

N-S-N Wild & Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council Meeting
NRWA's River Resource Center, 592 Main Street, Groton, MA
December 19, 2019

INFORMAL NOTES

Members Present: Rona Balco and Rebecca Longvall (Bolton); Tara Alcott (Dunstable); Stacey Chilcoat (Groton); Lucy Wallace (Harvard); Alix Turner (Lancaster); Ken Hartlage (Pepperell); Heidi Ricci (Shirley); Joan Wotkowicz (Townsend)

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

Guests: Anne Gagnon (MA Division of Fish & Wildlife); Mike Fleming (NRWA Board members)

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

Administrative

The minutes of the November 21, 2019 meeting were approved as presented.

NPS Update

Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell provided an update on behalf of Jamie Fosburgh, who was unable to attend. on NPS funding status and other matters.

- The President has received, and is expected to sign, legislation funding the FY20 budget recently approved by the House and Senate. This legislation includes \$3.65 million in funding for designated Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers (PWSR), including newly designated PWS Rivers. Elizabeth reported that we should receive \$175,000 from the NPS, but that in order to do so we will have to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the NPS. Jamie has advised Elizabeth that the budget in the Cooperative Agreement can be quite "broad brush", having general categories as opposed to citing specific projects or items. Elizabeth acknowledged the hard work Fred Akers of the PWSR had done in coordinating advocacy for these funds for the Partnership Rivers, including preparing a white paper explaining the need for funds and their allocation by the member councils.
- Emma Lord is returning to the New England NPS office, beginning on January 5, 2020. She will be our NPS liaison, although Jamie will continue to be available to us.

Bylaw Working Group

Bylaws: Lucy reported the Working Group, consisting of Anne Gagnon, Neil Angus, Elizabeth and herself, had met since our last meeting and revised the Bylaws in accordance with the comments received. In addition, they had reviewed some additional council bylaws (beyond the three we had most heavily relied on) to see if there were provisions we should include in ours. The revised Bylaws had been sent out prior to this meeting for members' review, the hope being they could be considered final and adopted tonight. The Council then went through the Bylaws, article by article and the following additional revisions were made and questions addressed:

- Article 2, Section 1: Mike Fleming suggested the word "special" in reference to values be amended to read "outstandingly remarkable resource values" which would more accurately reflect the basis for designation and language in our *Stewardship Plan*. The amendment was accepted by consensus.
- Article 2, Section 2 (5): It was agreed to replace the word "preservation" with "protection."

Nashua River NPS W&S Notes for December 19, 2019 Stewardship Council Meeting

- Article 4, Section 1: A question was raised with respect to allowing a core voting member entity's Alternative to serve as an officer. The Council agreed to leave the provision as written.
- Article 5, Section 3: There was a lengthy discussion about the need to specify that in the event a core voting member entity's Representative and Alternate did not agree on a vote, the Representative's position would prevail. The Council agreed to leave the provision as written.
- Article 7, Section 1: Ken Hartlage suggested dropping the listing of potential sources from the Bylaws and instead including them in the Policies and Procedures, which could be more readily revised. The Council agreed to this suggestion.

Lucy reminded members that at the last meeting the question had been raised about adding a final article regarding severability. She reported that this provision had not been found in any other bylaws, including the Nashua River Watershed Association's recently updated bylaws. Therefore, this provision had not been added. The Council concurred with this decision.

Lucy asked if the Council members were comfortable adopting the Bylaws subject to the amendments approved at this meeting. On a motion made and seconded, and by unanimous vote the Council adopted the Bylaws such to the stated amendments.

Policies and Procedures: Lucy asked if there were additional items to be added to the outline of topics to be covered in the Policies and Procedures. She noted the list of funding sources deleted from the Bylaws would be added. It was agreed that the topics needing to be addressed first were:

- Process and criteria for selecting the two additional core voting member entities;
- Process and criteria for appointing members of the Advisory Committee;
- Process and criteria for creating subcommittees, appointing members, and general operational requirements; and
- Meeting posting requirements.

Interim Projects

Al Futterman provided a brief update on the two projects.

Canoe Access Assessments: Al reported that the working group, which included Warren Kimball, Paula Terrasi, Joan Wotkowicz, Diane Carson, Drew Kellner, Neil Angus, had meet on December 9th to review a "Heat Map" and further rank 27 canoe access sites. He noted that two additional sites could probably be added once additional research was done, specifically one on the Nissitissit River at the Shattuck Oil site and another upstream of the Pepperell Hydro dam along the rail trail. Al then reviewed the sites on the three rivers, commenting on their status and needed improvements, beginning on the Nissitissit River in Brookline. He reported that approximately 267 acres surrounding the headwaters of the Nissitissit in Mason, NH (Spaulding Brook) had recently been acquired with a grant from New Hampshire. All continue to be very impressed by the work to date.

Conservation Networking Breakfasts: The next breakfast will be on January 7th from 8 – 10 AM. The topic will be Forest Legacy and Community Forest Programs. Al will send an invitation to Council members.

Possible Projects: Al gave a very brief overview of other projects suggested to do during this interim, start-up phase.

- **Self-driving Tour:** This project had been suggested as one to highlight the historical and cultural resource values associated with these rivers. Lucy had given Al a copy of a similar self-driving tour developed by the NPS for the Harriet Tubman Visitor Center in Cambridge, MD. He thought the Council members could ask for one or two river-related sites that could be included on such a map. Tara Alcott suggested developing an ArcGIS or ESRI “story map” which would provide hyperlinks to information on each site and which could be accessed by QR codes with cell phone as people did the tour. Ken added that he felt people also still liked hard copies of maps and that we should not overlook their appeal and value.

Other Business

Land Stewardship Subcommittee: Ken distributed a copy of a proposal for the formation of a Land Stewardship Subcommittee and explained his reasoning for forming it at this time. A question was raised concerning activities included in stewardship: simply resource management or did it also include restoration, protection, or conservation? Ken acknowledged the committee could help the towns in prioritizing lands to be protected or managed on a regional basis, as opposed strictly within a town boundary. Heidi Ricci noted it would be important to define terms and that perhaps this committee would be more than stewardship in the conventional understanding of the word. Lucy asked for those who would be interested in working with Ken on refining the scope of this committee. Al indicated he would and knew Paula Terrasi would want to be included. Heidi and Alix Turner offered to participate to the extent their schedules would allow.

Kiosk Poster: Al reported he had been working with Elizabeth, Lucy, Jordan, and Drew on finalizing a poster for the new kiosk at the Nissitissit River Park in Brookline, NH and presented the final version to the Council. He asked if the Council would approve laminating the poster at a cost of \$70. The Council agreed by consensus to expending the funds to laminate the poster and complemented Al on creating such an attractive and informative poster.

Next Meeting: January 16, 2020 at 7 PM at the River Resource Center

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.