

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
September 9, 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, September 9, 2026, at Sugar Loaf Recreation Lot, 1155 West Street, Guilford, Connecticut. Chair Levine presided.

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

Committee Members Absent: M. Doyle and B. Eitzer

RPB: R. Harvey, C. Havrda, and C. Mancini

Authority: T. Cort

Management: V. Benni and J. Triana,

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

No members of the public were present at the meeting.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Ms. Young, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2026 meeting.

Mr. Triana, RWA Real Estate Manager, provided an update on the Sugar Loaf Recreation Area in Guilford. He reported that the RWA is evaluating the future of the property due to low public usage and ongoing maintenance challenges. Feedback received from permit holders was evenly divided between maintaining public access and decommissioning the site. Efforts to assess use through on-site cameras confirmed limited visitation. Potential volunteer support for trail maintenance has been explored but has not materialized. Maintenance of the trail system remains resource-intensive, particularly on footpaths that require manual clearing.

At 5:47 p.m., Mr. Betkoski entered the meeting.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Triana reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
August 31	86%	75%	74%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
August 31	6.92	1.42	3.98
Fiscal YTD (6/1/26 –	19.99	4.74	11.46

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

- Durham – correspondence with property owner of 6+/- acres.
- Killingworth – correspondence with property owner of 35+/- acres.
- Woodbridge, Baldwin easement – Reviewed title report. Sent draft survey and easement to the Baldwin's.
- Cheshire, Papandrea properties – Discussed the acquisition of these parcels with Cheshire Land Trust staff.
- Killingworth, Abner Lane Rd. parcels (KI 6) – Spoke to environmental consultant about composing preliminary assessment for the disposition.
- Cheshire, Peck La. easement – Sent all needed documents to DEEP for them to convey the easement across the Farmington Canal Trail to us.
- Ansonia, Ford St. tank parcel – Spoke to USFS staff about their decommissioning and possible sale of the property.

Rental houses:

- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Owners said that they could not close a deal with the potential buyer. They said they would apply for the building permit in September.

Forestry Update

- Worked on bid package for Saltonstall slashwall sale and submitted application to finalize NDDDB request.
- Started planning for mark patch cuts in Prospect.
- Submitted 2026 Progress Report for the LSR grant detailing work done by RWA staff, NRS specialists, and outside contractors.
- Finalized the new RWA Firewood Cutting Program brochure and worked with Communications staff to order materials for printing and display at future RWA tabling events.
- Met with mulch vendor to discuss a strip-thinning treatment of a conifer plantation in Bethany, including the harvesting and selling of pole-sized logs and some sawtimber.

Recreation

- Bat event with DEEP biologist at Lake Gaillard had 12 participants.
- Earthworm talk by a Yale researcher at Maltby Lakes had 30 participants.
- Archery event at Lake Gaillard had 15 people.
- Discussed naming a trail in North Branford with the land trust after Otto Schaefer who recently died.
- Corresponded with one of the respondents to the Sugarloaf poll who said he would coordinate a volunteer trail maintenance crew.
- Milford Boys and Girls Club attended a fishing event at Maltby Lakes with 24 children.
- Cleared trails at Lake Chamberlain.
- The Water Wagon attended six events.

