



FARMINGTON RIVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE
100 East River Road – Squire’s Tavern
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Minutes
Resource Stewardship subcommittee
Tuesday, July 11, 2023, 6:30 PM
Zoom

Attendance: Colebrook (Alison Jassen, Representative, R/S Subcommittee Chair), DEEP (Matt Goclowski, Alternate and Susan Peterson, Alternate) Hartland (Dan Bowler, Representative), Barkhamsted (Roger Behrens, Representative and Committee Chair)

Call to Order 6:32 pm

1) Land Protection and Grants

Winchester Land Trust has requested \$10k towards the purchase of Cannavo Watershed Property. Property is upstream of actual Cannavo Springs, but acquisition will help protect watershed above spring. If not protected, there is potential for subdivision. Land drains to Highland Lake and Mad River, and ultimately W. Branch Farmington River. Susan shared comments from a previous review she did for CT DEEP Open Space grant program. Land protection will help protect downstream water quality which is already impaired. Discussed the funding amount request of \$10k. Noted that land trust has already received partial funding from CT DEEP Open Space grant program and is also pursuing other sources of funding.

Susan made a motion to **approve a grant of \$10,000 towards the purchase of 25 acres from Cannavo Watershed Property by the Winchester Land Trust.** Roger seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

2) MDC and W. Br. Farmington (Flows & Land Protection)

The committee discussed the water levels in the Farmington, Hogsback and Colebrook Reservoir, in light of recent heavy rains. Colebrook Reservoir is currently closed to recreation due to high water levels. Dan noted that flows are high in Connecticut River, also, due to heavy rains in Vermont. Dan shared water flow levels coming down W. Branch over the last few days and reminded us of ACOE’s role in flood control.

Dan feels that it would be appropriate for FRCC to start working on a solution to current water flow issues, especially since this is a Wild & Scenic River.

Alison said that state legislators are working on a plan to address concerns by businesses and selectmen. Lisa Seminara and representatives participated in a meeting at Legitimus to discuss concerns about low river flow due to MDC refusal to release water for riparian rights. The Northwest CT Land Conservancy is in discussion to purchase a right-of-way from MDC. The Town of Colebrook is concerned because of potential loss of property taxes. Dan is concerned that ACOE is not involved in these discussions. It is important to discuss ecological as well as commercial concerns. Dan stressed the importance of bringing all appropriate parties to the table. The committee discussed the potential to get outside funding and to get a facilitator to address the situation with the grant opportunity Andrew’s email mentioned. Alison would like to discuss this topic at the next full FRCC meeting re: water levels and health of the river.

3) Update: West River Rd. Bank Stabilization – Barkhamsted

Susan provided an update. Princeton Hydro (consultant to Town of Barkhamsted) is waiting for mussel protection plan from Ethan Nadeau (mussel expert) which will then be submitted to CT DEEP for review. Then, the permit process can move forward. The town received a one-year extension on STEAP grant contract. However, the timeline to complete this project is tight, as permits must be received and river flows, and fisheries seasonal restrictions, etc. will need to “align” to accomplish project before the contract expires.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:17 pm