

Upper Delaware Council  
**WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES**  
February 20, 2018

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

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2018 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Peckham called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Election of Officers:** Since the January meeting had been cancelled, election of officers took place. A motion by Henry, seconded by Jeffer, to elect Fred Peckham as Committee Chairperson was carried. A motion by Peckham, seconded by Jeffer, to elect Al Henry as Committee Vice-Chairperson was carried.

**Presentation by Michael Mrozinski, planning director for the Pike County Office of Community Planning, on the Pike County Hazard Mitigation Plan:** Peckham introduced Mrozinski, who provided a Power Point presentation on the Pike County Hazard Mitigation Plan that was completed late in 2017. He displayed two large binders with appendices that represent all the information collected. This process takes place every five years. Hazard mitigation involves a sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from a hazard event or any action taken to reduce future disaster losses. Mitigation is a phase associated with preparedness, response, and recovery.

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) established a national program for pre-disaster hazard mitigation and formalized state administration of a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Establishing State and Local All-Hazard Mitigation Plans is a condition to be eligible for federal and state disaster funds. The Act requires updated risk assessments, mitigation strategies, opportunities for public comment and involvement by agencies and stakeholders, plan maintenance, and adoption.

Pike County developed its first Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2006, with updates done in 2012 and 2017. Mrozinski described the composition of the team that worked with Tetra Tech as the contract consultant on the plan. The county received a 75% grant matched with 25% of in-kind services for the \$50,000 project, with the Pike County Commissioners contributing approximately \$6,000. Municipalities were asked to send representatives to meetings and workshops, provide data, complete worksheets, support the public and stakeholder outreach, review and provide feedback on the draft and final plans, pass a resolution to adopt the plan, and agree to implement and maintain it. He reviewed a tri-fold brochure and survey that were circulated for outreach purposes. Charts were produced to document which planning and regulatory documents each of the 13 townships and boroughs in Pike County have, as well as to assess their administrative, technical, fiscal, political, and staffing capabilities. In updating the risk assessment, five new hazards were added to the plan in 2017 to the 16 that previously were listed. The new hazards of concern are: Extreme Temperature; Invasive Species; Landslide; Lighting Strike; and Radon Exposure. Pre-existing natural hazards were: Drought; Earthquake; Flood, Flash Flood, Ice Jam; Hurricane/Tropical Storm, Nor'easter; Pandemic; Tornado and Windstorm; Wildfire; and Winter Storm. Pre-existing human-caused hazards were: Dam Failure; Drowning; Environmental Hazards; Nuclear Incidents; Terrorism; Transportation Accidents; Urban Fire and Explosions; and Utility Interruptions. Mrozinski reviewed slides sharing statistics on each of these potential hazards. The hazards were then ranked according to probability, impact, spatial extent, warning time, and duration to yield a risk factor of low, moderate or high rankings.

In discussion, Mrozinski said that every Pike County municipality has now adopted the Hazard Mitigation Plan. He noted that Wayne County just finished their plan and this nation-wide program would apply to New York counties of the river valley as well. When Pike County put together its first plan in 2006, there was no template to follow which there is now. He said the most difficult part of the process was actually administering the federal grant due to the amount of paperwork involved with that contract. Much of the

implementation and ongoing assessment of the plan is funding-driven but they will review it every October to assess whether further updates are warranted. In order to receive federal or state disaster relief funds for declared emergencies, municipalities must document every dime they spend. Peckham remarked that the Town of Hancock waited years to get reimbursed for its flood repairs which it had to seek bonds to pay for in the interim. Peckham presented Mrozinski with a UDC lapel pin in appreciation for his presentation. Mrozinski remained for the rest of the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion by Henry, seconded by Greier to approve the December 19, 2017 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

### **Old Business:**

**Scenic Wild Delaware River Stewardship Council January 22 Call Update:** Ramie reported that a draft agenda was shared for a bi-annual, in-person meeting of the Scenic Wild Delaware River Geotourism Stewardship Council that will take place on March 14 at the Nurture Nature Center in Easton, PA. There was also discussion about seeking resolutions of support for the SWDR initiative and funds to promote the MapGuide website from each of the nine counties that are served by the initiative (Northampton, Monroe, Pike, and Wayne (PA); Sussex and Warren (NJ); Delaware, Sullivan, and Orange (NY). Reports were provided from the Sustainability/Outreach, Marketing & Promotions, and Strategy & Fundraising Committees. Adding a live feed from social media to the website ([www.ScenicWildDelawareRiver.com](http://www.ScenicWildDelawareRiver.com)) is being explored. Ramie also noted that the February 1 issue of the SWDR's on-line newsletter included an article by NPS Upper Delaware Superintendent Kristina M. Heister on the progress toward converting the Zane Grey Museum in Lackawaxen into the "Upper Delaware Visitor Center at the Zane Grey House". Her article states, "Over \$800,000, awarded through the NPS Rec Fee program, will be put to use making the site handicap accessible, converting the garage into bathrooms, implementing needed building repairs, and creating exciting new exhibits focused on the ecological, geological, recreational, scenic, and cultural resources of the river corridor." The grand opening is slated for summer 2020 or spring 2021.

