

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority
Aquarion Water Authority, 835 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604

or

***Dial in by phone**

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Phone conference ID: 302 752 086#

AGENDA

Regular Meeting of Thursday, September 24, 2026 at 12:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order
 1. Safety Moment
2. Public Comment: The time limit granted to each speaker shall be three (3) minutes. Residents and customers may address the Board.
3. Meet as Audit-Risk Committee: T. Cort
 1. Approve Minutes – May 28, 2026 meeting
 2. Review FY 2026 Audit Results: D. Flint and G. Epstein - *Upon 2/3 vote, convene in possible executive session pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(5)(B), pertaining to commercial or financial information.*
4. Meet as Environmental, Health & Safety Committee (*Special meeting*): M. Ricozzi
 1. Approve Minutes – May 28, 2026 meeting
 2. Invasive Plant and Aquatic Species update memorandum
 3. Forestry Management update memorandum
 4. Raw Water Supply/Minimum Stream Flows/Safe Yield/Available Water – *Upon 2/3 vote, convene in possible executive session pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(5)(B)(19), pertaining to safety risk.*
5. Act on matters arising from committee meetings
6. Consent Agenda
 1. Approve Minutes – August 27, 2026 regular meeting
 2. Capital Budget Authorization - October 2026
 3. Accounts Receivable Update – August 2026
 4. Key Performance Indicators – Q1 FY 2027
 5. RPB Dashboard Report
 6. RPB Land Use Committee Special Topic: RPB Police Update
7. Finance: R. Kowalski
 1. Quarterly Financial Report
 2. DWSRF Resolutions
 3. Type B3 Amendment
8. Consider and act on adoption of Cost Allocation Policy
9. Consider and act on adoption of Conflict of Interest Policy
10. RPB Committee meeting assignments and reports on RPB Committee meetings
11. President's Report: S. Lakshminarayanan
 1. Monthly Business Highlights

*Members of the public may attend the meeting in person or by conference call. To view meeting documents please visit <https://tinyurl.com/4bdsdscw>. For questions, contact the board office at 203-836-0337 or by email at jslubowski@rwater.com.

*RPB member (S. Mongillo) is scheduled to attend.

*

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority

Environmental, Health & Safety Committee

May 28, 2026

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Environmental, Health & Safety Committee of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (“RWA”) took place on Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut and via remote access. Chair Ricozzi presided.

Committee Present – Messrs. Ricozzi, Borowy, Cort, and Mss. LaMarr and Sack

Committee Absent – Mr. Curseaden

Management – Mss. Kowalski, and Calo(R), and Messrs. Lakshminarayanan, Hill(R), and Singh

RPB – Mr. Jaser

Staff – Mrs. Slubowski

5. MEET AS ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

5.1 APPROVE MINUTES – MARCH 26, 2026 MEETING

On motion made by Ms. LaMarr and seconded by Ms. Sack, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of its meeting held on March 26, 2026.

Borowy	Aye
Cort	Aye
Curseaden	Absent
LaMarr	Aye
Ricozzi	Aye
Sack	Aye

5.2 INTERIM LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE

Chair Ricozzi noted that a legislative update memorandum was distributed to Authority members. He reported that House Bill 5249, which proposed restructuring the Authority Board to provide majority control to the Aquarion Water Authority, did not advance and died in the House without a vote.

He also stated that new legislation requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (“DEEP”) to provide training for inland wetlands commissions on riparian areas protection, reflecting the work of the Riparian Buffers Working Group, on which RWA serves.

5.3 WATER QUALITY ISSUES UPATE

Committee members received a PFAS update, which included:

- Monitoring
- Pilot at South Cheshire Well Field
- Class actions
- Certification and regulation
- Water quality emerging issues

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority
Environmental, Health and Safety Committee
May 28, 2026

Committee members discussed source protection, contamination regulations, high hazard applications, notifications, prevention, and town controls.

5.4 FY 2027 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The committee reviewed its FY2027 work plan and discussed moving the invasive species update to the post-season period for FY 2028.

At 3:18 p.m., on motion made by Ms. Sack and seconded by Ms. LaMarr, the Committee voted to adjourn.

