

Nashua River Wild & Scenic River Study Committee
Notes from the Study Committee Meeting
NRWA's River Resource Center, 592 Main Street, Groton, MA
August 17, 2017

INFORMAL NOTES

Members Present: Beth Suedmeyer (Ayer); Robert Pontbriand (Ayer); Nadia Madden (Groton); Bill Wilkinson (Townsend); Susan Munyon (Lancaster)

NRWA Staff: Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell, Al Futterman

NPS: Liz Lacy

Ex Officio: Cindy Delpapa (MA DER); Libby Herland (USFWS)

Guests: Mike Fleming (NRWA Board member); Warren Kimball (NRWA Board Member); Jordan Bailey (Brookline ConCom)

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by the vice-chair, Nadia Madden.

Administrative

The July 20, 2017 minutes were accepted with one correction.

Feedback for Liz Lacy on the 8-17-17 draft of Chapter 3: Eligibility and Classification being prepared for the "Study Report to Congress"

Liz Lacy walked the Committee through the draft document, starting on page 3, welcoming all questions and comments from members who had had a chance to review the document.

Next Steps on the draft Study: Liz would like any additional comments by **Monday August 28th**. Write notes on a hard copy, scan, and send them to her. Or, email her narrative notes. Don't do track changes. She will incorporate suggestions as appropriate and the resultant draft will be put together in a "package" by Jamie to go to other NPS reviewers in D.C. on August 31st. The "package" will include the draft studies from the two other rivers in our area going through the process simultaneously with us. Subsequent to the review in D.C. there will be ample opportunity for additional changes.

Discussion on Moving Forward a NPS Visual / Scenic Resources Assessment of Nashua Rivers This Year

Al recapped that he and Nadia had been trained by NPS, and there had been a discussion with Jamie that it would be good to have a Pilot -- that focused specifically on a river versus on an existing NPS site -- on the Nashua River. Al and Nadia could, in turn, train others and a team could go in the field to evaluate a few sites. How many sites? Perhaps a minimum of 9 sites. Perhaps more. Jamie is having the Visual Assessment forms revised for a river focus; Liz will check on when they will be ready for use. It was noted that if we don't do it soon, the leaves

will be off the trees – would it be good to have one viewing with them up and one viewing with them down? Cindy indicated interest in the project of defining scenic values. Nadia thought it could be a good strategy to do outreach to townspeople, municipal officials, and photographers. It was left unresolved whether it is feasible to undertake this in time for inclusion in the Study, or whether it is a goal to be included in the Management Plan.

The Visual Assessment topic brought to mind a poster that the Lower Farmington folks put together about their W&S project, notably with many photographs. Libby think this would be good for our W&S project. Nadia says she likes Study Maps.

Outstandingly Remarkable Resource Values (ORRV) Sub-Committee

Draft notes from the August 3rd Sub-Committee meeting were circulated (not yet reviewed and approved by Sub-Committee members). As evidenced in the notes, the group has been working on aspects of the Study document with Liz. Additionally, the work Al had done to calculate the amount of lands within the ¼ mile corridor of the Study Area that would be impacted according to FEMA 100-year flood maps was reported on – according to Al's calculations, an average of only 5.2% of the floodplain lands within the corridor are unprotected. Al requested that another entity undertake the GIS analysis to confirm such a remarkable finding.

Outreach Sub-Committee

Status of the Logo Project

The committee members reviewed four designs (A, B, C, D) prepared by Leah Basbane's graphic designer based on the feedback from the July Study Committee Meeting. Additionally, NRWA staff prepared a fifth design (F based on July's E) using the "E" design from July in combination with the current approach to the wording.

- Regarding the "Yin-Yang" style logos, committee members liked the logo in B better than A. They liked the ampersand in A better than the ampersand in B. There is still unease with the "yin-yang" nature of the logo – could it be "less yin-yangly"? Mike made a sketch of how he would recommend altering the logo, and that will be passed on to the designer.
- Regarding the "NSN Initial" style logos, committee members liked the Ampersand better in D. They liked the Letters better in C. Committee members felt the logo represents the blue river with greenway along its shores. Elizabeth thinks the pointy ends of the letters in F are more appropriately natural in feel than the style in C and D. Beth would like to see something between the too-thick lines of C and the perhaps too-wispy lines of F, and others agreed that was the request to pass on to the graphic designer.
- Elizabeth asked for straw vote on which logo direction was more appealing to committee members: 8 voted in favor of the "NSN initial" approach. 2 voted in favor of the "Yin-Yang" approach. Susan Munyon had left the meeting, and a couple of people did not vote.

