

Upper Delaware Council  
**WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES**  
**Oct. 21, 2008**

Committee Members Present: Wieland, Serio, Chase, Sundholm, McKay  
Committee Members Absent: Shafer, Fluhr, Bowers, Flaherty  
Partner: Hamilton  
Advisory Council: None  
Staff: Soete, Coney, Ramie  
Guests: D. Keesler

Committee Chairperson Charles Wieland called the meeting to order at 7:14 p.m. A motion by Sundholm seconded by Serio to approve the Sept. 16 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda. Ramie noted that Bill Douglass and George J. Fluhr were attending a public meeting at Berlin Township to answer questions on joining the UDC.

**New York Regional Interconnect proposed transmission line, update on activities:**

□CARI: The Communities Against Regional Interconnect and the Sullivan County Planning Division are sponsoring a public Q & A Session on Oct. 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Delaware Community Center in Callicoon. This Q & A will assist citizens in understanding the issues and preparing for the upcoming NYS PSC Public Statement Hearings on the application filed by NYRI.

□NYS PSC: The New York State Public Service Commission has scheduled Public Information Forums/Public Statement Hearings at numerous geographic locations along the route of the proposed transmission line project. The committee members were provided with a listing of locations for these meetings in Orange, Sullivan, and Delaware Counties. It is anticipated that the UDC staff will attend the hearings in Callicoon, Lake Huntington, and Hancock. The Information Forums presented by the NYS PSC will address the details of the administration of the proceeding under the PSC rules and modes of operation. The Public Statement Hearings will give the public the opportunity to present their comments before the Administrative Law Judges assigned to the proceeding. Other methods of commenting include by mail, email, and telephone. Most of the hearings will be webcast on the internet and can be viewed by accessing [www.NewYorkAdmin.com](http://www.NewYorkAdmin.com) and clicking on New York State Public Service Commission. The hearings will be archived for viewing as well.

**Old Business**

**Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Update:** Ramie provided an update on the Byway activities. They are supporting the County of Sullivan as the lead agency for the Byway Visitor Center SEQR review. Three quotes were received for the landscape survey (vegetation clearing), with costs ranging from \$15,000 to \$50,000. They are reviewing the quotes. A full-page ad will be taken in the Greater Western Catskills Guide.

The Narrowsburg model interpretive signs project is progressing. The Sullivan County DPW is preparing the area in front of the Council office for one, two-sided panel interpretive sign. Other signs will be installed on the Big Eddy deck, the Arts Alliance building, and at Fort Delaware, all in Narrowsburg. A public unveiling ceremony is being discussed. The next meeting of the Byway group is Oct. 27.

**D & H Transportation Heritage Council Update:** Ramie provided an update on the D & H activities. The Council met on Oct. 15. They walked the new section of the towpath trail by Rt. 209 in Wurtsboro, NY. This 1.5 mile trail section is located on NYS DEC property. A business meeting was held in the afternoon. The hiring of a graphic artist to do a template for logo and trail markers was discussed. Each member shared information on their organizations' activities. The impending gas drilling issues in NYS and PA were discussed in relation to D & H Trail impacts. The next quarterly meeting of the D & H group is Jan. 21 at the Shohola Township Building.

**NYS DEC Open Space Plan, 2009 Revision Update:** Coney reported in response to her query, Bill Rudge has indicated that the 2009 draft revision of NYS's Open Space Plan has not yet been released for

public review; possibly later this fall. The DEC Region 3 citizen's advisory committee has completed and handed in its report with recommendations for the 2009 revision.

### **New Business**

**NYC DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd resigns Oct. 8:** It was announced that NYC DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd resigned effective Oct. 8, according to media reports. Lloyd had been Commissioner for four years. She is accepting a job as chief operating officer of Trinity Real Estate. No successor has been announced to date.

**NYS DEC finalizes public meetings-draft Scoping Document Supplemental GEIS, natural gas drilling:** The committee received copy of a NYS DEC press release announcing the finalization of six public meetings to give the public an opportunity to participate in the analysis of the potential environmental impacts of high-volume hydraulic fracturing of horizontal wells in New York's natural gas-bearing Marcellus and Utica shale formations.

The meeting in Sullivan County will take place Dec. 4 at Sullivan County Community College in Loch Sheldrake. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., with a formal meeting beginning at 5:15 p.m. Brief remarks by DEC staff will be followed by public comments starting at 6 p.m. As a first step of it review, DEC recently released a draft scope that proposes issues to be covered in the analysis. The draft scoping document can be accessed at the DEC's website at [www.dec.ny.gov/energy/45912.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/45912.html).

