

WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES

April 17, 2018

Committee Members Present: Fred Peckham, Pat Jeffer, Al Henry, Andy Boyar, Jim Greier
Committee Members Absent: Doug Case
Staff : Laurie Ramie, Pete Golod, Linda Drollinger
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton
Guests: Roger Saumure

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 17, 2018 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Peckham called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A motion by Greier, seconded by Henry, to approve the March 20 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Old Business

March 22 Delaware Tailwaters Fisheries Investigation Meeting Report: Golod summarized the joint presentation by NY DEC and PA Fish and Boat Commission at Hancock High School. Describing the three-year quantitative/qualitative investigation into anglers and cold water game fish relative abundance from April 1 to October 15, Golod said the scope of the investigation will focus on the West Branch from below Cannonsville Reservoir to Hancock, the East Branch from below Pepacton Reservoir to Hancock, and the main stem from Hancock to Callicoon. The study will use direct and indirect approaches. Agents will interview anglers and ask them to complete survey forms. Weekly aerial surveys will be used to identify angler timing and location trends, but will not be used to detect individual anglers for agents to approach. One agent will serve each branch; agents will drive to access points and wade out to anglers. Boyar said he spoke to an angler who had been intercepted by an agent, and that angler said the agent had been friendly, polite and not at all pushy. Direct approaches involve micro-chipping fish, similar to EZ Pass tag, to study the ratio of fish to anglers in any given location. The nesting pits of females will also be located, counted and evaluated.

March 23 Wayne Pike Local History Roundtable Meeting Summary: Ramie attended this joint meeting of multiple Wayne and Pike historical groups held at the Forest City Historical Society, which is located in the former Methodist Church. The group has developed a "pastport" book, resembling a passport, to promote local historical attractions. It will be stamped at each of 17 attractions. When a pastport holder has collected all 17 stamps, he/she is eligible for a gift, to be claimed at the Lake Wallenpaupack Visitor Center. The idea not only catalogs local attractions that might otherwise go unnoticed, but is in itself both an impetus to visit them and a souvenir of each. On March 27, Wayne County Historian and News Eagle managing editor Peter Becker live streamed on that newspaper's Facebook page an interview with members of the Local History Roundtable. Upcoming special events include a 9-11 a.m. April 28 presentation at the Dorflinger Factory Museum featuring Dr. S. Robert Powell, foremost authority on the D&H Canal and Gravity Railroad, as a kickoff to the Thomas Kennedy Local History Festival that will take place there through 4 p.m.

March 26 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Meeting Minutes: (Copy of minutes provided in members' packets.) After noting that the FY 2018 budget was approved, Ramie recapped meeting highlights, including the organization's \$20,000 discretionary funding contract with Sullivan County. UDSB will allocate funding to the following projects: Rt. 97 Vista Enhancement; "Flyway by the Byway" Pollinator Campaign; Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Education, Tourism Promotion, and Resource Protection Materials; Visitor Contact Facility; and Preserving Scenic Values Workshop. Two Butterfly Habitat Promotion Grant applications were received: Tusten Heritage Community Garden (THCG) and Narrowsburg Beautification Group (NBG). THCG was granted \$475 to cover the cost of printing 170 Monarch booklets and purchase of 30 metal ID plaques and 12 stakes. The \$900 NBG grant will purchase 20-30 pollinator-friendly perennials and compost.

Ramie covered the following talking points items. Village of Hancock Representative and UDSB Inc. Vice Chair Nancy Furdock arranged for Glenn Pontier to address the Hancock Town Board at its April 3 meeting about

the benefits of UDSB membership. Sullivan Renaissance has awarded a \$500 grant to UDSB to offset the cost of speaker fees associated with the upcoming workshop on the importance of preserving scenic values. The \$250,000 grant from the New York State Dormitory Authority for visitor center construction, active since 2007 because Senator Bonacic has yet to withdraw it, has no deadline and can be used for capital projects of any kind, including renovation of existing structures, and/or as a match for non-state grants. UDSB does not have to own a building to renovate it, but a long-term lease agreement between UDSB and the building owner must be submitted in advance of grant funding receipt. The Callicoon Train Depot, already under consideration as a visitor center by the Callicoon Business Association, is deemed an opportune partnership possibility. The Hancock Gateway Tourism Council held a preliminary meeting with the Callicoon Business Association to explore the possibility of doing a scenic rail excursion between Hancock and Callicoon.

Ramie reported that 1,500 biodegradable litter bags are available at the UDC office for group and/or event use. Phase One of the NYS DOT Attractions Signs project, manufacture of the signage, is underway; production is expected to last until early summer, with installation occurring in a June-July timeframe.

The Sullivan Renaissance Spring Market/Conference will be held April 28. UDSB will share an information booth with the National Park Service.

Ramie provided as a handout a list of honorees at the April 22 UDC Awards banquet, as well as banquet reservation forms. A March 22 news release from Congressman John Faso's office, "U.S. House of Representatives Recognizes Upper Delaware River," in which Rep. Faso said, "The river is part of the National Park system and one of the most picturesque scenic byways in the country runs along its shores" was also provided.

The next meeting of UDSB will be Monday, April 23, 2018.

