

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee Minutes
Thursday, May 21, 2020 – Montgomery PSB (with Zoom option)

Attendees: Russ Ford, Carol Hickey, John Little, Mike Manahan, Keith Sampietro, Cynthia Scott, Wendy Scott, Dan Seeley, Ranier Lucas, Carol Lizotte and Lindsey Wight attended in-person; Jim MacCartney, Sherry Willey, and Heather Moore joined via Zoom.

Meeting called to order at 6:31.

Review of the April minutes: CS motioned; DS seconded; minutes were approved as written.

Administrative: We will have an ECO AmeriCorps member next year; however, it will not be the first person that Lindsey connected with via the position (she has taken a job closer to home). Lindsey will be speaking with other candidates in the coming days and should have a member identified for our July meeting.

Lindsey believes we are on track for spending down our funds by September. However, she will re-assess next month, after the newest quarterly report is ready. Jim said that it might be possible to get a no-cost extension if necessary.

Storm Impact Grants: Lindsey has been in contact with the State about the Storm Impact Grant projects and will do a few site visits next week. It is possible that some of the projects may require permits/additional assessments. Lindsey will continue to work with the towns to ensure that these funds are spent in an appropriate fashion.

River Community Grants: Lindsey met with partners at Big Falls to discuss improvements, desires, and management plan creation. All partners are on board with improving this site; Lindsey will continue to be part of this effort.

Projects: NFCT repaired the Davis Park steps in Richford – stop by and check them out when you get a chance! Also discussed additional locations to improve access. East Richford near the border station is problematic; JL may discuss with nearby landowners. Could install steps at the pull-out near the railroad bridge shortly after turning onto Route 105A. Possible improvement to the access at Chase Dam on River Rd in Troy? Also suggested: the steps at Lawyer's Landing could use some help!

Signage: Splash, Not Trash sign installed at Big Falls. Montgomery Conservation Commission is interested in putting them up around town. Lindsey will provide the signs (and hardware, if desired) to the MCC.

Mill Brook: Last week of June (also the start of July), the Northwoods crew will be on site, in addition to the machine work. Jim will be able to come. The Northwoods crew may have availability (already funded) to do other water quality-related projects. Let Lindsey know if you know of some.

Canoe trips for MVSD/FNWSD: 2 trips of 6 students each, one in July and one in August. Each student will have their own kayak and tent, and temperatures will be taken. Masks/bandanas/neck gaiters will be provided – probably the latter will be more likely to actually be worn.

Day Paddles: since we are not holding a River Explorer's Trip this year, provide day trips. Limit to 6 (kayaks); provide masks, sanitizer, lunch. Greenwood Deli can likely provide bagged lunches. Could do Paddle/Pedal – kids provide their own bikes. Would also need someone to watch the bikes while the kids are paddling, and at least 2 people to bike with the kids (a few Committee members expressed interest). Set a limit on how many trips they can sign up for (preference for new), to increase the amount of people overall that we can get on the water.

There is a demand for canoe-owning folks to have a guided river trip (RF) – could offer such trips for households.

Events: Cancel Paddle-Picnic for this year. Cancel Adult Overnight for this year. River Clean-Up can still be done, but we will have to write up our safety practices. If folks find river trash (i.e. KS mentioned 11 tires that he has noticed), they can collect, and leave at a location and let Lindsey know. She will retrieve and properly dispose.

Scavenger hunt idea: create locations or points by town. JL suggests leaving something that you can take from the back of W&S signs (draw attention to the signs!). Then offer a prize or raffle ticket to win something.

Missisquoi Rocks: Ranier has painted some rocks, and create a facebook page where people can note where they find the rocks along the Missisquoi.

Adopt-A-Site: with MRBA, get volunteers to monitor swimming holes/other locations. Create totes with materials. W&S partner (help cover tote costs, etc)? RF motions; WS seconds; all in favor.

Virtual programs: virtual field guides? Fishing guide? Videos of suggested paddle trip ("paddle of the week"? – offer resources on the hazards of the paddle, water levels, points of interest).

Other: We still aren't listed on the FPR website; Lindsey will rekindle that conversation.

Upcoming meetings: July 16 – outside the Enosburg library? Mill Brook to tour the site?
August 20 – set for Berkshire town hall.

Wrap up and Adjourn: DS motioned; WS seconded; meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.