

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee Minutes
Thursday, April 20th, 2023 6:30 PM – via Zoom

Attendees: Sarah Lunn, Jim MacCartney, Jacques Couture, Susan Staples, Wendy Scott, John Little, Russ Ford, Dan Seeley, Cynthia Scott, and Lindsey Wight; guests included Charlotte Bill, Dana Welch, Dean Pierce, Denice Crettol, Dennis Williams, Ellen, Emalee Garboski, Gretchen, Marilyn Lennone-Ajami, Parker Eversoll, Sarah Downes, Sharon & Ken Whitehead, Werner, and presenter Carey Hengstenberg

The Rock History of the Cold Hollow Mountains: Carey Hengstenberg from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation presented on her graduate research in geology, focused specifically on the Cold Hollow region of our area. Carey provided an overview of geology, the types of rocks found in our area, and how geology influences our natural resources.

Business meeting was called to order at 7:25pm with a round of introductions.

Review of the March meeting minutes: DS motioned to approve minutes with edits (the date is wrong!); SS seconded; minutes were approved with noted changes.

Updates on business from the March meeting: SL will send out the recruitment postcard language for review.

Event Overview: The Open House was well-attended and fun. March 21's online training seminar provided by North Branch Nature Center's Teacher-Naturalist, Pete Kerby-Miller was well-attended: 26 people (bigger than last year). This training provided an introduction to Vermont's amphibians, what the Amphibian Road Crossing program is, proper amphibian handling techniques, and more. 22 people signed up to be notified of our Salamander Night Patrol events, as the weather allowed. On April 17th, 8 people went out to count amphibians and shepherd them across Guilmette Road in Richford. We counted 27 spotted salamanders, 45 peepers, a few American toads, and a few pickerel frogs. It was very fun, and well-organized (the tent with the lights provided a nice rain-getaway for the kick-off).

Administrative: FY24 Budget has been signed and submitted. Lindsey presented her Work Plan for this year – this will help the review committee better understand and discuss needs and accomplishments at the end of the year.

Grants/Projects: Richford's Municipal Grant: need to revise the work that can be done this year – submitted a revised scope of work and budget. WS motioned to accept, as the revised budget still meets the criteria of the grant program; SS seconds; motion is approved.

Lindsey provide an update on the river corridor/properties project in North Troy that Ellen Fox has been leading. While the large parcel north of Big Falls sold to a private owner, the new owner is interested in conservation opportunities – and there are several other possibilities/ongoing pursuit of opportunities in the area. This includes municipally-owned river-front property that the MRBA plans to highlight in an application for funds for a native-species nursery. The multi-faceted potential projects have recreation opportunities and green-space conservation. Lindsey will continue to update the Committee as the project evolves.

2023 Upcoming Events: April/May: possibly additional Salamander Night Patrols? May 13: FCNRCD Fishing Festival. May 20: Richford BioBlitz. June 17: Flatwater Paddle Instruction. June 24: Nature Paddle with Jared Nunery. Location TBD (based on water levels) – but likely Lane Rd in Westfield to River Rd in Troy. July 9: Swiftwater Paddle Instruction. July 15: Missisquoi River Paddle-Pedal. September 9: Swimming Hole Clean-Up – based at RiverWalk Park in Montgomery. September 30: Paddle and Picnic. October 14: Wild and Scenic Film Festival.

Need help for the May 13 Fishing Festival; let Lindsey know if you're available. 10am-1pm; taking place at 387 St. Albans Street, Enosburg Falls, VT at the Missisquoi River Access, people of all ages and fishing experiences are welcome to share their love of the water and learn more about fishing! Everyone is welcome - no fishing experience required!

Formation of WSFF subcommittee: JC, SS, WS, DP (and SL and LW).

Other/Public Comment: none

Upcoming meetings: May 11 – potluck at the office. Lindsey has a conflict (will be canoeing!) on May 18th, so we have moved this meeting up a week.

June 15th meeting at the Westfield Community Center (JC will book the space).

SS motioned to adjourn; WS seconded; meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.