Boyar commented that he feels it is important to educate people about the monarch butterfly's need for the milkweed in order to survive. Ramie noted that in the past, the Byway had done an educational brochure about Japanese Knotweed as a similar river valley outreach effort. Hamilton noted there is a biological control for Knotweed that is in the "pipeline".

Other: Ramie said that at the last WU/RM meeting, discussion had come up about the Delaware River Water Trail and O'Dell had been asked to look into that designation. She reported on his behalf that the Delaware River has been designated as part of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Water Trail, but no nomination has been made for the federal National Water Trails System.

Henry asked if there is any update on the signs to be placed on various bridges over the Delaware. Ramie stated that O'Dell reached out to Heather Jacksy of Sullivan County Planning about this. She is actively working on that project. It is hoped that she will be in attendance at the October WU/RM meeting to show the conceptual plans for the four Upper Delaware bridge water trail signs.

New Business:

Draft Letter to NPS: Ten Mile River Access Improvements: Ramie referred to the draft letter in members' packets. Members reviewed that letter. They suggested the conclusions for why the Ten Mile River Access is muddy be removed from the letter. Boyar questioned if the letter was an initiative of Chairman Ritter's. Ramie said it was. Henry suggested the letter could simply ask the Park Service what, if any, recommendations could they make to address the situation. Boyar suggested removing the 2nd paragraph which provides the recommendation of a concrete ramp.

Boyar reported that the Lackawaxen River was chalky white earlier in the day and he has observed large mats of vegetation. He added he was surprised how much the coloration and complexion of the river changed in a 24-hour period.

A motion to re-craft the letter to the Park Service with the committee's edits, circulate it for approval, and seek Chairman Ritter's signature once approved was made by Boyar, seconded by Henry and carried.

Delaware River Flow and Storage Report: A handout containing the New York City's Reservoir levels as of September 15, 2015 was provided in members' packets. Current combined total storage was 81.3% with Cannonsville at 63.7%. Normal total storage for this date is 74.5%. A brief discussion about water temperature took place.

Other: Henry noted that letters have been received from both NYS DEC and NYS DOT regarding the Barryville Access. He said both letters acknowledge the area as a public fishing access with the August 3, 2015 NYS DEC letter stating "We did discover that our sign identifying the property as a Fishing Access Site is missing and we will take steps to replace it." Henry made a motion to send a letter to the Park Service and NYS DEC asking that the sign in fact be replaced and that the access be listed as a public access in future publications, as it is not listed currently. Ramie asked for clarification of which property he was talking about. Henry said the upstream side of the bridge extending from the Delaware River to a cul-de-sac at the end of River Road. Boyar noted he would like to get more input from the Town of Highland and area fire departments as the gated entrance is used for emergency access. He added it is the primary drafting site for the area fire departments. After much discussion Henry's motion was amended to send a letter to NYS DEC requesting the replacement of the Fishing Access Site sign in Barryville upstream of the interstate bridge based on Rudge's 8/3 letter. Suggest that the DEC work with the NYS DOT as property owner, the Town of Highland and local fire departments, and NPS to develop proper signage to note the restriction on parking in the cul-de-sac and use of the gated access for emergency services so that the Barryville Fishing Access site may be listed as a public, walk-in river access in future NPS and UDC map publications. That motion was seconded by Boyar and carried.

Ramie reported that Dick Comi from the Center for Municipal Solutions is not available to offer his telecommunications update presentation at the October full Council meeting. That presentation has been rescheduled to the November 5th meeting. She asked members if they had any suggestions for a presentation for the October meeting. Ramie said NPS will provide an update on the status of the law enforcement collaboration with Delaware Water Gap at the December full Council meeting. They will also report on the summer season in terms of incidents. Henry noted that the river went through some interesting changes in the past few months. He suggested that a subject matter expert could come in and talk about the health of the fishery. Henry asked if the Park Service could be asked to bring in the end-of-year statistics at the December presentation. He suggested they could do a comparison to last year. He asked if these numbers could be circulated to Council members prior to the meeting. Boyar said he keeps personal fish count records. He noted that this year's count is a mere fraction of a typical year. He said he would like to send a letter to licensed fishing guides asking them for comments. Ramie asked Hamilton if he has any information available from the recent shad study conducted. Hamilton said he could provide preliminary results at October's full Council meeting. Boyar asked about the status of didymo. Hamilton said there was a bit of a bloom as a result of the cold water releases on the main stem. After a brief discussion, it was

decided that a letter be worked on to send to licensed fishing guides surveying their views on the catch, quality, and trends of their fish takes on the Upper Delaware in consideration of arranging a panel presentation on the health of the fisheries for a future WU/RM committee meeting. Hamilton spoke of an angler log survey, a program for which the guides are required to submit reports. That data is compiled and analyzed by the Fish and Boat Commission. There is not a report issued annually, but periodic summaries have been issued. It is dependent upon Fish and Boat Commission staff to draft it. Boyar wonders if there is any trending in the size of the fish being caught.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by McKay seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell, 9/21/15