



**FARMINGTON RIVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

100 East River Road – Squire’s Tavern

P.O. Box 395

Pleasant Valley, CT 06063

860-379-0282

[www.farmingtonriver.org](http://www.farmingtonriver.org)

**Minutes of Regular FRCC Meeting**

**Monday, April 30, 2012**

**Squire’s Tavern**

**100 East River Road, Pleasant Valley**

**Present:** Tim Anthony (MDC Rep); Eileen Fielding (FRWA Alt); Jamie Fosburgh (NPS Alt); Liz Lacy (NPS Rep/FRCC Director); Nick Masi (FRAA Rep); Alison Murdock (New Hartford Rep); Susan Peterson (CT DEEP Rep/Secretary); Cherie Robinson (Canton Alt/Chair); Mario Santoro (Barkhamsted Rep); David Sinish (FRWA Rep); Tom Stanton (Colebrook Rep)

**Present (via conference call):** Edna Travis (Colebrook Alt/Vice Chair)

**Guests:** Alicea Charamut (Farmington Valley TU); Betsy Corrigan (Invasives Project Consultant); Joyce Kennedy Raymes (NPS Associate – Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Study Committee)

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting started at 6:00 p.m. to accommodate two presentations. After the presentations, Chair Robinson called the business portion of the meeting to order at 7:54 p.m.
- 2. Presentations:**

**FRCC Invasive Plant Survey Project** Corrigan provided an update on her work in 2011. The primary focus was on early detection of new invasive plant species – as compared to well established, widespread invasive species. However, the project also focused on areas where there are sensitive plant species that should be protected. Corrigan reviewed control sites along the river corridor where work to remove specific invasive species has been undertaken. She also identified several other sites of concern. Corrigan feels that it is important to go after widespread species such as burning bush. There was a brief discussion about the possible use of herbicides. While it may not be desirable, it may be the only effective way to eradicate some invasive plants species. Corrigan said that herbicides can be used in a very targeted manner, such as stump painting. Corrigan provided Lacy with a map of non-native invasive species along the West Branch of the Farmington River.

**FRCC Management Plan Update** Kennedy Raymes has prepared a draft of the Management Plan Update for the Committee to review and provide input through the month of May. Appendices still need to be prepared, and maps from Jeff Bolton (FRWA) still need to be integrated. It has been at least 15 years since the Management Plan has been updated. It has been reviewed in the interim but no changes have ever been made. Kennedy Raymes described the review process to date. Goals of the Management Plan Update include:

- Updating language

- Making document more user friendly
- Creating an attractive presentation and design
- Adding maps
- Updating and expanding action plans – such as invasive plan management and user capacity study

Kennedy Raymes requested Committee to review maps and provide input. She really needs input from people familiar with the area as she does not know the Upper Farmington region as well as the Lower Farmington. Kennedy Raymes handed out a new ORV chart she created which could be used for reference and put in the appendices. She is adding to the description of ORVs, as there is not much description in the original Management Plan. Next steps include:

- Receiving input from FRCC members
- Continuing to integrate comments
- Finalizing the draft for towns, CT DEEP, MDC, and others to review
- Presenting the Plan Update to the public at the FRCC fall Open House
- Finalizing the Plan Update
- Finalizing layout and design

Kennedy Raymes asked Committee members to provide input on the draft Management Plan Update and maps by May 31<sup>st</sup>. The Committee discussed making the Management Plan Update available electronically through a weblink for others to review. The Committee gave Kennedy Raymes a round of applause for her work on the Management Plan Update. (Lily also gave her “bark of approval”.)

- 3. Update on Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Study:** Kennedy Raymes provided an update on the status of the W&S Study. A bill requesting designation has been introduced into Congress. There will be a press event on the morning of May 21<sup>st</sup> with Senators Lieberman and Blumenthal, and Representative Murphy to formally announce submittal of the bill. Location to be announced. When the W&S Study is released, public comment will be sought. If and when designation occurs, the committee for the Lower Farmington/Salmon W&S area will begin to pursue projects.
- 4. Approval of Minutes of March 19, 2012 meeting:** The minutes were approved with the following changes:
  - Page 4 - Under “Town (and Other Committee Member) Reports” – “MDC” – Second paragraph, first sentence – Change “of” to “to”
  - Page 4 - Under “Town (and Other Committee Member) Reports” – “MDC” – Second paragraph – Strike the sentence reading: “Anthony said that he can also speak with Otis.”
- 5. Treasurer’s Report:** Fielding referred to the copy of the report provided. As of April 30, the new checking account balance was \$20,843.97; and the new scholarship fund balance was \$2,522.21. She noted that \$600 was returned by the Colebrook Land Conservancy and put in the checking account to reimburse overpayment. There should also be an \$800 check coming back from the Hartland Land Trust, as they were paid twice by mistake. Corrigan has been paid her final payment for last year’s work on invasives management. FRCC needs to request the remaining \$2,200 that is still with NPS. Meanwhile, Lacy submitted a new cooperative agreement for the next five years to the NPS for approval. This means that 2012 funds could be accessible soon. Fosburgh noted that the NPS is trying to get the funds out earlier this year.
- 6. Old Business:**