**Upper Delaware Scenic Byway January 22 Meeting Minutes:** Ramie referenced a copy of a Jan. 18, 2018 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. news release headlined "Scenic Byway Group Has Funds to Open Up Vistas from NYS Rt. 97". She noted that public and private properties along the state-designated byway route (which only excludes the non-participating Towns of Hancock and Fremont) are eligible to apply for non-matching funds to reduce vegetative overgrowth that is obstructing views from the highway. Confidential site nominations may be sent to UDSB, Inc. at [info@upperdelawarescenicbyway.org](mailto:info@upperdelawarescenicbyway.org) for evaluation. Ramie also offered highlights from the January 22 UDSB minutes that were included in members' packets. The New York State Scenic Byways Program has named a new state coordinator, Christine Colley, who is based in the DOT Main Office in Albany. The committee will invite Colley to attend a future UDSB meeting to orient her to the Upper Delaware area and find out what resources the state program has available. The byway committee approved renewing its Directors & Officers Liability insurance policy and its 2018 membership in the Sullivan Catskills with \$100 dues. Larry Richardson reported that he would present the UDSB monarch butterfly brochures at an upcoming meeting of the Sullivan County Elementary School Principals to suggest incorporating the habitat information into the 4<sup>th</sup> grade curricula. There are approximately 700 4<sup>th</sup> graders enrolled in Sullivan County schools. The committee approved a letter of support requested by the Hancock Partners, Inc. for cultural arts programming grants. The NYS Department of Transportation requested input from the committee about where to focus funding that is available for Route 97 shoulder restoration work. They can complete about 4 shoulder miles at an estimated cost of \$82,734 per mile. The DOT recently completed paving a section of Rt. 97 in the Towns of Lumberland and Highland which improved the shoulders but not necessarily sufficient for bicyclists or pedestrians. The question was whether to widen the shoulders further in that original segment or to move north from the Town of Highland into the Town of Tusten. On the basis that the new section would involve Kunkelli's hill which is a steep ascent that only expert bicyclists could handle, the committee will recommend finishing the job at the flat, original area. Ramie reported that UDSB, Inc. selected Saturday, July 21, at the Narrowsburg Union as the date and location to sponsor a Scenic Values Educational Workshop by nationally-renowned planner Ed McMahon from the Urban Land Institute. They discussed options to pay for his speaker's fee and travel expenses, including grants and donations. A tourism task force which recently formed in Hancock is interested in having McMahon

conduct a second workshop in Hancock that day for which additional funding will be sought. Mrozinski commented that McMahon is an incredible speaker and well worth booking. Ramie said she will share additional information with the committee as the workshop details are firmed up and publicized. Sullivan County Planning Associate Heather Jacksy's report that the Highland River Access Improvement Project did not get awarded any NYS grant funding this round prompted an invitation from the UDSB Committee to Jacquie Leventoff, who represents Sullivan County on the Mid-Hudson Region of the NYS Regional Economic Development Council, to explain how the process works and how the byway region can get more notice for its projects. She will attend the Feb. 26 meeting. The byway organization agreed to order 1,500 biodegradable litter bags with the UDSB logo for free distribution. The NYS DOT's representative to UDSB, Kris Gilbert, advised the committee that she is developing a catalogue of Botany Along the Byway based on taking photos of the plant life she sees as a landscape architect while traveling along Rt. 97. This may be turned into a pamphlet. The committee asked her to convey that UDSB, Inc. would like to hold a ribbon-cutting in May to honor the DOT for its initiative in developing new attraction signage for the byway, in order to motivate the agency to finalize and install the signs by this spring. Ramie concluded that the next UDSB Committee meeting will be on Monday, Feb. 26, at the UDC office.

**D&H Transportation Heritage Council January 24 Meeting Minutes:** Ramie noted that the minutes from the January 24 quarterly meeting were included in the packets. She also provided copies of the re-designed tri-fold brochure which added logos and some color features. Two thousand copies were ordered for the various canal sites to distribute. She has a supply available. The next D&H THC meeting will be on April 25 at the Town of Mamakating Environmental Education and Interpretive Center in Wurtsboro, NY.

