



CRJC Mount Ascutney Local River Subcommittee

Tuesday, April 20th, 2021

7 PM

Conference Call

Attendees

Plainfield	Elise Angelillo		Windsor	Michael Metivier	✓
Plainfield	David Taylor	✓	Windsor		
Cornish	Bill Gallagher	✓	Weathersfield	Howard Beach	✓
Cornish	Colleen O'Neill	✓	Weathersfield		
Claremont	Matt Maki		Springfield	Bill Manner	✓
Claremont			Springfield	Kelly Stettner	
Hartland	Cordelia Merritt	✓	Rockingham	Thomas Hernon	
Hartland	Judy Howland	✓	Rockingham	Margaret Perry	
Charlestown	Janice Lambert				
Charlestown	John Streeter	✓			

Olivia Uyizeye (staff, UVLSRPC)

Minutes

1. Welcome & Recap of Public Meeting Guidelines

Chair David Taylor called the meeting, conducted via conference call, to order at 7:07 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.

Taylor welcomed all present. Attendees and visitors introduced themselves and shared updates on local activities including bobcat and bear sightings, invasive species management, gardening, trails maintenance, and vaccination appointments.

2. February Meeting Minutes

Taylor opens up meeting minutes for review. O’Neill makes a motion to approve the minutes. Howland seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously by roll call vote, Gallagher abstains.

3. Permit Review

a. Herbicide Permit for Cornish Bridge (App 21-145)

Taylor opens up the permit for review. Uyizeye gives a brief summary of the permit’s intentions to use glyphosate for invasive species management on the NH side of the Cornish covered bridge, primarily for poison ivy maintenance and access purposes. Members discuss:

- Taylor – Explains that the Cornish covered bridge is a frequent visit by locals and tourists, so clearing the area of invasives for access and beauty is a good goal.
- Metivier – Wonders if there are alternative management options. These are not discussed in in the application. Concern for its impact downstream.
- Gallagher – Also curious about alternatives. Other sites in Cornish on this permit’s list, including one near a wetland.
- Beach – Understands that glyphosate is a broad spectrum chemical that can be used on almost any of the invasives that may be encounter. Also not a fan of glyphosate.

- Merritt and Howland both express concerns for the use of these chemicals.
- Metivier – There are home remedies for poison ivy, unsure whether these could be used instead of chemicals or possibly using other preventative methods.
- O’Neill – Describes that Roundup vs Rodeo main differences come from the type of surfactants. Rodeo is meant for use near water.
- Uyizeye – Understands that glyphosate has a relatively short half-life and thus does not last long in the environment. Research on its impact to the aquatic environment is not as extensive as terrestrial. The impact of the other chemicals in the solution, particularly surfactants, has also been a concern among some. Uyizeye also shares comments submitted via email by members who were unable to attend at the meeting time.
- Comments from Jan Lambert (Charlestown), submitted via email:

But I want go on record as being firmly opposed to the use of glyphosate. I have been following that issue and I think that the United States is way behind the rest of the world in recognizing that there is not any level of its use that is considered safe. Here is a list of countries currently considering legislation to ban it or severely restrict its use. You can find ample information that condemns the use of glyphosate.

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| ○ Malawi | ○ Qatar |
| ○ Thailand | ○ Saudi Arabia |
| ○ Vietnam (Vietnam’s move to ban glyphosate contaminated imports drew criticism from U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue.) | ○ St. Vincent and the Grenadines |
| ○ Sri Lanka | ○ Bermuda |
| ○ Oman | ○ Austria |
| ○ Kuwait | ○ Belgium |
| ○ United Arab Emirates | ○ Czech Republic |
| ○ Bahrain | ○ Denmark |
| | ○ France |
| | ○ Italy |
| | ○ The Netherlands |

- Comments from Kelly Stettner, submitted via email:

I have to concur with/echo Jan's concerns. In doing more deep-diving into water quality research, I'm just not happy condoning glyphosate use. I'm horribly "on the fence" over the topic of invasive plant management. I understand the concept/theory behind wanting to use it to "knock back" the plants to a level where they can be managed mechanically, but I am growing more and more concerned with the growing body of research on these chemicals moving through the trophic levels in ways we haven't predicted or anticipated.