**Resource Stewardship** – Anthony, Subcommittee Chair, led the updates:

Anthony commented that most items had already been covered earlier in the meeting.

**Still River** – At the last subcommittee meeting, almost all of the participants were at the table. There was an excellent discussion. MaryAnn Nusom Haverstock (CT DEEP) and Sean Hayden (NCD) were both present. Nusom Haverstock was supportive of Hayden’s endeavors. Fielding will continue to spearhead the effort as it moves forward. Fielding said the \$10,000 had been requested through the Watershed Assistance Small Grants Program. Stanton suggested ALCOA in Winsted as a potential funder. They recently sponsored a cleanup day.

**Invasive Plants Management Project** – We had needed an update from Corrigan and we heard from her this evening during her presentation.

**Water Quality** – On-going.

**Education and Outreach** – Sinish, Subcommittee Chair, led the updates:

Sinish noted that the subcommittee had met on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Didymo** – Sinish thanked everyone for helping to distribute the Didymo brochures. Peterson, in turn, thanked FRCC for assisting CT DEEP in this endeavor. She said to let her know if anyone needed more brochures. Anthony requested an additional 50 brochures for a landowner who has been in touch with him. The landowner allows anglers to cross his property to access the river, and he has set up a Didymo cleaning station. He would like to have brochures available and plans to build a box for them. Sinish asked if there was any news with regard to Didymo sightings, and no one was aware of any reports. Peterson said that she had checked with Mike Beauchene (CT DEEP) but he had not had a chance to get out in April to take a look. Someone asked if low water levels and exposure of rocks would hurt or help Didymo. Masi said that he assumed it would probably deter the Didymo.

**Scholarships** – Six scholarship applications have been received – the most ever. They will be discussed at the next E/O subcommittee meeting.

**FRCC Sign** – Lacy has been busy and has not had a chance yet to pursue a sign for the front of Squires.

**E-Newsletter** – The first e-newsletter went out ten days ago. The Committee discussed forwarding the e-newsletter to others. It’s important to use the forward button within the document and not the regular e-mail forward button – this way we can track the forwards and potentially add more people to the mailing list.

**River Etiquette Package** – Additional maps still need to be ordered. This should happen soon. Charamut inquired when this might occur. Lacy said that she would be in touch with Charamut about TU’s offer to assist with payment for reprinting.

**Fred Jones’ Photo Poster of Five Towns of Upper Farmington W&S Area** – Lacy is working on getting several framed to distribute to member towns.

**Social Media** – Santoro reported that we now have 29 + 2 friends on Facebook.

**Farmington River W&S Brochure** – Sinish said he would speak with Joe Hoke who is in advertising. It was suggested that it would be good to give Hoke a copy of the piece that was put together on O&E for the

Management Plan Update because this provides good background. Sinish mentioned that he recently did a presentation for the Barkhamsted Historical Society and for the occasion, he put together a small brochure by modifying panels from the Upper Farmington Water Trail map.

**Outings** – Several outings and other activities have been planned in association with the upcoming Spring/Summer full committee meetings. Activities planned thus far are:

- May 21 – Lighthouse hike
- June – Evening paddle on Hogsback Reservoir
- July – Tour of several invasive plant sites and work party with Betsy Corrigan
- August – TBA – but the idea of having Tim Abbott (HVA) to speak on Highlands project was discussed

The E/O subcommittee is open to other ideas. Fielding suggested having someone come and speak about the Sandy Brook Conservation Corridor project.

It was also noted that there will be a ceremony this year to award the scholarships. The subcommittee would like to make this a more refined event. To be discussed further by the E/O subcommittee.