Borowy	Aye
Cort	Aye
Curseaden	Absent
LaMarr	Aye
Ricozzi	Aye
Sack	Aye

Mario Ricozzi, Chair

(R) = Attended remotely.

UNAPPROVED

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority

90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut 06511-5966 203-562-4020

<http://www.rwater.com>

To: Authority Environmental, Health & Safety Committee
David J. Borowy
Kevin J. Curseaden
Catherine E. LaMarr
Mario Ricozzi
Suzanne C. Sack
Todd Cort

Cc: Michael Freda, CEO
Sunder Lakshminarayanan, President
Victor Benni, Director – Engineering/Environmental Services

From: Josh Tracy, Forester II & Drone Manager,
William Henley, Sr. Aquatic Resource Scientist

Date: September 10, 2026

Subject: Terrestrial and Aquatic Invasive Plant Update

Terrestrial Invasive Plant Species**Background**

Since 2018, RWA has managed invasive species across its 28,000-acre watershed to protect water quality and wildlife habitats, using tailored mechanical, chemical, and steam treatments. To date, the priority program has documented over 5,800 infested acres and treated nearly 750 acres total—with 11 acres documented and 21 acres treated since the start of 2026 targeting destructive widespread species like Japanese barberry, stilt grass, and oriental bittersweet.

Year (Calendar)	Acres Documented	Acres treated
2026	19	20.3
2018-Current	5,845	741

Special projects

RWA is testing three eco-friendly methods to clear destructive invasive plants without relying heavily on standard chemical sprays. First, a contractor uses a mini excavator to pull mature Japanese barberry bushes straight out of the ground, successfully clearing six acres at Lake Gaillard with minimal regrowth. Second, using a grant-funded steam weeder, we are searing invasive grasses with 255°F heat along the Lake Gaillard roadway leading to our protected bat habitat. Finally, for stubborn weeds on the Saltonstall Ridge that cannot be mowed or pulled, we are testing ultra-low doses of herbicides to stop herbaceous invasive plants from spreading their seeds in the wind.

Aquatic Invasive Plant Species**Background**

RWA manages various waterbodies containing native aquatic vegetation (macrophytes) that is vital for maintaining ecological balance. These diverse plant communities support fish and wildlife while actively improving water quality through oxygen production and nutrient uptake.

Invasive Aquatic Plant Management

In 2017, the RWA found an aggressive floating weed called water chestnut in Lake Saltonstall's Furnace Pond. These plant typically grow into thick mats choking out oxygen, heating up the water, and trap muck, which degrades water quality and harms aquatic life. To stop it from spreading into the main reservoir, RWA has been using a mechanical harvester every year since 2020 to scoop the weeds out of the water. This consistent cleanup is working, and a visible drop in the amount of water chestnut in the pond has been observed.



