**Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee**

**Meeting Minutes, Monday, March 27, 2017 5-7pm**

**Salem Town Hall**

* **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by A. Irving at 5:10 pm. Members present included; Anthony Irving, Melvin Woody, Mary Augustiny, Eric Belt, Sue Merrow, Bernie Gillis, Anthony Griggs, Kim Bradley and Andy George. Also present P. Young, Program Director
* **Acceptance of November 28, 2016 Meeting Minutes:** M. Woody made a motion to approve meeting minutes of January 23, 2017, seconded by B. Gillis. Approved Unanimously
* **National Park Service Updates:** P. Young reported that the federal budget will be under continuing resolution until end of April. If the federal government is shut down, ERWSCC is still able to access funds through the ASAP system. P. Young also shared a list of suggestions from Joan Harn in the DC Office. They may have a small amount of funding for specific projects and are asking for feedback. Items included, funding support for Wild & Scenic 50 year anniversary programs, development of a template for watershed committees to develop economic benefit case statements, a video on Wild and Scenic Rivers, a plan for outreach strategies to new audiences, updating of the NPS Wild & Scenic website and support for long term success reports. After further discussion the committee decided the first two items would rank the highest for the Eightmile River Watershed.
* **Partner Updates (TNC, DEEP, Land Trust, Towns)**
  + P. Young noted that D. Gumbart from The Nature Conservancy indicated that there would be a follow-up meeting of the Burnham Brook Stewardship Committee to discuss future management and funding priorities to follow-up on discussions from the February meeting in Middletown. It is tentatively scheduled for May or June.
  + CT DEEP: P. Young reported that E. Thomas sent an email with the following updates
    - The FY2017 Open Space and Watershed Lands Acquistion Progam Grant is closed for submission. He will stay in touch with any updates regarding the Eightmile River Watershed.
    - He also noted that he will be working on some comments for the bacteria summary report.
    - The 2016 Connecticut Integrated Water Quality Assessment comment period is closed and the document available on line.
    - The Statewide Integrated Water Resource Management Plan is also available on line and due in part to comments submitted by ERWSCC the East Branch of the Eightmile River has been added to the priority action list for water quality protection planning.
    - A reminder that there will be information session coming up on the Streamflow Maps. P.Young is planning on attending.
    - Opening day of fishing is coming up soon and the 2017 Angler Guide is available. And he also noted a new DEEP Fish Community Data set that is available through CTECO. It is an interactive map where a click on a stream segment will access information on fish and macroinvertebrate species that have been found in the segment.
    - The Connecticut State Outdoor Recreation Plan is up for the five year review. There is an on-line survey community members can take.
    - Connecticut’s Green Plan is now available on the web.
* **Subcommittee Discussion/Updates**
  + **Outreach and Education**
    - Sue Merrow updated the committee on previous Outreach and Education Subcommittee meeting. The committee reviewed RiverFest 2016 and noted any changes to make for 2018. The committee also discussed summer family programs. Topics include bugs, birds and fish (K. Bradley will be assisting in the fish program). S. Merrow mentioned further outreach on the mini-grant program and an article on gypsy moths, authored by A. Irving, that she will be submitting to the local paper. P. Young reported on the program she did on bats for Lyme Elementary School and the program that she and E. Robinson organized on amphibian monitoring with Mystic Aquarium. The Aquarium has offered to do a follow-up nighttime summer program. East Haddam Middle School is asking if ERWSCC can do another stormwater program this spring and P. Young is also scheduled to do a program for Groton Middle School at Devil’s Hopyard State Park in late spring with Trout Unlimited. K. Bradley also mentioned that UCONN is hosting a two-day training for high school students and a community member on mapping and other tools to then work on a community program. This is through the Natural Resource Academy Program.
  + **Protection and Management**
    - P. Young reported on the CLCC Conference presentation and passed around the award. She noted that was not anything new to report on the Important Bird Area. She also mentioned that at the next subcommittee meeting she would like to work on the open space map update.
  + **Science and Monitoring**
    - P. Young reviewed the topics from the Monitoring and Science Committee meeting. This will be the fourth summer monitoring water quality. She reviewed the new project of launching temperature loggers in stream segments that we don’t have year round data on yet. She also noted that we may be doing some spring/summer macroinvertebrate sampling, some drought documentation and that Moulson Pond Fishway will be open early April. ERWSCC coordinates the video recording equipment and a person who does viewing and reports fish counts to the state.
  + **Project Review**
    - Nothing new to report on the DOT Bridge replacements for RT 82, or the East Haddam bridge replacement above Chapman Falls. ERWSCC has submitted comments for the proposed diversion request modification to DEEP on the Hopyard Golf Course. P. Young also met with Eversource representatives and Town of Lyme representatives in the field about a proposed change to an existing crossing in Hartman Park in the powerline ROW. Due to flooding caused by beavers, Eversource will be applying for state and federal permitting to use a series of box culverts on top of the flooded roadbed to create a passable access. They also discussed making sure that the low flow was provided at the original stream channel in the event the water level is returned to pre-beaver condition in the future. Formal plans will be presented as part of the application process.
  + **Executive Committee/Finance**
    - **Budget:** P. Young noted that the updated list of expenditures is on the back of the agenda. There was no further discussion.
    - **CACEE-Connecticut Agriculture, Conservation and Economic Education Center:** P. Young reported that there will be a site visit on a parcel in Lyme as a potential for the CACEE site. The organization she shares an office with at the UCONN Extension Center has a grant from USDA to look at possible sites for a center. They are interested in working with ERWSCC and have identified several sites to explore further.
* **Project/Program Updates:** Nothing further
* **Old/New Business:** No old/new business
* **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn at 6:35pm.

**Next Meeting: May 22, 2017—Lyme Town Hall**

**Submitted by:** *Patricia Young*