

Nashua River Wild & Scenic Study Committee
Notes from the Study Committee Meeting
NRWA's River Resource Center, 592 Main Street, Groton, MA
October 20, 2016

INFORMAL NOTES

Members Present: Beth Suedmeyer, Robert Pontbriand, Cindy Knox(Ayer); Lucy Wallace (Harvard); Bill Flynn (Lancaster); Paula Terrasi (Pepperell); Heidi Ricci (Shirley); Bill Wilkinson (Townsend)

NRWA Staff: Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell, Al Futterman, Martha Morgan

Ex Officio: Anne Gagnon (DFW); Libby Herland (USFWS); Jeff Barbaro (USGS)

Guests: Jordan Bailey (Brookline Conservation Commission); Mike Fleming (NRWA Board member)

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by the chair, Lucy Wallace.

Administrative

The September 15, 2016 meeting notes were accepted as presented.

ORRV Subcommittee

As the Subcommittee had just met on October 19th, Lucy distributed the draft meeting notes for review and basis of her status report.

- With respect to fisheries and dam improvements to expand upstream range of herring runs, Heidi offered to make the Devens Hydrological Survey available as an additional resource.
- Lucy noted that while meetings to update the towns' boards of selectmen are just beginning, the ORRV Subcommittee felt the local representatives could approach their Historical Societies or "town historian" for information on unique historical resources. Members of the Subcommittee will cover Groton, Harvard, Pepperell and Shirley. The representatives of Ayer, Lancaster and Townsend agreed to cover their respective towns. Lucy will contact the Dunstable representatives about covering their town. Jordan has sent Al information on Brookline and will ask Drew Kellner to do the same for Hollis.
- Al continues to work on a summary of the ORRVs to be highlighted in the Study and hopes to have it ready in early November.
- Jeff has given Al USGS reports on the Squannacook and Nissitissit Rivers.
- Lucy noted that Jamie Fosburgh has organized a meeting of our W&S Study Committee with two other committees in the process of preparing studies for Wild and Scenic River designation of their rivers (the York River and Wood-Pawcatuck River) to be held on December 9th 10 AM – 2 PM at the NRWA offices. It will be open to anyone on our Committee.
- There was some discussion on the desirability/need to include Devens (through the Devens Enterprise Commission - DEC) and Bolton to our outreach efforts and as member communities. Lucy noted that Devens does not have a Board of Selectmen to approve joining or a town meeting to approve the Study and Management Plan. That said, it would be useful to make a presentation to them and keep them apprised of our work.

Given most of the river frontage in Bolton is state-protected land (Bolton Flats) it is questionable whether Bolton should be invited. On the other hand, it could seem strange to include Harvard, which abuts on one side, and Lancaster, which abuts on the other side, without including Bolton itself. It was noted there is, in fact, one private landowner whose land along the river in Bolton is unprotected. Libby felt it would be worth going to the Bolton selectmen to invite them to participate. She also thought it would be good to invite a Bolton Flats representative to attend our meetings. Elizabeth suggested we see if someone among us knows the private landowner so we could make plans to talk to him/her.

Outreach Subcommittee

Robert provided an update on the Subcommittee's work.

- Robert distributed a draft schedule of for meeting with the towns' boards of selectmen. The Outreach Subcommittee hopes to meet with the selectmen in all eight towns by the first week in December. He would send the PowerPoint presentation the week before meeting a given board so that the selectmen could review the material before the meeting. He noted their plan is to leave the selectmen with a template of a memo or letter to be sent to the town boards following their meeting as of giving the other town boards notice that members of the ORRV Subcommittee may want to meet with them. One Study Committee member questioned if this letter was necessary. Robert noted he would be willing to make the presentation to Bolton and the DEC, if the Study Committee decides it would be a good idea.
- Robert showed the PowerPoint presentation that he and Al would make and asked for comments. It was suggested that there be more slide with photographs, hopefully from each town and with its location noted. Elizabeth thought it would be good to have a photo of each of the three rivers. It was also thought that it would be good if there could be a photo from each participating town. Finally, it was suggested that the presenters linger on the photographs rather than the slides with text and that the amount of text be reduced to bullets. Cindy has taken some great photos that could be included.
- Robert presented a list of potential URLs, some of which Cindy has been able to check for availability. Nadia was not able to attend the meeting, but Elizabeth reported the preference Nadia had indicated in a recent email. After some discussion, members were asked which were their first and second choices, with the solid majority preference being "wildandscenicnashuarivers.org". Cindy will confirm its availability.
- Cindy demonstrated the website which she has developed after looking at some other W&S Rivers sites. She showed the Committee the York River and VT Rivers websites as comparisons to ours. She would like the Committee members to review the site and get back to her with suggestions and, in many cases, the text or information to include under various topics. We will approve the site at our November meeting so that it can go live shortly thereafter.
- Robert distributed a list of FAQs which will be posted on the website. Committee members were asked to review it and send comments, as well as additional FAQs, to Al.
- It was suggested we have a press release to follow the meetings in the towns. Robert will draft one.
- Elizabeth suggested that before going to each town's board of selectmen the membership then and now should be reviewed so Al and Robert are aware of any changes.

Representatives for a given town were also encouraged to attend when the presentation is being done for their town.

New Business.

Quilt Raffle: Elizabeth announced that Emily Norton had donated a matching set of full-size and crib-size quilts which were being raffled as a NRWA fundraiser.

NRWA Annual Meeting: NRWA will be holding its annual meeting on November 3rd at 7 PM at Devens Commons. All were invited to attend.

Elizabeth asked if other Study Committee members had similar announcements. None did.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 PM. Next meeting: November 17th at 7 PM.