**Executive** – Robinson, Subcommittee Chair, led the updates:

**Management Plan Update** – This was discussed during the presentations, prior to the business meeting.

## 7. New Business/Other

**Grant Request** – Lacy said that she had received a grant request from Jerry Milne, a CT DEEP forester, to produce signage about trees and how they help to protect the river. Lacy said she will be meeting with Milne to discuss the proposed project and other possible partnerships. Fielding said that FRWA has a program on which they might be able to coordinate.

**New Hartland Representative** – Lacy reported that we may have a new Hartland rep for FRCC. However, it is not official yet.

**Large Woody Debris in the River** – Peterson said that the CT DEEP Inland Fisheries Division was aware of trees, etc. that have come down in the river since the storms of last year. The Inland Fisheries Division hopes that FRCC reps will remind their towns and others who may be thinking of moving or clearing trees to refer to the large woody debris (LWD) guidance issued by Inland Fisheries. LWD provides habitat and food for fish and other aquatic organisms. Lacy noted that there is a link to CT DEEP's LWD fact sheet on the FRCC website. FRWA also just produced a newsletter featuring the connection between forests and river health which includes information about the role of LWD in aquatic ecosystems. Fielding said that others are welcome to reproduce information from this newsletter. Charamut said that she was looking to fill a space in the TU newsletter she was currently working on, and would include information about LWD.

**Enders Pond Dam in Enders State Forest** – Peterson said that she had inquired about this situation back at CT DEEP. Apparently, this dam is considered a low hazard and so hasn't been a priority for repair. However, the staff engineer that Peterson spoke with is going to be seeking funds from the Bond Commission for other projects. If there is funding available, it is possible that CT DEEP would be able to look at repair or removal of the dam. Peterson asked if Committee members had an opinion on this matter (which is actually located in the Lower Farmington watershed). Fielding questioned whether we would really want to restore a dam that had already been breached. The primary concern seems to be on stabilizing the site to prevent further erosion and sedimentation from occurring. Roger Behrens (Barkhamsted Alt) who raised the issue at

the previous FRCC meeting was not present. Peterson asked Santoro if he would bring the information back to the Barkhamsted Conservation Commission to discuss and let her know what they think about the matter.

**Potential Book Signing Opportunity** – Sinish noted that Kevin Murphy who wrote the book “Waterford Hartford”, recently completed a new book entitled “Flyfishing in Connecticut”. Paul Hart of the Barkhamsted Historical Society had suggested this book to Sinish, and was wondering if it might present an opportunity to host a book signing in conjunction with FRCC. The Committee discussed the possibility of inviting Murphy to the Open House to do a book signing.

**Blueways Initiative** – Fosburgh said that he is serving on a Department of Interior formative committee regarding a “Blueways Initiative”. It will highlight partnership rivers such as the Connecticut River.

**Invasives Coordinator** – Lacy said that a part-time invasives coordinator has been hired through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant of which FRCC is a participant. Lacy will be meeting the new coordinator tomorrow. The coordinator will be working with Corrigan and FRCC to get more volunteers, quantify efforts, and schedule events to enable more outreach in the eradication effort.

## 8. Town (and Other Committee Member) Reports

**Barkhamsted** – Santoro said that the Conservation Commission has proposed a zone for aquifer protection to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Planning & Zoning said this overlaps with the River Protection overlay zone, so they may want to discuss it more. Santoro also mentioned that East River Road will be closed for repairs for the next few days.

**Colebrook** – Stanton reported that the southern side of Sandy Brook is closed because of bridge construction. The Inland Wetlands Commission has put a lot of restrictions on the projects due to past incidences relating to bridge washouts. Returning property owners who only live along Sandy Brook seasonally did not realize how much the river has moved as a result of the heavy flows. So, there are a lot of property concerns, etc. Stanton also mentioned that the Sandy Brook Natural Area Management Plan will be reviewed at the next Inland Wetlands meeting.

**New Hartford** – Murdock said that they are ramping up for the next round of invasive plant removals with Corrigan.

**Canton** – Robinson reported that the Farmington River exhibit opening at the Roaring Brook Nature Center was well attended.

**FRAA** – Masi said that the annual FRAA cleanup will be taking place May 12 at Church Pool. The Greenwoods trail cleanup will be on May 19. MDC supplies a truck for the latter event.

## 9. Next meeting dates:

- **Full Committee and Pre-meeting Outings:** May 21; June 18; July 16; Aug. 20
- **SubCommittees** (by conference call unless otherwise noted):
  - **E&O** – May 7; June 4
  - **RS** – May 8; June 5

## 10. Adjourn: 9:02 p.m.

