



Thames River Basin Partnership April 20, 2021 Meeting Notes (Draft)

Attendance: Jean Pillo, ECCD/TRBP Coordinator, Dan Mullins, ECCD; Cindy Wright Jones, ECCD, Joellen Anderson, Avalonia Land Conservancy; Dennis Latchum, Lebanon Inland Wetlands Commission, Eric Thomas, CT DEEP; Tom Morgart, State Conservationist, Bill Purcell and Garrett Timmons, USDA NRCS; Lois Bruinooge, The Last Green Valley; Holly Drinkuth, The Nature Conservancy; Kathleen Boushee, Sprague Conservation Commission and Friends of the Shetucket River; Paul Stacey, Footprints in the Water

Special Presentation:

The special presentation for this meeting featured Ashley Helton, Associate Professor at UCONN, who gave a presentation on her current research focus “Can Watershed Landuse Legacies Inform Nitrogen Management?” This multi-partner effort includes the UCONN Center for Landuse Education and Research, USGS and consultant Paul Stacey from Footprints in the Sand. Legacy nitrogen is from nitrogen sources applied to the land or into ground water from past land uses. This nitrogen may travel through the water table at different rates depending on the soil make up and other factors, and then be reintroduced to surface water further away and up to years later as the groundwater resurfaces as springs and seeps. Forested land would be expected to have minimal nitrogen loading from it, but if the forest is a reforested area that was previously used for agriculture, the lag time for the ag associated nitrogen load may confuse computer models for that area based on current land use instead of the previous land use. A product of this research will be a geospatial vulnerability analysis to inform land use decision makers.

To see a copy of Ashley’s presentation, please use this link.

https://thamesriverbasinpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Helton_WatershedLegacies_2021.pdf

TRBP meeting notes from Winter 2021 were approved by consensus.

TRBP Financial Report: There has been no activity on the account. The current balance is \$1262.57. There was no financial activity this quarter.

TRBP Coordinator Report

The TRBP website issues reported at the January meeting were resolved with much effort and the website content and webpages were updated. Just prior to the spring meeting, there was a WordPress update that conflicted with one or more of the plugins or themes used to construct the website. Documents can be uploaded and given a unique URL, meaning documents can still be shared through the website, but updating the pages to hyperlink to those newly uploaded documents in the website library is currently not functioning. The website consultant has been contacted and will review the issue to see if it can be resolved simply.

The TRBP Facebook page is up to 174 followers, up from 135 in January. Updates are posted at least once a week.

The current TRBP Plan of Work will sunset in 2021. A discussion on potential updates to adopt in the new 3-year workplan included the updated Long Island Sound CCMP, the Governor's Report on Climate Change, Sustainable CT and inclusivity. The following people volunteered through the chat to participate in a TRBP PoW committee: Eric Thomas and Lois Bruinooge. Additional partnership input will be sought for before updating this important document.

TRBP Floating Workshop 2021 planning was discussed. The theme of this year's workshop will be Coastal Embayments of Eastern Connecticut. It will include a paddle your own boat along a protected area along the Groton coastal region and will not have an indoor component or lunch offering this year due to Covid-19. The topics of discussion will include the Baker Cove Water Advisory Committee, an outcome of the Baker Cove Watershed Based Plan; eelgrass restoration, coastal water quality indicators. A list of additional speakers/demonstrations are being developed. The workshop date will be June 18 with a rain date of June 25. The TRBP coordinator will seek a regatta permit and permission to use the Bluff Point State Park boat launch for the event, and look into options for event insurance. She will also request Project O to conduct a beach seining demonstration at one of the stops.

Partner Reports

TRBP Partner Reports will be compiled into the Spring 2021 Thames River Basin Partnership Partners in Action Report.

Next meeting will be on July 20, 2021 and will be held virtually via Zoom.

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