

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
March 11, 2026

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Land Use Committee (“Committee”) of the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”), of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”), took place on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at the Whitney Water Center, 945 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut. Chair Levine presided.

Committee Members Present: M. Levine, P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, G. Malloy, and J. Mowat Young

Committee Members Absent: J. Oslander

RPB: R. Harvey and C. Havrda

Authority: C. LaMarr

Management: L. DiFrancesco, W. Henley, J. Triana, and S. Vitko

Whitney Water Center: Allison Stowe

Chair Levine called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Mr. Eitzer, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of its February 11, 2026 regular meeting.

Ms. DiFrancesco, the RWA’s Multimedia Communications & Education Team Lead, provided an update of the RWA’s free water science program. She reported on the hands-on water science programs at the Whitney Water Center (“WWC”), offered to students from grades K-8 who reside in the district. The program serves schools, homeschool groups, scout troops, libraries, and community organizations and includes outreach, onsite activities, Project WATER field studies, and water science loan boxes.

She highlighted that the program, which commenced in 1990 has engaged over 395,000 students, including 18,800 in Project WATER, and 57,000 using Water Science Loan Boxes. However, Project WATER participation has decreased slightly from pre-COVID averages, with 717 students last school year and 700 students booked for the current school year.

Post-COVID, participation includes 5,017 students last school year (up 18% from pre-COVID averages) and 4,710 students booked for the current school year (up 12% from pre-COVID averages). The WWC has seen steady growth from 3,074 students and 154 classes in 2024-2025, increasing to 3,576 students and 177 classes in 2025-2026.

"The Water Cycle" and "Problem with Pollution" are the most popular programs, accounting for 30% of bookings this year. The Whitney Water Center’s narrated video, "Bartholomew and the Oobleck," has gained over 238,000 views, reaching 2.4 million viewers, and is the top search result on YouTube.

The WWC plans to expand its Vocation Career Program and develop a High School Career Awareness Program to further engage students.

Ms. DiFrancesco also introduced Alison Stowe, WWC’s newest environmental educator, with over 25 years of expertise, including her role as the former director of the Ansonia Nature Center.

The Committee discussed completeness, mode, and date of public hearing for the RWA’s Land Use Plan Amendment Application and found the Application to be complete. After discussion, on motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Ms. Young, the following resolutions were approved for recommendation to the RPB at its next meeting:

WHEREAS the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, on February 27, 2026, filed an Application with the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”) for approval to amend the Land Use Plan in its entirety (the “Application”); and

WHEREAS at its March 11, 2026 meeting the Land Use Committee of the RPB found the Application to be complete and recommended that it be accepted by the RPB; and

WHEREAS the Land Use Committee recommended that a public hearing be conducted by a Presiding Member; and

WHEREAS the Land Use Committee proposed a public hearing date of April 23, 2026, at 7:00 pm., in accordance with Special Act 77-98, as amended, and the RPB Bylaws and Rules of Practice.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the RPB accepts the Land Use Committee’s recommendation to consider the Application and determined to hold a public hearing, to be conducted by a Presiding Member, on April 23, 2026 at 7:00 p.m., in accordance with Special Act 77-98, as amended, and the RPB Bylaws and Rules of Practice; and

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Chairperson is hereby directed to give notice of said hearing in accordance with Section 11 of the Rules of Practice, as amended.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Triana, the RWA’s Real Estate Manager, reported:

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
February 28	65%	81%	82%	None

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
February 28	1.30	3.08	3.29
Fiscal YTD (6/1/24 –	19.98	29.49	33.95

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Hamden condemnations (HA 5A and HA 7) – Completed the condemnations of the easements along Treadwell St. and fee simple property at Hartford Tpk./Davis St.
- Killingworth, Abner Lane Rd. (KI 6) – Communications continue between Killingworth Land Trust and the Club.

Rental houses:

- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Tarlowski reported that they are working with the potential buyer about plans for the building. Their Avon house was being sold and if the buyer falls through, the money from the sale of the Avon house will fund the Johnson Rd. house.
- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. – Surveyor updating the map and to include an access easement to the retained acreage. Waiting for comments from Murtha to finalize the bid package.

Forestry Update

- Foresters attended workshop at Yale Meyers Forest to discuss acceptable practices for completing the management goals in the AMP grant through NEFF.
- Yale grad student interested to study soils at our slashwalls, and the RWA is working to assist the experiment while planning the harvest at Lake Saltonstall.
- Completed NRCS’s form regarding the NEPA environmental evaluation process that is completed for all federally funded projects. This is to secure funding for pre-commercial thinning of young forest stands through NEFF’s Advancing Markets for Producers grant.

Recreation

- Maple sugaring event had over 70 people attend during the day. Included talk by Audubon’s forester on their Bird-Friendly Maple program.
- Started receiving comments about Sugarloaf that were solicited through the newsletter.
- Contacted summer groups to ascertain interest in fishing programs at Maltby Lakes.
- Recreation activity permit renewals were sent to DPH for Lake Chamberlain (hiking and fishing) and Genesee (hiking - Mattabeset Trail).

	February		January	
	2026	2025	2025	2024
Permit Holders	4,811	4,730	4,833	4,775

Special Activity Permits

- UConn, Dept of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology (Dr. Mark Urban) – Research on pond amphibians - Totoket mountain in Northford; ridge north of Lake Gaillard; 60 ponds distributed to the west and east of Big Gulph Brook (3/1/2026- 3/1/2027).
- Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (Dr. Chris T. Maier, Agricultural Scientist)- Conduct research on insects, particularly longhorned beetles (continuation of 2025 project), and flower flies and to survey for abnormal emergencies of periodical cicadas, Near Lake Gaillard and Totoket Mountain complex (North Branford); near Beaver Head Road, especially Beaver Head Swamp (Guilford); River Road Hamden (3/15/2026-11/30/2026).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Madison, 702 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Abutter requested permission to have Eversource pull the wires in the conduit that is over the property line. RWA replied that it was not allowed, and they are not to add to any of the encroachments.
 - West Haven, Shingle Hill tanks (WH 7) – Murtha sent email to the City Council Administrator which included the latest draft agreement.
 - Seymour, EMS equipment at SWF – Town to execute new agreement for emergency radio equipment at the wellfield.

- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in North Branford. In-house discussions were held about water chestnut harvesting logistics associated with Lake Whitney upper basin.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	0.5 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	0.5 acres

- Deer hunt – Post-hunt surveys were received by the due date of February 6. DPH annual report was submitted.
- Killingworth, Kroupa Pond – DOT obtained permission from the RWA to have surveyors go over our property to investigate the dam and plan for repairs.
- Land Use Plan – Authority approved the updated Land Use Plan and forwarded it to the RPB.
- New Haven, Quinnipiac River watermain crossings – Investigating permissions for the 24” and 36” watermain across the Quinnipiac River. There were no easements. There were permits from the federal government and board of harbor commissioners.
- Drone flights - Flew drone at Armory Street pump station to inspect the north side of smokestack for Engineering.

There were no other land items to report.

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Levine stated that Monday, April 13, 2026 at 5:00 pm, via hybrid, the Finance Committee’s regular meeting will include a review of the FY 2027 Budget. All RPB members are invited to attend.

He also reminded members that the Land Use Committee and the Consumer Affairs Committee will hold a special joint meeting on Thursday, April 16, 2026 at 5:00 p.m., via hybrid, to review the FY 2027 Budget with management. All RPB members are invited to attend.

At 6:45 p.m., on motion made by Ms. Malloy and seconded by Mr. Betkoski, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Mark Levine, Chair

(R) – Attended remotely.