



Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Committee Minutes

May 25, 2016

7 pm to 9 pm

WPWA Campus, 203 Arcadia Road, Hope Valley, RI 02832

Call to Order at 7:00 pm

In Attendance: Jay Aron, Ken Burke, James Cole, Jamie Fosburgh, Roger Gibson, Christopher Grube, Madeline Jeffery, Maureen Kennelly, James Leigh, Joe MacAndrew, Dennis Migneault, Denise Poyer, Dave Prescott, Richard Seager, Louis Sposato, Denise Stetson, Fredrick Wagner

Approval of Minutes from April 14, 2016 meeting

Unanimously approved.

Financial Report

No expenditures to date. Now that the Cooperative Agreement with the National Parks Service has been signed by both parties, Denise plans to work with her controller to request reimbursement for her time spent on the project, as well as payments made to the videographer.

Subcommittee Reports

1. The Outreach Subcommittee has met three times. They have developed a logo for the project and are in the process of developing the formats that will be used. They will be meeting with the web designer (Bruce Hook) in June.

MOTION to approve logo developed by the Outreach Subcommittee – motion passed unanimously

Presentation

1. Dave Prescott presented information about the Lower Pawcatuck River and Estuary and highlighted potential ORV's of the river segment.
 - a. Discussion about how far into the estuary we could use for Wild and Scenic designation. Jamie stated that in general we could go to the mouth of the river (Pawcatuck Point). We need to make sure that any of the features we wish to study have some connection to the river.
 - b. We will discuss adding the lower portion of the Pawcatuck River to the river segments under study at the next meeting.

Old Business

1. Status of National Park Service (NPS) Cooperative Agreement with WPWA
 - a. Cooperative agreement has been signed by both parties and the budget has been approved.
 - b. There has been another approval for \$12,000 more to be added to the budget. Jamie (NPS representative) is working on a new Cooperative Agreement that will need to go through the same process.
 - c. The agreement specified dates and milestones for the committee to complete. Jamie stated that was for the purpose of getting the Cooperative Agreement approved. We are on target for the milestones.

2. Jamie Fosburgh discussed Outstandingly Remarkable Values
 - a. In general it is best to use the State as a measure of comparison. So the features we will be protecting are unique or special as compared to other rivers in the State. It would not be useful to compare them to other rivers in New England for instance.
 - b. The Nature Conservancy has information about biological diversity for this ecosystem and may be a resource.
 - c. Lumping versus splitting values- it may be better for the purpose of the study to use broader categories that include all or most of the special features of the rivers.
 - i. Ecology and biological diversity covers wildlife and botanical
 - ii. Under the larger general categories such as ecosystem we could have subcategories which would cover each river unique features
 - iii. These values need to have some relationship to the river. In this watershed we are looking at quite a bit of the area so we would base our management plan on a watershed prospective.
 - iv. Jamie stated that the area ¼ mile on each side of the rivers is normally considered to be included in the study.

3. Discussion about what committee members should be communicating with town officials.
 - a. It was stated that the delegates can determine how best to communicate. The minutes to the meetings are posted on the web and they are free to use those.
 - b. Some members are writing a short executive summary of each meeting and sending it to town council and selectmen.
 - c. Denise will start producing a short quarterly report which highlights accomplishments that can be sent to the towns.

4. Subcommittee Structure
 - a. Will be discussed after the expert presentations.

5. Text regarding Wild and Scenic Study for watershed towns. Denise reported that she has received some information from Sean about what the towns need to put into their comprehensive plans. She was unable to send this out to the towns yet but should have it done by next Monday.

New Business

1. Rivers to be included in the study – The committee has already agreed on the ten segments already listed. We will discuss adding the estuary portion of the Pawcatuck River at the next meeting.
2. Select next ORV for presentation – besides geology the committee would like to have presentations on the history of the watershed; natural communities; and rare and endangered species.
 - a. It was suggested that we should record these presentations. Denise Stetson will check with her husband who had recorded presentations for Envirothon trainings. Perhaps he or someone he recommends could loan us the equipment. Fred Wagner has a video camera that he will bring in also.

Schedule Next Meeting

Denise discussed scheduling the meeting for the last week of June. She will send out a meeting Wizard. By consensus the committee decided not to hold a meeting in July but will continue with a meeting at the end of August.

Adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Action Items

To be added to New Business:

- Linking new website to towns' websites
- Discussion about including the lower Pawcatuck River and how far downstream to study
- Reviewing the list of potential ORV's
- Presenters

Denise Stetson – check with Peter about video recording presentations

Denise Poyer

- Name cards
- Comprehensive plan language to the town planners
- Invite presenter to next meeting

Suggested names for presenters:

- Historian – Charlotte Taylor
- Natural History – Rick Enser
- Natural Communities – Chris Rathael
- Geology – Bryan Oakley