



Thames River Basin Partnership January 17, 2023 Meeting Notes (Draft)

Attendance: Jean Pillo, ECCD/TRBP Coordinator, Dan Mullins, Maura Robie, ECCD; Eric McPhee, CT Department of Public Health Drinking Water Division; Lois Bruinooge, The Last Green Valley; Cindy Wright Jones, TLGV vol & ECCD Board; Bill Purcell, USDA NRCS Andrew Ely, Callie Sheetz, Project Oceanology; Sam Alexander, SECOG; Bryan Avery, Ada Snodgrass, Joshua's Trust; Toby Glaza, Avalonia Land Conservancy; Tom Olson, Larry Dunn, Town of Groton Conservation Commission; Marcia Kilpatrick, Town of Hampton Conservation Commission; Tyra Penn-Gesek, Thompson Director of Planning & Development; Tyler Johnson, Mike Sturgeon, Windham Water Works; Pat Monahan, Amos Lake Association; Mary Looney, CT MS4 Coordinator and UCONN Clear; Zbigniew Graboski, UCONN CLEAR water quality; Benjamin Baldwin; Dan Malo, Woodstock ZEO and Thompson Conservation Agent; Kate Blacker, Groton Public Utilities; Rebecca Hayes, Preston Conservation Commission; Rick Canavan, TLGV Board of Directors and environmental consultant;

Special Presentation:

If you missed this winter's special presentation, then you missed a presentation by Eric McPhee, a Supervising Environmental Analyst from the CT Department of Public Health Drinking Water Division. He demonstrated a new online mapping tool developed to inform objective decision making for open space planning with a focus on drinking water source protection. This project has been funded by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service through the Connecticut Soil and Water Council. The tool, developed for this project by the staff at UCONN CLEAR, is still in the development phase. Users will be able to click on a parcel that has been scored in a way to provide a numerical value to large parcels and their relevant value in drinking water protection as an open space parcel. A final project rollout is expected in spring 2023.

TRBP Financial Report:

The fund balance at the beginning of the quarter was \$1598.36.

Jean Pillo attendance at Project O gala \$125 (\$1473.76)

Go Daddy website and two URL annual renewal \$163.42 (\$1309.94)

New balance \$1309.94 (unofficial balance not confirmed by accounting report ledger)

TRBP Coordinator's Report

The Thames River Basin Partnership is recognized by Highstead as a Regional Conservation Partnership. Highstead coordinates monthly RCP meetings and workshops for RCP's to network and share ideas.

The TRBP Coordinator took part in a 3-part RCP Leadership Training Workshop series presented by the Institute for Conservation Leadership. The workshop presenters demonstrated

tools to make meetings more interactive and jam boards for idea sharing, how to set ground rules for meetings, etc.

At the December 2022 RCP meeting the TRBP Coordinator was asked to co-present on the Pollinator Pathway Initiative with Donna Merrill, a co-founder of the Northeast Pollinator Pathway initiative. Highlighted in that presentation was how TRBP included the Pollinator Pathway Initiative in the TRBP work plan revision and how ECCD was able to utilize the Pollinator Pathway Initiative in a grant funding application.

On January 19, 2023 TRBP will be represented in a meeting on how to effectively use bird conservation in overall conservation planning.

It has been requested by Highstead staff the TRBP Coordinator submit a proposal for the Annual RCP network gathering along again co-presenting with Donna Merrill on the Pollinator Pathway Initiative later this year. Date and time TBD. Lois at TLGV, as the TRBP sponsor, has pre-approved this participation.

By invitation, TRBP was represented at a Healthquest meeting. At this meeting, the TRBP was introduced to the Healthquest organization as a follow-up to Linda Colangelo's presentation at the October TRBP meeting.

The TRBP Floating Workshop is typically scheduled for June. In preliminary discussions with Andrew Ely at Project O, we discussed finding grant funding to subsidize the use of the Envirolab for a lower Thames River on-water event. The cost of hiring the boat is approximately \$1500/event and the maximum capacity of the boat is just over 50 participants. If we had maximum attendance, the cost per person just for the boat would be \$30/person without any lunches or snacks. It is unfair to ask Project O to donate the use of the boat for the workshop. Our workshops have been averaging lower than 50 participants. A more realistic cost per person would be \$50. Paddle only events have left behind some of our older partners and exclude people who don't have access to a canoe, kayak or SUP. If anyone has leads on small grant opportunities where the grants are awarded on a continuing basis, or of a local business or industry with a philanthropic side mission that would help to subsidize the cost of this workshop, I request you let me know ASAP so I can initiate the application process. The Charter Oak Bank Foundation is one possibility to request funding support.

TRBP website update

The TRBP website has been renewed for another year. The website has been updated to include the most recent TRBP documents including the fall newsletter and the FY22 annual report. It was noted that the mapping resource page can use an update as many new online mapping tools have been developed including the TLGV mega mapper, Anew tool to access watershed health developed by staff at UCONN CLEAR and eventually the DPH Sourcewater protection mapping tool demonstrated at this meeting. Other mapping tools created include environmental justice community maps for CT and MA. Any other map applications you are aware of that are related to the focus of this organization and should be included on the mapping resources page of

the TRBP website, please send a link to the TRBP Coordinator and I will update the page with this new information all at one time.

Please report any out-of-date information to Jean.Pillo@Comcast.net and the content will be updated.

Social Media update

The TRBP Facebook (FB) page has increased to 286 followers. The FB page remains active through the sharing of posts by partnering organizations and random other items that are determined to be of interest to the group. If any of our partnering organizations wish to have their message shared on the TRBP FB page, please send the information via email to Jean.Pillo@Comcast.net in a cut and paste format. Pictures are encouraged.

Partner Reports

TRBP Partner Reports will be compiled into the Winter 2023 Thames River Basin Partnership Partners in Action Report and uploaded to the website once completed.
<https://thamesriverbasinpartnership.org/>

Next meeting will be on April 18, 2023 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.