

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
 South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
 June 10, 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, June 10, 2026, at the Madison Slash Wall, Route 42, Bethany, Connecticut. Chair Levine presided.

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

RPB: R. Harvey, N. Campbell, and C. Havrda

Authority: D. Borowy and C. LaMarr

Management: J. Hill, V. Benni, J. Triana, J. Tracy, and C. Cordes

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

Mr. Tracy, the RWA’s Forester II – Drone Manager, and Mr. Cordes, the RWA’s Forester II, provided an update on the Madison Slash Wall/Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) study, initiated in the early 1980s to evaluate differences in forest harvesting methods and the influence of regeneration, stand growth, and carbon storage. Over time, the project progressed to examine additional ecological factors, including soil property dynamics and belowground carbon processes. The study continues to evolve, providing valuable insights into forest ecosystem responses and sustainable management practices.

Mr. Tracy and Mr. Cordes reported on the implementation of the slash wall in 2021, which uses logging residue to create barriers around regenerating stands to deter deer. The approach offers a low-cost alternative to fencing and protects seedlings until they grow beyond browsing height, after which the structures naturally decompose.

They highlighted that early results indicate that the slash walls are improving regeneration, with a 40% higher density of tall seedlings within protected areas after three years. These areas also show an increased presence of desirable species such as oaks and hickories, along with fewer non-native species compared to unprotected areas.

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

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
May 31	88%	98%	93%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
May 31	2.84	6.74	3.94
Fiscal YTD (6/1/24 –	29.58	43.56	46.48

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

- Madison – correspondence with property owner of 14+/- acres.
- Durham – correspondence with property owner of 6+/- acres.
- Cheshire, Fenn Rd. easement – Emailed Town Manager and others about the OSWLA grant money.
- Woodbridge, Baldwin easement – Baldwin’s are in general agreement to grant an on-foot access easement to our land that is east of the Wepawaug River.
- Ansonia, 119 ½ Ford St. – Staff found Ford St. Tank site locked by the USFS. RWA Police found contact person who allowed our lock to go in sequence at the gate. Emailed two USFS contacts since it seems that they will be divesting themselves of the property. We have a 50-year easement for the tank plus an option to extend it for another 50 years. We are in year 33 of the original easement.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. – Bids were opened. Bayram’s had the highest bid of \$40,000.
- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Received update of the plans being negotiated between the owner’s and their potential buyer.

Forestry Update

- Installed 500 tree shelters around tree seedlings planted recently in Branford.
- Attended a roundtable with Senator Chris Murphy to discuss the US Forest Service’s planned reorganization and closure of Connecticut’s and New England’s research and outreach facilities and offices.
- Investigated sourcing mile-a-minute weevils for an infestation in Prospect.
- Inspected witch hazel harvesting and approved the removal and re-installation of timber mats at a new intermittent watercourse crossing.

Recreation

- Held forest ecology walk at Rt. 42, Bethany with 18 participants.
- Kids fishing derby was held at Maltby Lakes with 13 participants.
- The Water Wagon attended four events in May.

	May		April	
	2026	2025	2026	2025
Permit Holders	5,106	4,979	5,037	4,974

Special Activity Permits

- (no permits were issued in May)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural agreements – Talked to tenant interested in the Beaver Head Rd. field. Signed amendment of agreement with tenant for the field at Downs Rd., Hamden.
 - Madison, 752 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Abutter contacted us again about permission for Eversource to run the line after the conduits were moved. We repeated that we would not authorize anything until the matter was settled. Meeting between lawyers and surveyors was not attended by Anderson.

- North Branford, 217 Forest Rd. (NB 17) – Signed license agreement with new owner for the encroachments over the property line.
- Bethany, Hoadley Rd. (BE 17 & 18) – Abutter said they would remove the well pipe.
- Madison, unauthorized trails (MA 2) – Sent letters to five abutters of the Cedar Swamp property about the unauthorized trails and some objects on our land.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in North Branford and East Haven. Assisted Connecticut Butterfly Association effort to eliminate garlic mustard off of Reeds Gap Rd., Northford. Sprayed invasive plants, including mugwort and swallowwort, at the Furnace Pond shoreline restoration project area. Contractor for barberry control at Gaillard.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	0.5 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	3.4 acres

- Land Use Plan – RPB approved the LUP update.
- New Haven, Edgerton Park wall (HA 1) – City, RWA, and beekeeper coordinated with the contractor.
- Deer hunt – Lottery for hunters was run. DPH sent approval for the amended permit for the deer hunt, extending the hunt period from October 9 to December 31.

There were no other land items to report.

Chair Levine reported that next month’s meeting would include the annual election of the committee chair.

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

At 6:35 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Mr. Betkoski, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Mark Levine, Chair