Figure 1: Historic aerial imagery showing plant invasion

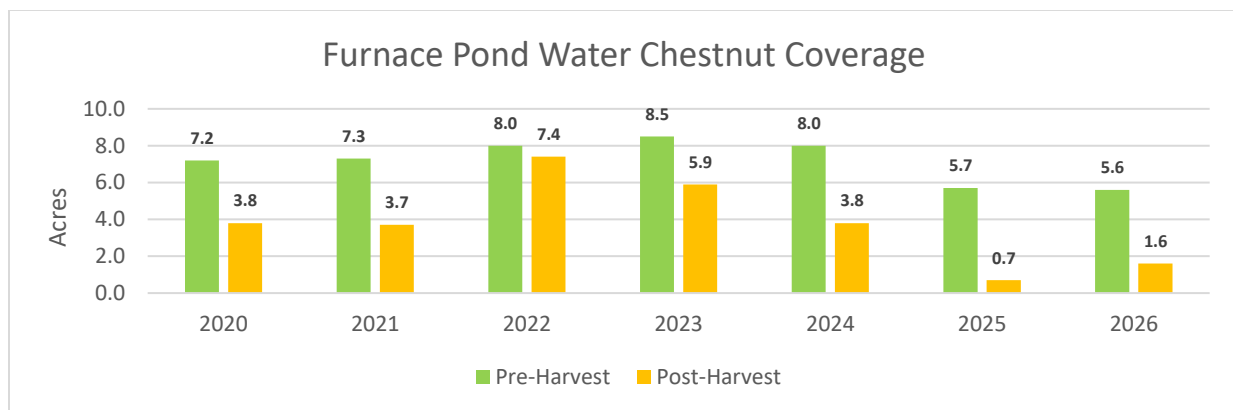


Figure 2: Plant coverage before/after annual management efforts

RWA recently found water chestnut in the Lake Whitney reservoir. Because the weed is tangled up with our helpful native plants, RWA exercises extra caution during cleanups. Creating a full, careful plan to protect the lake from this invasion has been a top priority.

Mitigating Actions

To arrest new invasive species before they start, RWA closely watches and cleans all boats and gear entering our waters. Contractors, researchers, and state workers must sterilize their equipment and sign a form with proof. RWA limits public access to our waterbodies to prevent accidental introductions. Finally, RWA regularly works with state experts and scientists to survey aquatic plants, track new threats, and make sure best practices and protection methods are deployed.

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Sunder Lakshminarayanan, President
Victor Benni, Director – Engineering/Environmental Services

From: Casey Cordes, Forester II
Joshua Tracy, Forester II & Drone Manager

Date: September 10, 2026

Subject: Regional Water Authority Forestry Update

1. Forest Management and Tax Strategy

Active forest management has been a core priority since 1904, when a partnership with the Yale School of Forestry began reclaiming agricultural land. Today, with the watershed fully forested, the program maintains ecosystem health through selective harvesting and aggressive invasive species removal—ensuring a thriving forest that naturally protects clean drinking water for RWA customers.

To manage these properties cost-effectively, RWA utilizes Connecticut Public Act 490, which lowers property taxes by assessing land based on its environmental use rather than its peak development value. RWA foresters maintain the required certifications to manage this program. Consequently, as our *Land We Need for the Water We Use* initiative looks to acquire an additional 3,000 acres of private watershed land, we are prioritizing properties that qualify for PA-490 to keep payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) costs to a minimum.

2. Firewood Program

RWA leases small woodlots to residents and commercial harvesters, generating community goodwill and specialty product sales. While operators harvest unique items like sugar maple sap, sassafras branches, and witch hazel stems, most participants are residents who collectively harvest about 300 cords of personal firewood annually. To boost participation, RWA recently created a promotional brochure for distribution at upcoming community events.

3. Tree Planting

RWA continues its strategic tree-planting programs, focusing on land restoration, infrastructure project follow-ups, and introducing climate-resilient tree species. To maximize efficiency during the spring planting window, RWA engages recreation permit holders as volunteers, fostering community stewardship. In FY26, volunteers successfully planted over 2,000 trees across four distinct sites, including the annual planting at Lake Gaillard's Christmas tree farm.

4. Slash wall Harvests

Slash walls are a cost-effective, low-maintenance alternative to deer fencing. Built from low-value logging debris, these barriers exclude deer for a decade or more, allowing young trees to safely grow past the browse line before the wood naturally degrades. Our newest slash wall will be constructed at Lake Saltonstall. It will protect approximately 40 acres and host an environmental soil study conducted by a Yale graduate student.



Slash wall, Seymour CT

5. Grants

A federally funded Landscape Scale Restoration grant focuses on the 7,000-acre forest around Lake Gaillard, a critical habitat for three protected bat species. The project utilizes a three-pronged approach: controlling invasive plants, conducting state-funded bat surveys, and designing timber treatments to improve bat foraging grounds. Recently, grant funds were used to hire technicians to mark a timber harvest at Lake Saltonstall and operate a steam weeder for invasive plant management.



Example of steam weeder trailer



Saturated steam head in action

The Advancing Markets for Producers (AMP) grant, funded by the USDA through the New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF), supports commercial landowners in improving forest health and timber productivity. This project covers comprehensive management practices. Funded partially by the grant on a reimbursement basis for completed work, the remaining costs will cover forester, technician, and contractor time. The goal is to enhance forest ecosystem health, increase timber productivity, and protect water quality. Work is anticipated to begin in winter.