

Thames River Basin Partnership

July 15, 2008 Meeting notes

Attendance: Patricia Young, ECCD; Tom Seidel, SCCOG; Liz Rogers, NRCS; Lee Szruba, Lisbon; Bud McAllister, PEACE; Dave Dembrosky, CT DEP LID Coordinator; Mike Whitney, UCONN Marine Science; Marc Cohen, ASRWWA; Dave Goodrich, Hampton; Eric Thomas, CT DEP Greater Thames Watershed Coordinator; Melissa Knickerbocker, summer intern; Anne Roberts Pierson, Avalonia Land Conservancy/Ledyard CC; Holly Drinkuth, TNC/GVI; Ruth Cutler, GVI; Mickey Weiss, Project O; Jean Pillo, TRBP Coordinator

Meeting notes of April 22, 2008 approved by consensus.

TRBP Financial Report

Date	Activity	Credit	Debit	balance
02/05/08	Beginning balance			929.42
	Workshops fees (RC&D \$20, NEIWPC (\$75)		95.00	834.42
	April meeting refreshments		19.39	815.03
	Floating Workshop registrations (39 X \$25)	975.00		1790.03
	Workshop Expense (pencils)		163.23	1626.80
	Workshop Expense (insurance)		365.00	1261.80
	Workshop Expense (refreshments)		51.87	1209.93
	Miscellaneous postage		8.10	1201.83
	Proceeds from Rain Barrel Promotion	406.00		1607.83
	UCONN GPS workshop fee		100.00	1507.83

TRBP Coordinator's Activity Log

May was spent preparing for June

June was a busy month.

- June 8 – 58 rain barrels delivered as a result of the rain barrel promotion. Each rain barrel patron received a TRBP pencil with the web address on it. Lee Szruba was thanked for her part in assisting with the distribution day.
- June 13 – Floating Workshop VIII at Mansfield Hollow Lake was attended by 54 participants. New web-links to more detailed information on brief presentations are available at http://www.thamesriverbasinpartnership.org/floating_workshop8.shtml, as well as a slide show of the event. Pencils with TRBP web address were given to all involved.

- June 21 – StreamWalk Training and Eagleville TMDL outreach attended by 11 people and a photographer from the Willimantic Chronicle.
- June 28 – Participated in planting a demonstration rain garden in Coventry

Poquetanuck Cove update: Anne Robert's Pierson and Dave Bainbridge led another CT Trails Day event at Poquetanuck Cove to highlight the significance of the cove and to help recruit volunteers for the vegetative sampling that is supposed to take place mid-August. Floristic survey work continues and final report is due July 31, 2008. This survey so far has identified at least 5 plants that are listed on the CT Natural Diversity Data Base, including one that has not been recorded in Connecticut for 80 years. The next phase of the project involves creating a pre-treatment vegetation map and selecting random sampling locations for the next phase – monitoring for treatment effectiveness and repopulation of treated areas with native species. There is funding for a professional botanist to train volunteers to assist with the monitoring this year and prepare a report of the outcome. In future years, the volunteers will continue this monitoring. Volunteers have been recruited. A botanist has not been hired yet. Several have been contacted and it may take more than one to complete the task. The Town of Ledyard Conservation Commission has once again requested funding in this year's budget to supplement the needs for the Poquetanuck Cove project. The DEP WHAMM staff has the herbicide treatment scheduled for late August/early September.

Killingly Stormwater Retrofit –Eric Rumsey, Town Planner 1 from Killingly invited me to work with his town staff to discuss options for a stormwater retrofit that could be included in Phase 2 of their Water Street redevelopment project. I did research and presented several options appropriate for that location, including stormwater planters designed to collect and use roof runoff; tree box planters designed to capture and filter street runoff and a rain garden if land was donated along the Five Mile River to expand a riverside park. A memorandum of understanding has been drafted that is still being considered by the town of Killingly. The MOU allows the TRBP Coordinator to continue to provide input and possibly assist with a grant application for an implementation project.

Next steps –

- Finalize an agreement with a botanist(s) for Phase 2 of the P. Cove grant.
- Continue to pursue the MOU with the Town of Killingly.
- Assemble slide show on Coventry Rain Garden demo for website.
- Meet with Mansfield town staff and UCONN OEM staff regarding Eagleville Brook TMDL.
- Meet with CT DEP TMDL, Watershed, NPS staff
- Developing Floating Workshop IX for June 2009 with LIS TMDL for nitrates as central theme. Grants to support this workshop have been applied for.

Workshops attended
NEIWPC Conference Day 1

RC&D Annual meeting/tour of CT River
GPS training class

Special Presentation: Dr. Weiss educated all in attendance with an informative and entertaining review of his ten years of research on Caribbean spiny lobsters, *Panulirus argus*. Using a specially designed camera and underwater lighting system he designed, Dr. Weiss has increased our knowledge of interspecies nocturnal encounters and has numerous publications to his credit on the subject. He also compared and contrasted Caribbean spiny lobsters to American lobsters, *Homarus americanus*, which are commercially fished in portions of the lower Thames River estuary.

TRBP Plan of Work – The partners reviewed the proposed 08/09 Plan of Work and it was approved by consensus. The new Plan of Work will be posted to the TRBP website. Liz Rogers was thanked for hosting a conference call that allowed more partners to be able to take part in the preparation of this year's work plan.

Floating Workshop Report. (see above). Funding for the TRBP Floating Workshop IX has been applied for from multiple sources to include funding for the TRBP Coordinator's time. The focus on the workshop will be on the Long Island Sound TMDL for Long Island Sound as that is compatible with the 08/09 Plan of Work. The likely date of this event is June 12 to coordinate with the QSHC source to sea program. Project O has agreed to host the event.

Partner's Reports have been consolidated into the TRPB Partners in Action Report. A copy of the current report will be forwarded to the e-distribution list when complete or can be downloaded from the TRBP website.

Michael M. Whitney, Assistant Professor in the Department of Marine Sciences at the University of Connecticut has submitted a funding request to the National Science Foundation (NSF) in support of a 5-year project entitled "Tracking Fresh Water from Watersheds to Estuaries and the Coastal Ocean" which focuses on the Thames River. He would like to continue and expand observations in Norwich Harbor. The main objective of these observations is to study the physical factors leading to the development and relaxation of summertime hypoxia and anoxia in the upper estuary. He also plans to expand the Thames simulation effort to describe how water circulates in the estuary. Dr. Whitney has requested a letter from the Thames River Basin Partnership that supports this funding request. This research is compatible with the TRBP Plan of Work. The Partners voted in favor of supporting this research.

Dave Dembosky introduced himself to the Partnership. He was recently hired at the CT DEP Low Impact Development Coordinator.

Bud McAllister introduced himself. He is the founder of a new environmental justice organization called People's Earth Action for the Conservation of the Environment (PEACE).

Next steps:

Fall meeting date will be October 21, 2008. Location TBA. A guest to speak about the MA Biomap or Living Water's program is being solicited.

West Thompson Lake Forum – discussion tabled as there was no USGS representative present.

Upcoming workshops and webcasts were announced.

Meeting notes respectfully compiled by Jean Pillo, TRBP Coordinator