

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee Minutes
Thursday, June 25th, 2023 6:30 PM – IN-PERSON at the Westfield Community Center

Attendees: Sarah Lunn, Jim MacCartney, Jacques Couture, Wendy Scott, John Little, Dan Seeley, Cynthia Scott, Bryan Dickinson, and Lindsey Wight

Meeting was called to order at 6:34pm.

Review of the May meeting minutes (Thanks Wendy!): DS motioned to approve; JL seconded; minutes approved as written. **No updates on business from the May meeting.**

Event Overview: Montgomery tree planting with students - 150 trees on the town-owned property where we are funding knotweed control work. RCG events hosted by FCNRCD: Fishing Festival on May 13th was a great event – many and varied booths, 50-60 attendees; hope to do again. Richford Nature Rally was May 19th with students and May 20 with the public; great with students, fewer attendees on the 20th. Montgomery Bioblitz with students on June 8th and the public on June 10th: both well-attended. June 3 Circle of Courage performance was a nice event; pretty good turnout and a neat offering/partnership.

Administrative: Office signage: Sarah created several options; pros and cons were discussed, and the favorite was chosen. JL motioned to finalize the second option; CS seconded; motion passed.

Sarah also updated the recruitment postcard. JL motioned that we print and send out this version; DS seconded; motion passed.

Grants/Projects: Final reporting from Franklin County NRCD for the Enosburg Fishing Festival, Richford Nature Rally, and Montgomery BioBlitz (see above for event details).

Videography Interns – start Tuesday 6/20/23. Lindsey and Sarah will go paddling with them to kick off the videos we wish to have made.

Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi canoe experiences – hoping to get kids out on the river, and would love to get some overnights scheduled – Parker Castle from Newport is a potential option to lead these. A new board member for the Maquam Bay (the nonprofit for the tribe) who is hoping to have more paddles on the river and on the lake. August 26th – ANM River Celebration; the War Canoe will be back out on the river in Swanton. Side note: Guy Choiniere’s family campsite at Highgate would be a great spot for an ANM overnight.

North Troy property at the end of Dominion Ave. 87+ acres owned by the Village. Ellen from the MRBA has been working with the Trustees and other interested parties to explore options for this property - MRBA applied for nursery funds through LCBP; this could be a good location.

2023 Upcoming Events: **June 17:** Flatwater Paddle Instruction. **June 24:** Nature Paddle with Jared Nunery. **July 9:** Swiftwater Paddle Instruction. **July 15:** Missisquoi River Paddle-Pedal. **September 9:** Swimming Hole Clean-Up. **September 30:** Paddle and Picnic. **October 13-14:** Wild and Scenic Film Festival, in conjunction with Jay Peak’s Bean and Brew festival.

Other: MRBA Community Water Walks in Bakersfield maybe June 29th, Enosburg- Giddings Brook, and North Troy – walking (planning stage) – some (or maybe all?) of these are part of the “What’s Out Here” Series.

October 31st Knotweed event – Montgomery River Walk Park...hoping to do a knotweed maze!

Other/Public Comment: Jay Peak snowmaking expansion: looking to the Missisquoi. BUT: concern about state monitoring – the river gets scary low even without drawdowns... Expanded operations means more snow guns, but also maybe a longer time frame for blowing snow. Is it possible to increase the efficiencies of the snow guns, rather than have to add more of them? Another concern is the runoff: the evident erosion on the Jay Branch along 242 was not there in the 80s. Also: location for drawing is above the waste water treatment - need the water in the river to dilute this. Perhaps we could engage with BT Fitzgerald as an independent consultant? Jeff ? worked at the DEC and helped write the snowmaking rules (with BT Fitzgerald?): cfm per square mile basis, based on Feb median flows...

Dan Seeley – Proposal to alter the Richford project from Golf Course Road and to extend it to Corliss Road to take care of some erosion problems. (same equipment, people, and \$ invested; just a new spot). Dan is asking permission to switch the project as noted. Cynthia made a motion that we accept Dan’s proposal, John seconded. Motion passed.

Upcoming meetings: July 20th meeting at the office in East Berkshire; August 17th on site at the North Troy property? Westfield Community Center as a back-up if inclement weather.

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.