

**Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District**

Minutes of July 13, 2022 Meeting

A regular meeting of the Land Use Committee of the Representative Policy Board of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”) took place on Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant, 1 Saltonstall Highway, East Haven, Connecticut. Chair Betkoski presided.

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

Authority: D. Borowy

Management: William Henley, Prem Singh, and Josh Tracy

Staff: J. Slubowski

Chair Betkoski called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Eitzer, and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the minutes of its June 8, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Henley, the RWA’s Aquatic Resource Scientist, and Mr. Tracy, the RWA’s Invasive Species Management Technician, provided an update on invasive plant activities at Lake Saltonstall in Branford. They stated that the water chestnut originated in Branford in the 1860’s and it is unknown whether the seeds were spread through the watershed, by birds, or other methods. They reported that the removal process is in its third year and the most successful method is to use a machine that pulls the roots from the pond and deposits them at specific locations where the plants dry out and evaporate. The RWA conducts drone inspections to view and keep up with areas of collection. Messrs. Henley and Tracy reviewed progress maps from 2020 to 2022 of the water chestnut removal progress. It is expected that total elimination of the invasive plant may take up to 6 or 7 years. The RWA has applied for grant funding through the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection but has been turned down two years in a row. Depending on parameters, it is unknown whether or not the RWA will apply for a grant for the upcoming year.

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

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
June 30, 2022	91%	93%	88%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
June 2022	3.07	1.34	3.72
Fiscal YTD (6/1/22 – 6/30/22)	3.07	1.34	3.72

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

- Madison – Corresponded with property owner of 23+/- acres.
- Cheshire, adjacent to Bis property – Got the appraisal from Nadeau and forwarded to Murtha staff. Reviewed affidavit from Murtha and discussed bringing quiet title action to solidify our claim.

- Cheshire, Ricci property – Contacted town to find out status of the OSWLA grant.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Received final Preliminary Assessment. Gave draft disposition application to Sunny for review. Reviewed draft MOU for use with the NBLCT.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Sent another email to the assistant town attorney without a response. Discussed possibility of razing the house to end the matter.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – 25% complete.
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – Not started yet. **A field memorandum and change order have been executed. A preliminary field meeting between the buyer and RWA representatives was held in June to discuss and resolve issues related to the landings and use of a field. A summer start time is anticipated.**
- Madison - Nathan’s Pond Slash Wall Harvest (MA 6) – 95% complete.
- Seymour - Silvermine Road Slash Wall Harvest (SE 9) – 100% complete. **The screened door within the gate area was repaired by the forester in June, who also showed the hardwood debris to a potential firewood harvester.**
- Killingworth - N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) – Not started yet.
 - Sent overdue notice to logger from the Bethany job (>\$10,000).
 - Reviewing request from someone wanting to harvest mountain laurel.
 - Contractor mowed the Christmas tree plantation.
 - Met with four new woodcutters to set them up in lots.

Recreation

- Trails day hike was held at Maltby Lakes and had 30 attendees.
- Walk about biocontrol of swallowwort given by Gail Reynolds was held at Lake Gaillard and had 12 attendees.
- Walked a portion of the New England (MMM) Trail with CFPA to discuss location of the trail.
- Hired Vincent Torres for the recreation staff.

	June		May	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
Permit Holders	5,334	5,991	5,676	6,337

Special Activity Permits

- Beecher Road School (Barbara Ahern) - Study of bluebirds, native species. Trail walking with viewing of bluebird boxes related to conservation of reservoir area. - Lake Chamberlain Recreation Area – (6/13/2022)
- East Haven Fire Department (Deputy Chief James Murray, Jr.) – low angle ropes training on the side of the hill to practice removal of victims; Saltonstall Treatment Plant inside the gate on the left, (6/6/22-6/9/22).
- Native Plant Trust (formerly New England Wild Flower Society) – (Jessa Finch, Michael Piantedosi, Conservation Director) – study of Aplectrum hyemale which is an orchid called putty-root, Maltby Lakes, (6/7/22-12/31/22)
- Shoreline Outdoor Education Center and Guilford School System (Karen S. Christensen, Ph.D., Director)-Provide geology instruction and collect rock samples from the area- Genesee Tunnel spoils area, Race Hill Road in Madison (06/10/2022-06/10/2023)