**Leadership Sullivan Bus Tour stops in Narrowsburg Oct. 15 – UDC presentation:** Soete announced that the UDC staff briefly spoke about the Council and its mandates at an Oct. 15 stopover of Leadership Sullivan when it visited some Narrowsburg locations. The Leadership Sullivan offers training about Sullivan County by taking future leaders to various locations within the County to obtain additional information about that organization or business entity. In Narrowsburg they visited the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance, Fort Delaware, and Lander's Campground. The UDC presentation was made at Lander's.

**Millennium Pipeline newsletter article, "Millennium Helps Mongaup Visitors Get Back to Nature":** The committee received copy of a Millennium Pipeline newsletter article as a point of information. The article mentioned that nature-loving visitors to the Mongaup Falls Wildlife Management Area would soon enjoy new hiking trails, information kiosks, an eagle blind, new and improved parking facilities and other amenities to more fully appreciate the wildlife experience. Millennium has constructed a series of improvements within portions of the Wildlife Management Area in Sullivan County that will make it more accessible to the public. Millennium has already installed newly completed hiking and wheelchair-access trails to provide convenient access to a bald eagle viewing blind. Other improvements will also be completed in segments. This public-private project is part of the Millennium Pipeline construction activity.

Serio mentioned that Millennium has equipment in the East Branch by Peas Eddy now. They are also starting to put in barriers for dewatering purposes.

**NPS Report:** Don Hamilton reported on the Oct. 15 NYS Assembly committee hearing he attended in Albany relative to input and comment on what should be included in the state regulations that NYS DEC is preparing regarding gas drilling/exploration. Hamilton mentioned that the DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis and Brad Field, Mineral Resources Division were at the hearing. The lawmakers heard from a broad range of stakeholders including energy companies. DEC is indicating that no gas wells will receive permits until the Supplemental GEIS is finalized.

Hamilton noted that the Susquehanna River Basin Commission is playing a regulatory role on the Pennsylvania side of the River in the gas drilling process. Serio mentioned that the gas companies are pulling back on their lease agreements right now. They won't lease any more land as they'll need dollars to drill and the economy has slowed down. Hamilton mentioned that the NPS will review the draft Supplemental GEIS when it becomes available in the spring of 2009. NPS will attend the Dec. 4 DEC public meeting as mentioned previously and will work with its geologic resources division regarding this issue.

Chase asked if Pennsylvania put in any safeguards for its streams. Hamilton responded they are tightening up on that and looking at surface waters if okay to draw water for gas drilling activities. Fracturing a well takes from 1 to 5 mg of water, so 500 water trucks will be hauling 2.5 mg to well drill

sites at least. Local municipalities are trying to get bonding in place for roads maintenance work. New York State is looking at ways to make bonding mandatory from the gas companies. Serio commented the amount of water would be 20 cfs for two hours to equal 1 mg. Some small streams could accommodate that. The impacts to the roads with the heavy truck traffic would be of immediate concern. McKay added treating the polluted fracing water is an issue also. Hamilton noted in some NPS areas where NPS doesn't have the mineral rights, the drillers are using containers for the frac fluid. Wieland asked is there a ratio how much comes back out of the well. Hamilton responded that sometimes 70% comes back; depends on the well. That's why they want open pits, but the drillers will know better what will come back to the surface once they start drilling in this area. Chase asked what was in the fracing fluid. Hamilton noted that DEC will want to know that information, as well as the DRBC. The gas companies should have MSDS sheets that list chemicals in the fluid.

Hamilton passed around information on the "Vital Signs Monitoring Program" through Eastern Rivers and Mountains Network of NPS. The Network is composed of nine park units within the states of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and West Virginia. NPS-Upper Delaware is involved with this program, as reported at last month's meeting, in the Upper Delaware. The Network has identified 13 vital signs deemed to be the highest priority that represent a systems approach to the monitoring program. Some of these vital signs include water quality; air and climate; soil quality; biological integrity and ecosystem pattern.

Serio asked Hamilton if there was any progress on revamping the fish takes reporting logs, and Hamilton said he would ask Jamie about that since she is part of the committee reviewing it.

**Public Comment** None

**Adjourn** A motion by McKay seconded by Chase to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. was carried.

Carol Coney, Office Manager