

CRJC Headwaters Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 22, 2021
7:00PM
Conference Call

Pittsburg			Northumberland	Edwin Mellett	✓
Pittsburg	Alan R Williams		Northumberland	Dale Covey	✓
Colebrook	Kevin McKinnon		Bloomfield		
Colebrook			Bloomfield		
Stratford	Jamie Sayen		Lemington		
Stratford	Clayton Macdonald		Lemington		
Clarksville			Maidstone		
Clarksville			Maidstone		
Clarksville (alt)	Alan Karg		Canaan	Tom Caron	✓
Stewartstown			Canaan		
Stewartstown			Brunswick		
Columbia	Kenneth Hastings	✓	Brunswick		
Columbia	Lucas Deblois				

Jeff Lougee (The Nature Conservancy)
Elizabeth Bergquist (The Nature Conservancy)

Olivia Uyizeye (Staff, UVLSRPC)

1. Welcome, Introductions & Review of Conference Call Tools and Public Meeting Guidelines

Chair Mellett called the meeting, conducted via conference call, to order at 7:08 PM under the emergency provisions of RSA 91-A, New Hampshire's Right-to-Know law, as allowed by Emergency Order 11 under Executive Order 2020-04 in light of the COVID-19 outbreak. Uyizeye conducted a roll call of LRS members, invited any guests to introduce themselves, and welcomed all present. Uyizeye reviews zoom conference call features and how to reach her for technical assistance.

2. Presentation on the Gray Mist Farm Project by Jeff Lougee (The Nature Conservancy)

Lougee and Bergquist provide an overview of their work in the Maidstone Bend, known as Gray Mist. This area is of particular interest to TNC due to floodplain conservation priorities. See presentation slides and additional notes below.

- Working in coordination with Vermont partners to protect aspects of Maidstone bends
- The project is early on in development and working on options with landowner
- Conservation values on this property: 6 miles of frontage for Connecticut River as well as some additional on tributaries; patch of floodplain forests including silver maples
- Importance of floodplain forests because of their ability to absorb a higher amount of flood waters than say agricultural fields; of their ability to protect shorelines and stabilizing the channel; of their filtering of sediment and pollutants; of their providing riparian habitat. Actually quite rare in New Hampshire.
- Discusses the different habitats, partially determined by elevation. This may help to identify areas for restoration and also identify what types of tree species would go where
- Discusses important wildlife corridor that runs right through this property at a critical points. A location of wood duck, bald eagle, moose, bobolinks, just to name a few.

- Property also sits above an important aquifer. The water is not protected by a bedrock cap so it could be contaminated more easily. Areas of natural cover are an important element for recharge of that
- An important agricultural resource in those areas where prime agricultural soil. Expect to maintain of this area as agriculture
- Project component will include improving unvegetated banks that are rapidly eroding (demonstrates through time series maps)
- NHANRS Scientific Wetland Buffer Report – main report being used to determine buffer widths. 100ft is sufficient for filtering pollutant, but not nearly enough for riparian habitat for wildlife
- Using LIDAR to identify different flood and habitat areas
- Focus of previous projects to plant silver maple trees. This project also looking to incorporate other species like box elders, and others that are in the northern end of their range (thus more adaptive to climate change expected impacts) like cottonwood
- Expect to own and manage the Gray Mist Farm property as part of the Maidstone conservation series. It will be open to public use, low impact activities

Conversation follows:

- Hastings – suggests the use of Golden willow, used in previous projects. Cut them in late fall, planted under certain conditions, and they grew up quite well. Dogwood worked quite well but they tend to like late afternoon sun. Based on two projects previously done. Also highlights the benefit of transitions between habitats in the riparian area.
- Caron – asks how large is the property
- Bergquist – 750 acres
- Mellett – asks if there is an agricultural restriction on it
- Lougee/Bergquist – TNC expects that they will have to work with those restrictions in the areas where they apply
- Covey – would agricultural activity then still continue?
- Lougee – Yes there will be some agriculture. Still assessing which are the best locations for restoration and which for agriculture
- Uyizeye – asks about next steps and at what points the LRS may hear more about the property
- Lougee – don't expect any wetlands permits, unless there is a need to use glyphosate in a targeted fashion as has been done previously on other properties; however the current expectation is that this will not be necessary.
- Covey – invites the group to a cookout on his property if we end up doing a tour of the property. Appreciates the presentation and the approach presented today.

4. Meeting Minutes from January

Hastings moves to accept the minutes. Caron seconds. The motion passes unanimously by roll call vote.

5. Permit Reviews

- a. New Single family and septic, Shoreland, North Main St, Pittsburg, NH**
- b. 12 Courier Dr, Pittsburg (no permit details received, submitted by Sterling and details requested). Remove existing port, put on 16x18 addition, replace septic.**

Mellett notes that both permits are in process and cannot be fully reviewed at this time.

6. Other Permit Communications

- a. Request for More Information. Reconstruct Existing House, 52 Baldwin Loop Rd, Pittsburg. (Past Comment)**
- b. Lyman Falls Dam, CRC (Past comment)**

NHDES recently asks for more information.

c. Wyoming Dam Removal Update

Remnants of the old dam on both sides of the bank that make it difficult for recreation activities to function in the area.

Due to access challenges, will not be able to do certain river bottom work on the NH side. Mellett has inquired with the Town to purchase a piece of shoreland property that would allow access for that work to be done, as well as canoe access. Mellett notes these are his hopes, but still early on in the process.

Caron reports. Recent meeting on Murphy dam where a lot of work that needs to be done. That work is approaching. There is not a firm timeline. Some of the work is completed on the upstream of the dam, not they have to do the more intensive work on the body and downstream parts of the dam (possible to take a couple of days in May). Original plan was to flow water from Lake Francis through the auxiliary dams. There is some concern that there is not enough runoff to fill up Lake Francis. Recent occurrence at Murphy dam where one of the valves got stuck wide open. Lucky that these occurrences happen at a time when they did not cause harm, could be a major problem if it happens again at a bad time. Caron heard that it was an electrical issues that they were able to solve, happened twice. Caron notes that these concerns were shared with the NHDES commissioner. Expect to have another zoom meeting prior to the work being done, likely in May. Caron will share any updates if they come in.

Covey asks if it would be appropriate to submit a letter of comment highlighting the safety concerns with the Murphy Dam. Hastings responds that we could do this, however feels confident that the authorities are aware and also recognize the problem and will be address. Caron agrees that there is movement is happening.

6. Updates & Other Business

a. Water Quality Testing

Uyizeye is waiting to hear back from the Vermont La Rosa program as a potential lab to submit samples to. It is an attempt to find the simplest option for sample submission, to allow more time flexibility and reduced driving responsibility for volunteers.

b. Outreach & Speaker Series

Uyizeye shares an update on the next event in the series. Video recordings of events will be available for a week after the presentation.

#2 Future of Invasive Species Management

MAY 25, 6-730PM

Kimberly Jensen (VT DEC) and Amy Smagula (NH DES)

c. Commissioners Update

Hastings shares that the climate migration workshop planned for May will be postponed to at least this fall. AUNE student report expect to be shared in the next month or so.

d. Other Business

Mellett asks if there are any updates on new member inquiries. Uyizeye notes that Sayen and Macdonald recently submitted renominations from Stratford. It is unclear if their lack of attendance since the start of the pandemic is temporary and will hopefully return when we are able to have some degree of in person meetings. Hastings notes that Deblois, member from Columbia, is likely a similar scenario.

Mellett encourages members to recruit new members as they are able.

8. Adjourn

Hastings makes a motion to adjourn. Covey seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.