I don't know what the best solution is, I realize it has to be pragmatic...I have a "fantasy" of an ideal framework but I have no idea how it could be brought into being.

Suffice to say that at this time, I would like to see NH & VT make every effort to move away from chemical pesticides. I'd be happy to write that as a separate letter from BRAT, if the majority of the subcommittee strongly holds the opposite view.

Merritt makes a motion to write a comment letter with concerns raised and request discussion of alternatives. Howland seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously by roll call vote. Metivier offers to draft the letter for Uyizeye to put on letterhead.

b. FERC – Great River Hydro

Uyizeye shares that there are no significant updates on the FERC permitting process at this time. In February, the CRJC did submit a letter to FERC expressing a series of concerns related to the draft proposal. The Upper Valley subcommittee will be hosting a speaker from great river hydro at their May 17th meeting at 7pm if anyone is interested in attending.

4. *Updates & Other Business*

a. *BRAT Updates from Kelly Stettner (shared via email)*

- Received \$975 from VT State Watershed Grant program for equipment and supplies related to River Dippers water quality monitoring program. River Dippers was begun in 2012 in response to T.S. Irene "rewriting" the watershed; a small handful of volunteers collected samples at 11 river sites in Springfield, North Springfield, and Weathersfield. In the ten years since the program launched (with the invaluable guidance of Bill Manner), it has roughly quadrupled in size, scale, and scope. For 2021, there are more than 40 volunteer Dippers collecting data and samples at 42 stream and river sites, plus 6 lakes and ponds, as well as weekly samples for bacteria testing at 6 swimming holes. Support also comes from the Ludlow Insurance Agency, the State of VT's LaRosa Partnership Program, University of Massachusetts, Greater Upper Valley Trout Unlimited, Okemo Mtn Resort, Endyne Labs, and several organizations & businesses around the region.
- I hope to work with CRJC to collect monthly samples from the CT River near the mouth of the Black River.
- BRAT is providing clear "National River Cleanup" trash bags to volunteers wishing to do small-scale cleanups around the watershed on their own time and in small groups.
- BRAT will be cleaning up trash weekly at Hoyt's Landing public boat launch in Springfield, in partnership with VT Fish & Wildlife.
- Finalizing plans this week for early May native tree/shrub plantings in Springfield. One along the riverside Toonerville Trail rec path, the other on a sensitive river bank just below a bridge (this site is impacted by the fluctuating water levels on the CT River).
- I'm submitting comments/questions to the Low-Impact Hydropower Institute concerning the hydro dam at Comtu Falls on the Black River in downtown Springfield.
- Gearing up for the 2021 Dragonfly Detectives season; we'll be collecting exuviae, the shed larval exoskeletons that dragonfly nymphs leave behind when they emerge from the water to metamorphose into adults. A storymap of the project is being created by Emmy Whistler and Steve Lamonde of Antioch University's Spatial Analysis Lab, so we can try to correlate the various families/genera of dragonflies with the water body they lived in - looking at water quality, human infrastructure, and canopy cover as potential habitat features.
- I'll be networking with Laurie Callahan and the NH Academy of Science on gathering root material of the invasive aquatic Flowering Rush plant in Springfield VT; the folks at NHAS will do chromosome tests to figure out if our population of the plant has viable seeds or only spreads vegetatively, which should help guide management decisions.

b. *Water Quality Grant*

Uyizeye explains that the MARS region should be all set. Stettner is helping to organize a volunteer and we are working out the lab coordination details, likely with the Vermont La Rosa program.

c. *Outreach and Speaker Series.*

Next event on Tuesday May 25th about invasive plants, details coming soon.

d. *Commissioners Update*

e. Other Business

Merritt - Funds for towns to improve and use the facilities at recreation sites, specifically thinking of Sumner Falls in Hartland. Howland has also seen this area active recently and could do with some improvements. Popular launch site for kayaks and canoes, safe site to go in just below the falls.

5. Adjourn

Manner makes a motion to adjourn. Beach seconds the motion. By roll call, the motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by Olivia Uyizeye.