



**Wood-Pawcatuck  
Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council  
Meeting Minutes**

***Wednesday, October 22, 2025  
Westerly Land Trust,  
449 Westerly Bradford Rd, Westerly, RI 02891 and via Zoom***

Abbreviations: Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council (WPWSRSC or Council), Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), National Park Service (NPS), Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM), Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association (WPWA), Save The Bay (STB), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Westerly Land Trust (WLT), Information and Education (I&E), Board of Selectmen (BOS)

Attendance:

**Sharon MacLean, Exeter, RI (I&E Committee)**  
**Nan Quinlin, Exeter, RI (Projects Committee)**  
**Juliet Lamb, Hopkinton, RI**  
**Elaine Caldarone, North Stonington, CT (Council Vice Chair, Projects Committee Chair, I&E Committee)**  
**Madeline Jeffery, North Stonington, CT (Projects Committee, I&E Committee Co-Chair)**  
**Antonia Bryson, Richmond, RI (Council Chair, Advisory Committee Co-chair)**  
**Denise Poyer, Richmond, RI (Council Secretary)**  
**Tom Halavik, South Kingstown (Projects Committee)**  
**Fred Wagner, Stonington, CT (Advisory Committee)**  
**William Gay, Voluntown, CT**  
**Bob Madison, Westerly, RI (I&E Committee)**  
**Catie Alves, STB (Advisory Committee)**  
**Harvey Perry, TNC (Advisory Committee)**  
**Tobias Glaza, Avalonia Land Conservancy**  
**Casey Merkle, Council Coordinator**  
**Sarah Wilme, Landowner Stewardship Coordinator**  
**Fred Sculco, Westerly resident (Advisory Committee)**

Meeting Convened at: 5:08 pm

Minutes Approval: Motion to approve September 24, 2025 minutes. Motion passed.

Rain Gardens presentation (20 minutes)

1. Powerpoint presentation by Catie Alves and Nan Quinlan on the Rain Garden installed in Exeter.

2. Asking the Town Reps to start thinking about where in your town would benefit from a rain garden.
  - a. You would establish a relationship with your town officials and offer a free rain garden somewhere on public property.
  - b. Determine what kind of permits or processes would be required and potential barriers.
  - c. Identify someone/department to take responsibility for first couple of years.
  - d. There is funding available this year for at least two gardens.

Committee Updates:

1. Executive Committee (Antonia Bryson, Richmond)
  - a. Fred Akers - Wild and Scenic Representative
    - i. This person would be the primary point of contact for the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers concerning legislative issues.
    - ii. It would be done primarily by email and phone.
    - iii. They would report back to the Council.
  - b. Land and Water Summit
    - i. Casey is looking for ideas to do a presentation concerning Wild and Scenic projects at the Summit in March.
    - ii. Please contact her by the end of this week with any suggestions.
  - c. Consistent name use
    - i. Need to shorten the name
      1. Take out the word Stewardship
      2. W-P Wild and Scenic Stewardship Council
      3. Seven Rivers Wild and Scenic Council
      4. The Stewardship Council of the Wood-Pawcatuck ...
      5. Please send suggestions to Casey
  - d. Date changes for Nov and Dec
    - i. Moving the dates to Nov. 19 and Dec. 17 to avoid conflict with the holidays.
2. Projects Committee (Elaine Caldarone, North Stonington)
  - a. No up date until January.
  - b. If questioned send people to website for application.
  - c. Deadline is December 29, 2025
3. Advisory Committee (Antonia Bryson, Richmond)
  - a. Meeting with representatives from RIDEM for Low Impact Development (LID).
    - i. Learned that the permit will be updated in the fall of 2026.
    - ii. Because the watershed has low density most of the towns will not qualify for the stormwater funds.
    - iii. Funds could go towards to education and outreach.
      1. Established a relationship with RIDEM reps.
      2. Encouraged our involvement in green infrastructure projects.
4. Information & Education Committee (Co-Chair Madeline Jeffery, North Stonington & Co-Chair Bob Maietta, Charlestown)
  - a. Discussed hydrilla issue and how I&E could help.
  - b. Working on signs for Wyoming and Bradford.
  - c. Garments are ready to ordered. Please send your order to Casey ASAP.