**NPS Water Safety Committee February 15 Meeting Update:** Ramie reported that she and Cindy Odell attended this meeting held in Barryville. The National Park Service will hold its Annual Water Safety Partners' Meeting at the UDC office on Friday, May 4, at 11 a.m. The National Canoe Safety Patrol will sponsor a catered lunch and approximately 30 invited guests are expected, primarily representing the liveries who will be picking up materials and receiving information to assist with the opening of the boating season. The committee reviewed its budget and plans to order "Wear It!" life jacket usage promotional items including water bottles, sunscreen, lip balm, key chains, magnets, and stickers. They are also securing a button-maker to take to public events. Two interns have already been hired to work on the Water Safety program. Their tasks will include conducting observational surveys, studies, and keeping the loaner life jacket stations stocked. It was reported that the NPS supply of loaner life jackets was depleted; in the next order, they will purchase red-colored vests to help distinguish them from those used by the liveries. Loaner life jacket stations are proposed for Kittatinny Canoes Minisink Base, Kittatinny Canoes Luke's Landing Base, Kittatinny Canoes Riverside camping area, the NYS DEC Skinners Falls Access, Ascalona Campground, and the Lander's Skinners Falls popular swimming area. The committee discussed setting up a high-water alert to be instantly activated on the [www.nps.gov/upde](http://www.nps.gov/upde) website when the river levels justify it. The committee thanked Odell for her service on the committee and wished her well as she leaves the UDC's employment. The next NPS Water Safety Committee meeting will be on March 29 at 10 a.m. at the Zane Grey Museum meeting room in Lackawaxen.

**2018 Upper Delaware River June 15-23 Sojourn Draft Overview:** Ramie called attention to the handout of the 2018 Delaware River Sojourn Overview. The event will start in the Upper Delaware section on Friday, June 15, with optional camping at the Northeast Wilderness Experience campground in Equinunk, PA for the first three nights. The river segments to be paddled on June 16 are from Equinunk (River Mile 312) to Cochection (River Mile 298). On June 17, the Sojourners will paddle from Cochection to Skinners Falls (River Mile 290). On June 18, they plan to paddle on the Lackawaxen River. Meals, programs, and shuttle arrangements are included on the handout. Ramie emphasized that this plan is still a draft. Further details and registration information will be posted at [www.delawareriversojourn.org](http://www.delawareriversojourn.org) as they are confirmed.

**Other:** None

### **New Business**

**Letter of Support for Upper Delaware BioBlitz 2018 NEEF Grant Application:** A draft copy of a letter supporting a mini-grant application to the National Environmental Education Foundation for funding

assistance of the 2018 Upper Delaware BioBlitz was presented. Ramie explained that she was contacted by BioBlitz Coordinator Steve Schwartz on February 16 with a request for the letter to accompany the application that must be submitted by February 26. The BioBlitz is scheduled for June 29-30 at a 63.5-acre site owned by the Norcross Wildlife Foundation in northern Wayne County near the community of Starlight, PA at the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Delaware River. A motion by Henry, seconded by Case, to approve the letter as drafted was carried.

**Delaware River Flow and Storage Report:** A copy of the February 20 NYC Current Reservoir Levels was provided in members' packets. Total combined storage was at 90.4%. Normal storage for the same date is 87.8%. Peckham commented there is virtually no snowpack.

**Other: 1)** A February 14 press release, "Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed Expresses Concern Over Lack of Delaware River Investments in President's 2019 Budget Proposal", was provided. It states that President Trump's 2019 budget request does not include any funding for the Delaware River Basin Restoration Program which was established in 2016 through bipartisan passage of the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act. Henry pointed out that the press release goes on to say that the President's 2019 budget request also does not include funding for the Delaware River Basin Commission. Peckham noted that the federal share of the DRBC has not been fulfilled for many years. **2)** Greier asked Ramie whether the UDC's federal funding has been restored. Ramie replied that the UDC was able to reimburse the expenditures it had paid out of its Unrestricted Fund since Fiscal Year 2018 began on October 1, 2017, but the UDC does not have access to its full annual appropriation because the Department of the Interior/National Park Service portion of the federal budget has not yet been approved. The federal government is still operating under a Continuing Resolution through March 23, meaning that the UDC is entitled to the percentage of its Congressional appropriation that corresponds to that timeframe. **3)** Ramie was asked about the status of the UDC Secretary vacancy. She said that the position has been advertised in local newspapers since last week as well as being posted on the UDC website. Applications are due by February 26. She said there has been a minimal response to date. It was suggested that she approach county workforce development agencies to seek assistance and look into on-line job sites such as Indeed.com.

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Greier, seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. was carried.

*Minutes prepared by Laurie Ramie, 2/22/18*