- Nadia pointed out that it would be important to look at the logos at scale in the sorts of applications in which we would be using them. Letterhead? Posters? Our web-site?
- It was commented on that it wasn't clear that "Nashua . Squannacook . Nissitissit" = rivers. It might mean towns. A couple of suggestions arose:

Nashua . Squannacook . Nissitissit Rivers

Rivers: Nashua . Squannacook . Nissitissit

Three Rivers: Nashua . Squannacook . Nissitissit

3 Rivers: Nashua . Squannacook . Nissitissit

Meetings

Al and Robert Pontbriand reported that the presentation to the Groton Board of Selectmen went well.

Jordan reported that the July 25th presentation by Al and Jamie to the Brookline Conservation Committee went well, and the topic has been recommended for consideration by the Brookline Board of Selectmen. That meeting is coming up on August 28th, and Al and Jamie will be there to present. It may just be an informational presentation, or perhaps the BOS will want to take a vote as to whether to formally join the Study Committee. Jordan and Al reported that Drew Kellner presented the topic to the Hollis Conservation Commission on August 16th; Drew said the presentation went well. Jamie and Al will join Drew in presenting it to the Hollis Board of Selectmen on September 11th, at which point the BOS may want to reflect further on the situation, or may feel ready to take a vote as to whether to join the Study Committee. Committee members expressed that this was very encouraging news.

Robert says a presentation to Devens Enterprise Commission (DEC) will be arranged as an FYI.

Hold Constituency / Stakeholders Groups Input Meetings?

It still feels premature to get input on the draft Management Plan from Conservation Commission Agents; we need to put the part that Mark is working on together with the part Al is working on.

It doesn't feel premature to hold a constituency input meeting with some other types of stakeholders:

- Regarding our Recreation ORRV, members of Rod & Gun Clubs, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, fishing groups, local birding groups, etc. could be invited to one meeting. Mention was made of Forbush – a birding club out of Worcester. Al will begin to work on setting up a meeting.
- Get land trusts together? Trail groups? Libby mentioned the NE Mountain Bike (NEMBA) group.
- Historical Societies and Cultural Commissions – Al has already written to each to request input and will be meeting with them on an individual basis if that is what works for them.

Other Outreach-Related Activities

Robert is drafting a matrix of the special rules pertaining to the Town Meetings of each of our towns.

A question came up as to whether the Fall Town meetings that some towns are holding in 2017 would be good opportunities for distributing information. Voters who attend in the Fall are likely to attend in the Spring. Robert will make a list of the Fall Meetings. Have paper to hand out? Have a poster?

Elizabeth noted there are fall festivals in some of the communities. NRWA will cover Grotonfest – are there others that should be attended? Elizabeth had seen a sign for the Townsend Fall Festival; Nadia subsequently provided a link to that Fair and one in Pepperell:

(<http://www.townsendhistoricalsociety.org/fallfairnews.html>)

(<http://pepperellfallfestival.com>).

Libby said she had just heard from Jane Adams in Representative Tsongas's office that September 23rd has been picked for this year's River Day, and Niki is interested in doing it at the Bill Ashe Visitor Facility and paddling on the Nashua River again. That will be an important opportunity to showcase progress on the W&S and distribute information.

W&S Paddle on the Nashua River for Municipal Officials

Al has been in touch with Diane Carson of Nashoba Paddler, LLC. A good time might be during the first two weeks of October. Diane does not want to have more than 12 boats in a group, and we would need certified guides to meet insurance requirements. Since we can't have unlimited number of participants, perhaps we would be looking for 2 people per town? Liz pointed out that October 14/15 might be the paddle NPS is organizing for the region, but it didn't seem like a good idea to combine the two activities. Al has done a draft invitation *re* our paddle and will work more on getting it organized.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.