



**Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed
Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Committee**



December 3, 2015: 6 pm to 8 pm

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

Meeting Minutes

Present:

Charlestown, RI - James Cole & Bruce Loeckler; Hopkinton, RI - Sean Henry & Maureen Kennelly; North Kingstown, RI – Meg Kerr; North Stonington, Ct – Madeline Jeffery & Richard Seager; Richmond, RI - Denise Stetson & Carol Ann Baker; South Kingstown, RI - Karen Stein (By Skype) & Dennis Migneault; Sterling, Ct – Roger Gibson & Robert Mclevy; Stonington, Ct – James Leigh, Fred Wagner, & Oren Cooke; West Greenwich, RI – Christopher Grube; Westerly, RI – Louis Sposato; RIDEM – Jay Aaron; CTDEEP – Eric Thomas; Save The Bay – Rachel Calabro; WPWA – Alan Desbonnet; WPWA Coordinator – Denise Poyer; National Parks Service – Jamie Fosburgh

1. Introductions and Status of Municipal Representatives
 - a. Representatives from 10 of the 14 Watershed towns, CTDEEP, RIDEM, Save the Bay, WPWA, National Parks Service, and Congressman Langevin's office were present. Judy Benson from The Day was also in attendance.
 - b. A committee list with email address will be posted on the WPWA Wild and Scenic webpage.
 - c. We are awaiting an appointment for the Town of Exeter.
2. Brief history of how this Study Committee came to be
 - a. D Poyer presented a PowerPoint slide show giving a brief background of the process to get the study bill passed. A copy of the presentation will be posted to the WPWA Wild and Scenic webpage.
3. NPS/WPWA Cooperative Agreement
 - a. J Fosburgh provided information about the Cooperative Agreement signed in May 2015 between NPS and WPWA.
 - i. WPWA will be the facilitating agent to ensure the study is performed.
 - ii. WPWA staff will coordinate the committee and write the required reports.
 - iii. WPWA will act as the fiscal agent to disperse funds from NPS.
 - iv. The Study Committee will develop the budget and approve all funds dispersals.
4. Anticipated Timeline & Orientation to Responsibilities of the Study Committee
 - a. The Study Process will take up to three years.

- b. They Study Committee will be responsible for
 - i. identifying Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) of the rivers,
 - ii. evaluating studies or other data that supports those qualifications,
 - iii. determine which segments of the rivers to propose for Wild & Scenic designation
 - iv. a management plan that protects the ORVs
 - c. During Q&A J Fosburg discussed some of the implications of W&S designation from a federal standpoint:
 - i. Adjacent land use decision-making and private land management is not affected by designation.
 - ii. NPS would review "federally assisted water resource projects" for compliance with the designation
 - iii. No new hydropower dams would be allowed
5. Committee Outcomes: Study Report for Congress and Management Plan
- a. At the end of the study the Committee will need to submit a report to the NPS with their findings and all supporting evidence.
 - i. NPS will use the report to make their own recommendations to Congress
 - b. A management plan will be developed concurrently that address the need to protect the ORVs as well as the needs of the communities.
6. Administration items: Committee structure and additional members
- a. This item will be taken up at the next meeting. It will include:
 - i. Electing a Study Committee Chairperson
 - ii. Deciding on voting procedures
 - iii. Creating subcommittees
 - iv. Inviting additional committee members
7. Next Steps, Review Tasks & Assignments
- a. Develop a budget
 - i. D Poyer, S Henry, and C Baker will develop a draft budget for discussion and approval at the next meeting.
 - b. D Poyer will create a timeline for approval at the next meeting.
8. Schedule next meeting
- a. D Poyer will send out a scheduling email to pick the next date in February