



## Thames River Basin Partnership April 19, 2011 Meeting notes

**Attendance:** Dixie Goodwin, TU; Anne Roberts Pierson, Avalonia; Dave Schroeder, Ledyard Conservation Commission; Mike Whitney, UConn Marine Science; Lee Szruba, Town of Lisbon; Bud McAllister, Partners for Healthy Communities; Judy Rondeau, Jean Pillo, ECCD; Lois Bruinooge, TLGV; Eric Thomas, Dave Kozak, Kelly Streich and Jen Pagach, CT DEEP; Aubrey Waz, TLGV WQM volunteer; Grace Jacobson, Woodstock CC, Bev Thornton, Brooklyn CC; Carl Fonteneau, Planner, Town of Griswold; Joan Smith, Groton Open Space Association; Rick Potvin, USFWS; Javier Cruz, USDA NRCS; Marc Cohen, ASRWWA; Mickey Weiss, Project Oceanology; Elaine Trench, USGS

Meeting notes for April 19, 2011 were approved by group consensus.

### Special Presentation

Mike Whitney of the UCONN Avery Point Marine Science Department gave a special presentation entitled *Hypoxia in the Thames River*, supported by Mickey Weiss of Project Oceanology. Each year from June until October, Norwich Harbor experiences hypoxic conditions. The dissolve oxygen concentration often drops below 2 mg/l. This causes mass die offs of the organisms that live in or on the bottom. The cause of hypoxia is excessive nutrient inputs from land runoff and outflows from sewage treatment plants. Dr. Whitney's study of the currents in the Thames River demonstrated that tidal currents carry nutrients from downstream locations upstream to Norwich Harbor in addition to the nutrient sources from upstream locations.

### TRBP Financial Report

The quarter began with \$2,237.93. J. Pillo was reimbursed \$11.85 for refreshments supplied at the April meeting. Income included 19 paid registrations for the Floating Workshop @\$20 each, plus a \$5 donation. Webster Lake Association members were admitted gratis in exchange for the use of their pontoon boats. Expenses for the Floating Workshop included event insurance provided by USI Connecticut (\$233), luncheon at Point Breeze Restaurant (\$354.00) and 2 cases of bottled water (\$11.38). Chips were donated by Frito Lay. The final account balance after the Floating Workshop is \$2,012.70. The TRBP financial report was approved by consensus.

### TRBP business

Motion by L. Bruinooge Second by Mickey Weiss to extend the TRBP FY2010/11 Plan of Work through October 2012 in order to determine which partner organizations would survive state and federal budget cuts during the existing fiscal crisis before developing a plan for this fiscal year. Approved.

TRBP Floating Workshop XI *Featuring the French River*  
Workshop Partners

- Webster Lake Association – provided pontoon boats and an on-water water quality monitoring demonstration

- TLGV – provided funding support for the TRBP Coordinator to organize the workshop

Participation in the workshop, including presenters was 32 people.

Featured presenters included:

Ken Parker, President of the French River Connection

Lois Bruinooge, The Last Green Valley

Norma O’Leary, Thompson Together

Roland Zeleny – SayWatt Hydropower – owner of the Mechanicsville Hydropower station

Jean Pillo, speaking on behalf of the TRBP and TLGV volunteer water quality monitoring program

Before we boarded the pontoon boats, Dick Cazeault of Webster Lake Association, gave a brief history of the lake and Webster, and a description of its industrial past.

On the water, Ernie Benoit, Al Huefner and Gloria Ricker of WLA demonstrated how to use a Troll 9500, a secchi disk and how to use a Van Dorn bottle for collecting water samples at depth for colorimetric analysis for nutrients.

Jean Hixson of US Army Corp of Engineers spoke of the two flood management projects on the river and recreational opportunities on their land in Charlton, MA.

Judy Rondeau, of ECCD spoke about the riparian buffer restoration project and rain garden at Riverside Park in Thompson, the partners involved in the project and the important functions riparian vegetation serve for water quality protection.

Mauri Pelto of Nichols College shared data on a hydrologic investigation of Webster Lake.

Having the workshop in Massachusetts was a great way to introduce TRBP to the northern watershed conservation organizations. There were many first time Floating Workshop participants, including the Massachusetts Assistant State Conservationist, John Kick. As a bonus, Point Breeze Restaurant enhanced our refreshment order from light refreshments to a light luncheon at no extra charge.

Partner reports were recorded in the Summer 2011 Partners in Action Report, available at [www.trbp.org](http://www.trbp.org).

Next meeting will be October 18 at the Connecticut Audubon Society’s new Lois Orswell Grassland Bird Conservation Center, located at 218 Day Road, Pomfret Center.

Meeting notes prepared by Jean Pillo, Watershed Conservation Coordinator, ECCD