



Thames River Basin Partnership July 19, 2017 Meeting Notes

Attendance: Jean Pillo, Dan Mullins, Michael Soares, ECCD; Garrett Timons, Tom Morgart, NRCS; Eric Thomas, CT DEEP, Marc Cohen, ARSWWA; Jean Cass, Woodstock; Sam Alexander, SCCOG; Pat Young, ERSWR/SRWP; Jon Morrison, USGS; Nancy Balcolm, Sea Grant.

The meeting was held at the Branford House, UCONN Avery Point. Parking fees covered by Sea Grant. Nancy Balcolm of Sea Grant was verbally thanked on behalf of the partners for this contribution.

Meeting notes for April 18, 2017 were approved by consensus.

Special Presentation: UConn Professor Jack Clausen presented an overview of a Regional Conservation Partnership Program he is leading. The title of the program is “PATH to Reduce Pathogens in Agricultural Runoff”. This multiagency project is being funded by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Cooperating agencies include ECCD, TLGV, DEEP and others. TRBP has an education and outreach role for this project. The project is comprised of 4 tiers. The first was to develop partnerships, and that has been completed. The second was to target watersheds that were known to have problems with pathogen contamination. Existing TMDLs were helpful in that regard. Ongoing water quality monitoring by TLGV water quality monitoring volunteers is underway, with results of interest already coming in. Following the confirmation of contamination from agricultural origin, the next step will be to encourage the adoption of conservation practices to reduce pathogen export. ECCD will be providing technical assistance in that regard. A forth tier of this project will be to determine opportunities/barriers for agricultural producers in adopting pathogen reduction practices.

Preliminary results indicate that water samples from 2 of 3 samples shipped out analysis at a specialty lab in Florida tested positive for ruminant gut bacteria. Further testing of those samples will indicate if the source is from cattle or not. In total, there are 10 monitoring sites in eastern Connecticut, all downstream of known agriculture activity.

TRBP Financial Report

Beginning balance \$2169.58
April meeting expenses = -\$25.17
Floating Workshop registration fees (24 @ \$25) = + \$600
Donations = +\$85
FW insurance = - \$419.25
FW Food/Misc expenses = -\$282.72
Final balance = \$2127.44

Total FW expenses were \$701.97. Total FW income was \$685, including donations. Net loss from the workshop was \$16.97.

TRBP Coordinator's Report

The TRBP website is still static. EPOC did not fund our grant request. The Rivers Alliance of Connecticut will soon announce a small grant program. If supported by the Partnership, the TRBP Coordinator can pursue that opportunity. A summer helper has offered to copy the current content off the TRBP website to prepare to transfer over to a new platform eventually.

ADA compatible website rules were briefly discussed.

TRBP is listed as an active partner in the 3 Regional Conservation Partnership Projects with an outreach role. Below is a summary of outreach activities completed this quarter.

- All projects were summarized in the Spring 2017 TRBP Partners in Action Report.
- April 20 – UCONN PATH RCPP update on TRBP Facebook page
- May 1 – UCONN PATH RCPP update on TRBP Facebook page
- May 17 – UCONN PATH RCPP update on TRBP Facebook page
- June 19 – TRBP Floating Workshop – PATH project was mentioned as part of the Little River/Muddy Brook implementation work.
- July 19 – UCONN PATH was the featured presentation at this meeting.

A suggestion was made to develop a three panel display board to be showcased at outreach events such as Celebrating Agriculture Day. Each panel will feature one of the RCPP projects.

Facebook updates – shout out to Eric Thomas of CT DEEP for sending easy to copy and paste bits of information for posting on the TRBP Facebook page. TRBP Facebook page followers are still a small group, but when those group members share the information, a greater number of people see the information. For example, 575 people saw the post announcing open registration for the floating workshop.

TRBP Floating Workshop 17 – a PowerPoint summary has been prepared and can be viewed on the TRBP page on the TLGV website. <http://thelastgreenvalley.org/learn-protect/watershed-protection/thames-river-basin-partnership/>. The PowerPoint was quickly presented to those in attendance.

Total participation in the workshop was 37 people. The planning committee decided not to charge a fee for people attending the morning project tour only. About 19 people attended the morning tour including, Steve Winnett and Mel Cote, from EPA Region 1, and Steve Anderson from the CT DoAg. Matt Peckham and Lucas Young actively presented projects completed at their farms. Nine people attended for the entire day. Many were only there for the afternoon only.

Thank you letters were sent to all workshop presenters/donors and to the Board of Trustees for Roseland Park for use of their barn for the indoor portion of the event. A press release was prepared after the workshop that was read over the air on the Putnam Radio station WINY and posted to their Facebook page. Denise Coffee of the Courant Reminder attended the workshop and published an article in that publication. Both articles are available to review on the TRBP Facebook page.

Partner Reports

TRBP Partner Reports will be compiled into the Thames River Basin Partnership Partners in Action Report available for download from The Last Green Valley website after it is completed.

Next meeting will be on October 17, 2017 (location TBD). An appeal to Yale Meyers Forest for a presentation on a Still River Watershed Neighborhood Plan prepared by students as part of their Quiet Corner Initiative, but faculty have not completed their review. Yale Meyers Forestry Camp in Eastford under construction after last year's fire. They anticipate it being completed this summer, along with a new lab nearby. Other suggested topics/locations are welcome. TLGV Forestry RCPP was a suggested topic.

Meeting notes prepared by Jean Pillo, ECCD and TRBP Coordinator. These meeting notes are considered draft until approved at the next TRBP meeting.