- d. Business cards will be printed both personalized and general. If interested in having one with your name please let Casey know.
- e. Working on River Friends, looking for people in the watershed to help with Council projects. Planning to have a mailer using Constant Contact to alert them to volunteer opportunities.

#### Council 25-26 Initiatives

1. Landowner Stewardship Coordinator – introduced Sarah Wilme who will be the coordinator.
  - a. Sarah is currently developing a database of landowners who's property abuts one of the Wild and Scenic Rivers and their tributaries.
  - b. Next step will be to develop a series of brochures.

#### Hydrilla Updates

1. Antonia and Casey are attending SNEP award event at Roger Williams Park.
2. Will set up a meeting with RIDEM to push for more funding for Worden Pond.
3. New signage will be going up at Worden Pond boat wash station using a W&S Community Grant.

#### Working Group Updates:

1. Brook Trout – no update. This will be updated at the next meeting.
2. Kenyon Funds – We are the beneficiary of a court settlement for Kenyon Industries with an initial award of \$40,000.
  - a. This has been awarded to Shannock Development for clean up below the Kenyon Industries.
  - b. There have been further penalty payments that so far totals \$28,000. This will be a little less restrictive but still need to benefit water quality. We would ask for suggestions from the council and discuss it at the next meeting.

#### Partner Updates:

1. Avalonia Land Conservancy
  - a. Getting closer to finalizing a 10-acre Conservation Easement in North Stonington adjacent to Spaulding Pond/Wyassup Brook. Baseline Documentation Complete, awaiting finalization of some details of easement language.
  - b. As a complement to the OSWA grant for the purchase of the 100-acre Kincaid property with frontage on the Shunock River (which feeds into the Pawcatuck), the Town of NS BOS has decided to send to Town Meeting for townspeople consideration an additional \$75,000 from Town Open Space Fund. Town Meeting will be November 24th where we will be expected to make a presentation.
2. CT DEEP – Recent Funding Opportunities
  - a. Long Island Sound Ecosystems Grant, Application due December 16,2025. Funding to support the planning and implementation of projects focused on coastal habitat restoration and green stormwater infrastructure across the state. There are two primary goals of the program: 1) to promote large-scale habitat restoration and enhance restoration planning, while also helping coastal communities and ecosystems adapt to changing environmental conditions; and 2) to further promote the application of green stormwater infrastructure techniques to reduce nonpoint source pollution, improving water resource quality. There is approximately \$7 million available; no match is required. This grant program is

made possible by financial support provided by the Long Island Sound Partnership from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

- b. Climate Resilience Fund, Applications due: January 15, 2026 \$44 million in state and federal funds to support planning, project advancement, and construction to help Connecticut's communities build resilience to extreme weather. This opportunity is open to municipal governments, local public utilities, non-governmental organizations, Tribal nations, and other eligible entities
  - c. Aquatic Invasive Species Control, Applications due: December 10, 2025. Grants support (1) restoration and rehabilitation of lakes, rivers and ponds in the state; (2) programs of DEEP for the eradication of aquatic invasive species and cyanobacteria blooms; (3) education and public outreach programs to enhance the public's understanding of the need to protect and preserve the state's lakes, rivers and ponds; (4) allocation of grants to state and municipal agencies and not-for-profit organizations to conduct research and to provide public education and public awareness to enhance understanding and management of the natural resources of the state's lakes, rivers and ponds; and (5) provision of funds for all services that support the protection and conservation of the state's lakes, rivers and pond.
3. NPS – on furlough, no report
  4. RI DEM – no report
  5. Save the Bay – there are some international coastal cleanups
  6. Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association – no report
  7. The Nature Conservancy – no report
  8. Westerly Land Trust –
    - a. We are embarking on the restoration of the gravel pit there, seeking support for that effort now. We have just a few more steps with RIDEM to take to get the sign-off and then we can move forward with our plan to convert it to grassland! More to come on that.
    - b. In other news at Champlin, we are developing a Forest Mgmt Plan and working to manage invasives like autumn olive through NRCS grants.

Good of the Order:

1. Fred has been in discussion with Dennison Pequot-Sepoy's Nature Center to see if they would be interested in joining the council. So far we have not heard from them.

Next Meeting: 5 to 7 pm, November 19, 2025

Adjourn: 6:48 pm