

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
July 8, 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, July 8, 2026, at the Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant, 1 Saltonstall Parkway, East Haven, Connecticut. Chair Levine presided.

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

Committee Members Absent: P. Betkoski, J. Engelhardt, and G. Malloy

RPB: R. Harvey and C. Havrda

Authority: D. Borowy and T. Cort

Management: J. Hill, S. Vitko, J. Triana, W. Henley, and J. Tracy

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. Eitzer and seconded by Ms. Young, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2026 meeting.

Mr. Henley, The RWA’s Senior Aquatic Resource Scientist and Mr. Tracy, the RWA’s Forester II – Drone Manager, provided updates on the water chestnut harvest at Furnace Pond and Lake Whitney, which included:

Furnace Pond

- Current harvesting operations, project history, recent developments, and progress.
- Planned harvesting activities in 2026 to reduce population to levels requiring minimal maintenance.
- Recent aerial photography highlights and areas requiring attention.
- Upcoming visual inspection and targeted hand removal at Lake Saltonstall planned for early July.

Lake Whitney

- RWA expansion for water chestnut removal at Lake Whitney in 2026.
- Access installation and permitting.
- Unmanned aerial system (UAS) photography and selective removal.
- Preliminary mapping and initial findings.

Mr. Tracy stated that information for the visual inspection at Lake Saltonstall and UAS photography of Lake Whitney would be provided to the Committee when available.

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
June 30	81%	93%	88%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
June 30	2.80	1.07	3.68
Fiscal YTD (6/1/26 – 6/30/26)	2.80	1.07	3.68

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

- Durham – correspondence with property owner of 6+/- acres.
- Cheshire, Fenn Rd. easement – Continued to correspond with DEEP staff about the OSHA grant with the town.
- Woodbridge, Baldwin easement – Authorized surveyor to start working on the mapping for the easement. Murtha ordered a title report of the property.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. – Executed the purchase and sale agreement with the winning bidder.

Forestry Update

- Established herbicide strips within the rows of Christmas trees recently planted to limit mowing and weed whacking damage.
- Reviewed NRCS comments on RWA proposed activities and treatment methods in preparation for the NEFF grant-funded activities.
- Expanded Fish Dock slashwall harvest area to accommodate a nutrient-cycling research project and finished marking the trees.
- Worked with a Natural Resource Specialist to design and draft a brochure about the firewood program at events.

Recreation

- Trails Day hike had 9 participants.
- Butterfly walk hosted by the Connecticut Butterfly Association had 30 participants.
- One kids event was held at Maltby Lakes with 23 participants.
- One bass tournament was held at Lake Saltonstall with 37 participants.
- Cleared trails at Lake Chamberlain, Lake Bethany, and Sugarloaf.
- Received permit renewal from DPH for Chamberlain hiking and fishing and Mattabasset Trail hiking.
- The Water Wagon attended five events in June.

	June		May	
	2026	2025	2026	2025
Permit Holders	4,989	4,916	5,016	4,979

Special Activity Permits

- Mississippi State University (Connor Kurz) – in partners with CTDEEP to study the population of black bears in Western Connecticut, map locations 41.40745, -72.96811; 41.43445, -72.96726; 41.38044, -72.96895; Rt. 69 near Lake Watrous, Wooding Hill Rd., Rt. 69 near Lake Bethany (6/1/26 – 8/31/2026).
- United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (Geraldine Vega Pizarro) – take soil surface samples from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station forest plots to compare fungi communities in the forest soils of Connecticut, North Madison (7/1/2026 – 7/31/2026).
- Quinnipiac University (Jeffrey Lombardo) - two research projects: beach leaf disease and microstegium grass-impact of invasive plants and tree disease on eastern forests. Maltby Lakes and along the Mill River near the Quinnipiac University campus (7/1/2026 – 11/30/2026).
- Connecticut Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation-(Mr. Jack Swatt) flowering chestnut trees on RWA property to harvest nuts to plant in their Germplasm Conservation Orchards to preserve genetic diversity of the species; Seymour Slash Wall, RT 79 Durham, Genesee Tract, Menunkatuck, Bethany Tract 13, Lake Saltonstall (6/30/2026 – 12/30/2026).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Madison, 752 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Continued correspondence with abutter.
 - Bethany, Hoadley Rd. (BE 17 & 18) – Abutter removed the well pipe from our property.
 - Madison, unauthorized trails (MA 2) – Two of the abutters who received letters responded. Grosso will remove the patio furniture and move the slide from the playset. Another said she doesn't use the trail, but others in the neighborhood do.
 - Madison, Dead Hill Rd. (MA 4 and MA 4A) – Sent letter to abutters about brush pile near their property. They called back and said the pile was not from him.
 - Orange, Pine Crest Rd. (OR 3) – Abutter noted that the batting cage was removed. We will send them an amendment to the agreement to lower the fee.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in East Haven, North Branford, and Guilford. Conducted drone mission at Lake Whitney to map the water chestnut population. Used steam weeder to continue burning vegetation surrounding at Lake Gaillard. Met with contractor about removing barberry by Beech St. Implemented an invasive brush control study along Saltonstall Ridge Road.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	1.4 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	1.3 acres

- New Haven, Sachem St. easement – Executed easement agreement with Yale for the water main below the discontinued portion of Sachem St. Filed on the land records.
- Orange, Trout Brook (OR 6) – Met GreenVest and state staff at Trout Brook to show them the potential site for work through a grant.
- Deer hunt – This year we have 103 participants at Gaillard, 22 at Bethany, 20 at Prospect and 8 at Seymour/Ansonia.
- Drone flights - Conducted drone flight at Lake Chamberlain with the multispectral sensor to look for over saturated areas along the earthen dam.

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There were no other land items to report.

The Committee discussed the election of the Land Use Committee Chair for the upcoming fiscal year, including the annual expiration of the Chair position. Chair Levine called for nominations for the position. After three calls for additional nominations and hearing none, on motion made by Mr. Eitzer and seconded by Mr. DeSantis, the Committee voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Levine as Chair of the Land Use Committee for the upcoming fiscal year.

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, August 12, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

At 6:34 p.m., on motion made by Ms. Young and seconded by Mr. Eitzer, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Mark Levine, Chair