March 29 NPS Water Safety Committee Meeting Summary: Ramie reported that the primary emphasis of the meeting was to prepare for the May 4 Annual Water Safety Partners' meeting that will be held at the UDC office at 11 a.m., as well as to generate promotional ideas for May as Water Safety Month. She also reported that the NPS honor system for provision of personal flotation devices (PFDs) free of charge to all recreational water users, swimmers in particular, is viewed by NPS as successful. However, swimmers have been taking them from access points and failing to return them. As users are not required to provide names or contact info when taking them, no one can be held accountable for non-return. Henry said that, when he worked for NPS, users were required to register when borrowing PFDs; when a PFDs was not returned, the user received a violation notice more expensive than the purchase price of a PFD.

April 12 Upper Delaware BioBlitz Conference Call Summary: Ramie participated in this call. \$11,600 in grant funding was announced. NPS will contribute \$5,000; FUDR - \$1,000; US Forest Service - \$1,000; Sierra Club - \$1,000; and Wayne County Community Foundation - \$2,500, among other funding sources. Ramie said BioBlitz events are increasing in popularity. The upcoming June 30 BioBlitz event in Starlight, PA (at the intersection of Routes 370/191) will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Gales Property owned by Norcross Wildlife Foundation at the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Delaware River. Free and open to the public, the event will feature nine teams investigating aquatic insects, birds and fish, mammals, mosses and lichens, mushrooms, reptiles and amphibians, plants, grasses and trees, and terrestrial bugs. There will be mushroom walks, forest walks, birdwatching walks, etc. For more information and directions to the site, visit www.upperdelawarebioblitz.com.

Other: Henry mentioned allegations of potentially toxic spillage from Barnes Landfill into Beaver Brook tributary. Per a video from Ned Lang purporting to show leachate tank overflow at the site, Henry said the NYS DEC has failed to respond to requests for comment from River Reporter journalist David Hulse. Said Henry, "If DRBC has this great war chest of funds, why aren't they pursuing possible contamination of a tributary less than 10 miles from the Upper Delaware?" Henry said there once was funding for routine tank collection, but the escrow fund has since run out and no one is willing to bear the cost burden. Henry suggested the Committee draft a letter to the DRBC asking it to look into the alleged leachate tank spillage. On a motion by Henry, seconded by Boyar, a motion to draft a letter to DRBC was carried unanimously. Golod will research the Barnes Landfill issue and send letters to the NYS DEC and DRBC, with copies to the National Park Service and Town of Highland, requesting a written update on the status of leachate collection, monitoring of water quality, and remediation plans.

New Business

Registration Information for 2018 Delaware River Sojourn: A DRBC news release was included in members' packets. Ramie said this year's theme, "Still Wild After all These Years," will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Mark Zakutansky, Director of Conservation Policy Engagement for the Appalachian Mountain Club and chair of the sojourn steering committee, said, "Three-quarters of the non-tidal Delaware River has been designated as Wild & Scenic. On the 50th Anniversary, it is only fitting that the Delaware River Sojourn highlights the Wild & Scenic Program and features designated river stretches along our eight-day journey." The June 16 segment will begin at the Northeast Wilderness Experience Camp near Equinunk and end at Callicoon. The June 17 segment will start in Callicoon and end in Narrowsburg. June 18 will be a Lackawaxen River stretch yet to be determined. On Friday June 15, the Sojourn and NPS UPDE will host a river cleanup from 1-5 p.m. Volunteers will clean up a four-mile section of the river, starting at the Buckingham, PA access and ending at the Lordville, NY access. Volunteers must pre-register through the Delaware River Sojourn website: <https://delawareraiversojourn.com>, which also provides sojourn registration details, itinerary overview, and sojourn guidelines. Email info@riversojourn.com for first-time paddler discount information and other registration-related questions.

NPS Long-Range Interpretive Plan Meeting Announcement: Ramie reported that NPS will be hosting a stakeholders meeting on Tuesday, April 24, from 3-6 p.m. at NPS HQ in Beach Lake. She noted that it will precede Project Review and Ops Committee meetings the same day. Over an eight-month period, NPS is preparing a five-year plan for its Interpretation and Education Program. The invitation states, "Park staff and other specialists will be available that evening to explain the process and accept feedback from attendees. Your insights, opinions, and expertise are important to us as we collaborate to create visitor experiences that result in earnest stewards of this special place we are entrusted to protect." RSVP to Ingrid at Ingrid_peterec@nps.gov or (570) 685-4871.

Delaware River Watershed Initiative Update: A PA Environment Digest Blog handout was included in members' packets. Golod talked about the William Penn Foundation announcement of \$42 million in new funding over the next three years for the Delaware River Watershed Initiative (DRWI), one of the nation's largest non-regulatory conservation efforts to protect and restore clean water. The Delaware River watershed is the source of drinking water for 15 million people in PA, NY, NJ and DE. The 65 NGOs comprising the DRWI seek to protect drinking water quality by protecting headwaters forests, which absorb, store and recharge groundwater and filter out pollutants. Golod said more information is available at www.4states1source.org.

Delaware River Flow & Storage Report: Committee members reviewed the New York City Water Supply storage report, updated as of 4/17/18. Storage is at 97.9%; normal for this date is 98.5%.

Other: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Greier, seconded by Henry, to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Linda Drollinger, 04/19/18