- Resources In Search and Rescue, Inc. (Celeste Robitaille and designees)-four day water seminar for training and certification testing of search and rescue K9 teams to assist with locating drowning victims; Gaillard Reservoir south and west portion (6/30/2022-7/3/2022)
- Connecticut State Police K9 Unit (Mr. Ryan Cloukey and designees)-training K9 teams in the discipline of tracking, Lake Gaillard, (6/15/2022-6/15/2023)
- Something Projects (Jennifer Davies and Meg Bloom-artists)-piece of art which will wrap around the pipe displayed in front of the Whitney Water Purification Facility, and another which will hang on the fence facing the waterfall at Water Learning Lab on the grounds of the Eli Whitney Museum, historic artifact pipe in front of Whitney Water Purification Facility and the fence that faces the waterfall near the Water Learning Lab at the Eli Whitney Museum, (8/15/22 – 11/15/22)
- US Forest Service (Ryan Nowak, Research Forester)-re-inventory a forest inventory and analysis research site on the property 215 Sherman Ave., Hamden, (June 28, 2022 – July 31, 2022)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural agreements – Sent draft license amendment to potential farmer at Parish Farm Rd. fields in Branford. Spoke to tenant of the Downs Rd., Hamden field since part of it needs to be used for a timber harvest landing. Renewed license for free ranging chickens in Guilford.
 - East Haven, 167 Saltonstall Parkway (Route 1) (EH 7) – Reached settlement with Lucido’s insurance company. Received and deposited check.
 - East Haven, 9 Pardee Place (EH 6) – Checked the pipe to ensure there was no leakage. Contacted abutter (East Haven Memorial Funeral Home) and sent them a draft license agreement for the encroachment.
 - North Branford, Forest Rd (NB 17) – Noticed fire within a container on the property and sent notice to abutters that it must be extinguished or removed from our property.
 - Trespassing – Forwarded many instances of trespassing to LT members including ATV’s at Lake Chamberlain, fishing after hours at Lake Saltonstall, inflatable boats at Lake Saltonstall, dog walker at Lake Gaillard, ATV’s and illegal fishing at Lake Saltonstall, hikers without permits at Lake Hammonasset, cars inside the Genesee area, dirt bikes off of Reeds Gap Rd. (NB), and a broken lock at the Maltby Lakes entrance.
- Invasive plants – Documented and/or treated invasive populations in Branford, East Haven, North Branford, Cheshire, and Hamden. Specifically addressed areas where invasive plants are encroaching on rare, state-listed species in North Branford and East Haven. DEEP rejected our aquatic invasive grant application for the water chestnut at Furnace Pond. Submitted requisition for harvest of water chestnuts. Met with Gail Reynolds of UConn and students from the University of Rhode Island to put up a cage and release the moths for biocontrol of swallowwort, *Hypena opulenta*.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	88 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	4.7 acres

- Deer hunt – Proficiency test scheduled for July. Participants notified.
- Boundaries – Checked boundaries in North Haven and Seymour.

- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain – Environmental Planning staff heard from one of the agencies needed for the DEEP permit.
- Woodbridge, Laurel Rd. (WO 11) – Met with town engineer and IWEO to look at flood plain of the Wepawaug River on our property.
- Hamden, Clark’s Pond (HA 18) – Responded to question about who was responsible for fixing potholes in the parking lot.
- Cell phone towers – North Haven, Rabbit Rock Tank (NO 1) – Continued discussion with T-Mobile about sharing a generator at this site. Reviewed updated plans from T-Mobile and sent them comments. Environmental Planning staff submitted change-in-use application to DPH.
- Branford, Hosley Brook clearing – Assisted Environmental Planning staff with inland wetland application regarding the clearing and cleaning of the Hosley Brook diversion channel. Attended field meeting of the IW Commission.
- Drones – Conducted drone flights at LGWTP, future Derby tank site, and Hamden Middle School with John Hudak.
- Environmental career camp – ISMT, Forester, NRA, and REM gave presentations to the students enrolled in the WWC’s environmental career camp.

Mr. Singh, the RWA’s Chief Information Digital Office & Vice President of Customer Care, discussed with members the need for staggered security at RWA properties. The RWA is currently in the process of conducting a study to determine needs. Committee members requested that they be included in discussions to express concerns and strategies.

Members also discussed the status of the Skiff Street rental house and received an update of the Derby Tank project.

Chair Betkoski stated that Mr. Page, of the Maple Tree Farm in North Branford, is expected to attend the next meeting on August 10th as a speaker but is unable to make the current scheduled time of 5:30 p.m., but is available at 4:30 p.m. After discussion, it was the consensus of the committee to meet next on Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. Members and the general public will be notified of the meeting site when it is available.

Ms. Young motioned for interest in the chair position for the upcoming year. No members expressed interest in the position. On motion made by Mr. Levine, seconded by Mr. Malloy, and unanimously carried, the committee voted to reappoint Mr. Betkoski as Committee Chairman for 2022-2023.

At 6:30 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Ms. Young, and unanimously carried, the committee meeting adjourned.

Peter Betkoski, Chairman