



Thames River Basin Partnership

January 15, 2019

Meeting Notes (Draft)

Attendance: Jean Pillo, ECCD/TRBP Coordinator, Bruce Davidson, Gary Lussier, Raymond Schaefer, Thames Valley Trout Unlimited; David Parry, TVTU and Joshua’s Trust; Dan Mullins, Anne Roberts Pierson, ECCD; Joellen Anderson, Avalonia Land Conservancy; Lois Bruinooge, TLGV; Eric Thomas, DEEP; Molly Jacobs, Project Oceanology; Jeanne Davies, Riley Doherty, CT RC&D; Emily Boushee, Senator Murphy’s office; Jesse Raymond, USDA NRCS.

The meeting was held at USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Conference Room, Norwich, CT.

Special Presentation:

A presentation was given by Lois Bruinooge, Executive Director of The Last Green Valley (TLGV). Her presentation was on two very impactful programs for natural resource conservation in the Thames watershed. The first part of her presentation was an update on the Southern New England Heritage Forest Regional Conservation Partnership Project (RCP). This \$6.1million tri-state initiative funded through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is focused on preservation of the forested landscape in parts of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island through the purchase of conservation easements on forest lands, and through sound forest management. After releasing the request for proposals in May 2018, TLGV was inundated with applications from 30 different landowners representing over 2500 acres of forested land who were interested in selling conservation easements on their land. Through a carefully thought out metric, they were able to narrow their focus on parcels over 100 acres in size including four parcels that are over 200 acres each. The overwhelming response to the easement program is an indicator that there is an interest in land conservation as long as there is a financial incentive. Phase two of this project is to fund forest management plans and bird habitat assessments on forested properties. The application process was advertised and closed on January 18, 2019.

Next, TLGV, in partnership with the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, was awarded \$120,000 by the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut for a three year collaborative program to accelerate the pace of regional conservation. The project goal is to strengthen the individual and collective capacity of participating member land trusts. Through this program, they will update outreach materials focused on land conservation and explore options for regional collaboration of land trusts in ways that may include shared services, organizational mergers and development of comprehensive geographic information system tools. The kick off meeting for this project was held on January 21, 2019.

TRBP Financial Report

Beginning balance \$2520.19

date	Activity	Amount	Balance
10/30/19	Meeting refreshments	17.16	2503.03

12/11/18	TRBP website and 2 domain names renewal and security essentials	189.85	2313.78
		Balance	2313.78

TRBP Coordinator's Report

The TRBP website committee received 4 responses to the request for proposal for updating the TRBP website. Caryn Oresky of Gales Ferry was selected. ECCD prepared a cooperative agreement, and work on the updated website is underway.

For the website, the TRBP Coordinator

- Conducted outreach to current and potential new partners to confirm their interest in being listed on the TRBP website as a Partner, along with their web-link, a contact person and email address/phone number. Partners will be listed in alphabetical order on the partners' page.
- A special page for area land trusts will be created.
- New partners are being accepted on a continuous basis.
- A clickable watershed map is in progress, to link to regional watershed pages.
- A special section has been created for hosting information on the RCPP projects
- Input on what water quality data should be accessible from the site is requested.

A required quarterly report was created and submitted to the Rivers Alliance of CT regarding the website project.

A required annual report was created for The Last Green Valley to summarize the activities of the TRBP. TLGV sponsors, in part, the TRBP coordinator position.

During the Winter 2019 TRBP meeting, a Floating Workshop 2019 theme focused on the Yantic River was developed into a program outline. Several site locations for the indoor workshop were suggested. A list of potential outdoor hands on activities were planned to take place in a river park adjacent to the Yantic River. Trout Unlimited offered to demonstrate fly fishing. Project Oceanology offered to demonstrate water quality monitoring and TLGV in partnership with the Lebanon IWC offered to demonstrate riffle bioassessments. The potential for an optional morning paddle on the Yantic River was discussed, with an onside

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 is it completed.

Next meeting will be on July 16, 2019. (Location TBD).

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