

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
April 9, 2025

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, April 9, 2025, at the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut and via remote access. Chair Levine presided.

Committee Members Present: M. Levine(R), P. Betkoski(R), B. Eitzer(R), M. Horbal(R), G. Malloy, and J. Mowat Young

Committee Members Absent: P. DeSantis and J. Oslander

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

Authority: C. LaMarr

Management: S. Lakshminarayanan, V. Benni(R), J. Hill, J. Tracy, and J. Triana

UConn: C. Witharana(R) and E. Zocco(R)

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 Ms. Young, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of its March 12, 2025 meeting, as presented.

Messrs. Witharana and Zocco, of the Department of Natural Resources & the Environment at the University of Connecticut, provided a presentation on Multitemporal Monitoring of Forest Regrowth Using Drone Technology of the Madison and Seymour slash walls. The presentation included:

- Types of data collected
- Sensor specifications
- Data collection & analysis
- Vegetation response
- Changes over time

Committee members discussed invasive species, expectations, and additional work and benefits.

At 6:05 p.m., Messrs. Witharana and Zocco withdrew from the meeting.

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
March 31	90%	100%	91%	None

<u>Rainfall (inches)</u>			
	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
March 2025	4.57	9.57	4.34
Fiscal YTD (6/1/24 –	34.06	54.99	38.42

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

- Madison – Corresponded with property owner of 24+/- acres.
- Cheshire, Bis property (CH 5) – Checked and marked boundaries. Juliano updated survey and property description. Forwarded to DEEP for the OSWLA grant.
- Cheshire, Moran/Ricci property – Received copy of letter sent from Audubon to Town saying they would not give them expected funds for management since a management plan was never developed.
- Seymour, 56 Squantuck Rd. (SE 5) – Notice of the decision was published in the newspapers.
- New Haven, Route 80 PRV – City conveyed an easement for the PRV to be moved to school grounds.

Rental houses:

- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Corresponded with potential buyer of the property.
- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Tried to file maps on the land records but was told that Engineer and Planner needed to review and sign. Then told to update property owners to present time.

Forestry Update

- Joshua Tracy was endorsed as an Audubon Forester.
- Met with Landscape Scale Restoration grant manger to discuss his departure, continued funding, and reimbursement strategies.
- Submitted a letter of support for a grant proposal developed by Dr. Susanna Kerio to work on a biocontrol for chestnut blight.
- Met with former maple taper at Lake Gaillard and discussed possible Audubon certification of RWA sugarbushes for another taper.

Recreation

- Held star gazing event with astronomical society with about 80 attendees.
- Held two maple sugaring events with about 25 attendees.
- Application sent to DEEP for a bass tournament in June.
- Trout were stocked in Lake Saltonstall by DEEP.
- Continued to review applications and interview applicants for recreation staff. Two people were hired by the end of the month.

	March		February	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Permit Holders	4,842	4,827	4,730	4,771

Special Activity Permits

- University of New Haven (Dr. Albert C. Nyack) - studying qualitative and quantitative data at different locations along the West River watershed. Lesson entails sampling flow rate, water's width, DO, temperature at the Lake Bethany Dam culvert on the downstream side (3/5/2025 1 PM – 2 PM and 3/6/2025 10 AM – 11 AM).
- Six Lakes Coalition (Dr. Gaboury Benoit) - to use a doppler flow meter to measure discharge leaving the Six Lakes property, Treadwell St., Hamden (3/12/2025-3/6/2026).
- Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (Dr. Chris T. Maier, Agricultural Scientist)- Conduct research on insects, particularly longhorned beetles (continuation of 2024 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 (3/13/2025-11/30/2025).
- West River Watershed Coalition (Mr. Ron Walters)-hike to the Yale Nature Preserve to discuss regional open space, Maltby Lakes, West Haven (3/23/25).
- Northeast Work & Safety Boats, LLC (Mr. Jack Casey)-inspection of the Lake Saltonstall Bridge I-95 for CTDOT with inspection firm ATANE; (3/26/25 – 3/27/25).
- Stephen Trumbo, Ph.D. (Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, UConn Waterbury) - Continue research on the behavior and ecology of burying beetles.- Off Route 42 (near the Cheshire-Bethany-Prospect line) just east of traffic light at Rt.69-Rt. 42 juncture (5/15/2025-9/20/2025).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Madison, 752 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Found encroachments of equipment and material over the property line. Emailed property owner.
 - Madison, 702 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Discovered multiple encroachments including vehicles, boat with trailer, antique farm equipment, firewood, storage container, shed, and dumped brush over the property line. Drafted letter to go out in April. Contacted surveyor to find corners again and will install fence.
 - Cheshire, 795 Mountain Rd. (CH 5) – Found several trees girdled by abutter with brush in large piles over the line.
 - Watermain easement encroachments – Discussed further with Murtha staff. Authorized title search to clarify the situation in Branford.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in North Branford. Attended CIPWG Invasive Plant Review Subcommittee to discuss language to be used in the invasives bill that will allow for sterile cultivars of Japanese barberry and winged euonymus to be allowed for sale at nurseries. Issued PO's to land clearing vendor and All Habitat to cut and treat invasives in the Great Hill Rd. field, North Branford (NB 4).

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	10 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	0 acres

- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain – Replied to Notice of Insufficiency from DEEP.
- Branford, Vaiuso ditch (BR 14) – Assisted Environmental Planning staff with addressing work by Vaiuso in the ditch that drains from his property north of I-95.
- Hammonasset Fishing Association – Discussed beaver management with HFA staff in the area of Nathan's Pond.
- Deer hunt – Sent out applications for 2025 hunt.

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- North Branford, UI watermain easement – Got work details from Operations and forwarded to Murtha staff.
- Land Use Plan – RWA staff reviewed North Branford, Saltonstall, and Mill River sections.
- Drone flights – Performed a drone flight for Engineering looking at the pipe bridge that spans under the Quinnipiac River. Performed drone flight over witch hazel harvest.

Discussion took place regarding watermain easements, forestry program, and the causeway schedule at Lake Chamberlain.

Chair Levine reviewed upcoming meetings, including:

- a. Joint meeting of Consumer Affairs and Land Use – Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. (FY 2026 Budget Review – *All RPB members are invited to attend*)
- b. Next regular Land Use Committee meeting - Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. at Skiff Street in Hamden.

At 6:31 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Mr. Eitzer, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Mark Levine, Chair

(R) = Attended remotely.