	August		July	
	2026	2025	2026	2025
Permit Holders	4,830	4,916	4,812	4,861

Special Activity Permits

- SLR International Corporation – (Gregory Szyszkowski, LS) - two research projects: ecology & biodiversity: locate/flag limits of ordinary high water and/or inland wetlands; perform hand auger probes for soil identification; assess area vegetation types. land surveying: perform topographic survey and locate drainage outfall pipes within fenced area between roadway and water's edge; perform necessary bridge survey measurements for design team; perform bathymetric survey within 150 either side of bridges, 50 feet from shoreline for Waite and Mather Street bridges; (8/10/26-8/14/26 for ecology project) and (8/15/26-12/31/26) land surveying.
- Friends of The Farm River & Estuary (FREE) – (Isabella Vega and Curt Johnson) - as part of a watershed wide effort to improve water quality and ecological connectivity/function: survey mainstem, tributaries and ponds on SCCRWA properties within the Farm River watershed. Document presence of beaver (*Castor canadensis*) or preferential beaver habitat, including presence of shoreline willows or other closely associated plant assemblages.
- CT Forest & Park Assoc. (CFPA) (Elizabeth Merow) conduct tour of property, Master Woodland Manager Program, forestry ecology, Rt. 79 Madison-Nathan's Pond, (9/19/26).
- Southwest Conservaton District (Ms. Mileena Alvarez) - Stream walk assessment for Honeypot Brook, 330 Blacks Road, RWA's North Cheshire Wellfield, (8/31/2026 – 9/18/2026).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Madison, Dead Hill Rd. (MA 4 and MA 4A) – Foresters sent letter to abutter about removing the firewood and brush. He started removing the firewood by the end of the month.
 - North Branford, Forest Rd. (NB 17) – Contacted abutter about activity in the licensed area. Met with him to discuss what was and was not allowed.
 - Madison, Walnut Hill Rd. (MA 2) – Corresponded with abutter after she sent complaints about bees coming from the nearby hives. The issues she pointed out were yellowjackets and not honey bees.
 - West Haven, Shingle Hill tanks (WH 7) – Contacted city staff again about the license agreement that has expired. Told them that we will be charging back to when the last agreement expired.
 - Madison, 760 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Police spoke to abutter about shooting on his property and using our property as the backstop.
- Deer hunt – Check station volunteers were chosen and notified.
- East Haven, Barberry Rd. fields – Received additional information from GreenVest about their plans.
- New Haven, storm water pipes – Met with Engineering and ACE staff about the city's plan to pump storm water through the city down to Long Wharf. Discussed our rights to be within public ROW's and their need to compensate us if we need to move any pipes.
- Hamden, Wilbur Cross parkway work (HA 11/NO 6) – Sent email to DOT staff after reading about planned work next to our property.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in Woodbridge, West Haven, Seymour, and Branford. Demonstrated steam weeder for Save the Sound and EMERGE. Conducted post-harvest drone flight at Furnace Pond. Continued to experiment on drill-and-fill techniques on populations of *Ailanthus*.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	4 acres
--	---------

Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	3.25 acres
----------------------------------	------------

- Drone flights - Completed drone missions to take photos on Spring St. PS in West Haven, and the West River residuals project in Woodbridge.
- Hamden, Clark's Pond dam (HA 18) – Replied to report that Quinnipiac was discussing the removal of the Clark's Pond dam even though they do not own it.

Chair Levine recognized Ms. Young, who provided an update on the assignment of the Land Use Charter Review Subcommittee ("Subcommittee"). Ms. Young reported that the Subcommittee met twice to review and update the Land Use Committee Charter ("Charter"), which was last revised in 2018. She noted that she made updates to the existing Charter using references found in various RWA documentation, including the enabling legislation and recently updated Land Use Plan, which was distributed to the Subcommittee members for review and comment.

Following discussion, the Subcommittee voted unanimously to recommend the revised Land Use Committee Charter for adoption by the Land Use Committee.

Mr. Levine stated that he attended both Subcommittee meetings and commended Ms. Young and the Subcommittee for the thoroughness of their review and attention to the proposed revisions.

After discussion, on motion made by Ms. Young and seconded by Mr. Malloy, the Committee voted unanimously to adopt the proposed Land Use Committee Charter, as presented.

Chair Levine reported on upcoming Authority meetings and asked for volunteers:

- October 22, 2026 – J. Mowat Young
- November 19, 2026 – J. Mowat Young
- December 17, 2026 – G. Malloy
- January 28, 2027 – M. Levine

There were no other land items to report.

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, October 14, 2026, at 4:30 p.m., and will include the annual pizza dinner.

At 6:27 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Ms. Young, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Mark Levine, Chair