

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee Minutes
Thursday, August 19, 2021 – Westfield Community Center

Attendees: Mike Manahan, Wendy Scott, Dan Seeley, John Little, Keith Sampietro, Jacques Couture, and Lindsey Wight; Jim MacCartney joined via zoom.

Review of the July minutes: WS motioned to accept the minutes; KS seconded; minutes were approved as written.

Events review:

- Summer Days on the River – we hosted 3 trips in July, but cancelled the final one in August due to both low water and poor weather on the scheduled date. We had good response from our communities, and even pulled in some interest from outside our communities this year! The lunches from Greenwood Deli were well received; though we may want to consider asking him not to include a plastic water bottle – we can provide water without the waste.
- Paddle and Picnic – had a good trip from Richford to East Berkshire, though the low water caused some scraping; difficult for kayakers especially.
River Explorers camp trip – a tough year for emotions; we discussed the pros and cons of these trips, and will be revisiting these this winter as we figure out what to plan for next summer.
- Missisquoi Paddle Pedal – 60+ participants, despite only having ~20 registered two days before the event! Again, low water, but well received by all participants. Thanks to our volunteers for helping pull together this great partner event!
- Knockout Knotweed – partner event with the MRBA; afternoon rain kept the attendance low, but we did get some interest and curiosity. The knotweed projects are on-going; we have learned quite a bit already this summer and will undoubtedly learn more as we finalize this year. We'll hold a summary event in October and plan to have a handout/report available at that time.

Upcoming:

- Montgomery River Clean-Up on Sept 11. Targeting swimming holes
- Partner event: Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi – drumming, local artistry, and free war canoe rides (pre-registration required) on August 28th at the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge.

River Community and Town Infrastructure Grants:

- MVSD and NCSU river trips completed; awaiting final reports
- LHS and MRBA/Arrowwood projects are underway – hearing good things from/about each
- Richford Library (a 2020 grant) is wrapping up
- Outstanding RC grants: NFCT – Sampsonville; VRC – Big Falls; CHC – Keeping Track. Lindsey will check in about these.
- Town of Troy – culver project completed; awaiting final report
- Ongoing – North Troy ditching (and culvert – their 2020 project); Westfield Loop Rd culvert; Berkshire Marvin Rd culvert. Lindsey will check in about these.
- Montgomery Conservation Commission has run up against obstacles with their proposed project; several of the landowners they had hoped to work with are not interested in the project at this time. Rather than develop plans that can only be implemented piecemeal at best, MCC has requested to pivot their remaining funds and the technical service providers to assist with a planning project focused on the Town Forest: bringing together surrounding landowners and community members to address pros and cons of trail systems and property management in the Town Forest. JL motioned to accept this

pivot/WS seconded. Needed a quorum (one more pro vote); Lindsey emailed the full Committee and obtained this electronically.

Release the 2022 RCGs this fall? Yes – start to alter so it better fits our fiscal year: application out in September, due in early November; funding decisions finalized during November meeting.

Focus for 2022: Water Quality – teaching kids about it; improving it. Also River Access – physical or providing new opportunities for people to connect with the river.

Town Infrastructure grants: would be best for the Towns to know in early January about funds they getting, for budget-writing purposes. Proposed timeline: Application out in October; due in early December; decisions by January.

Other Projects: Marlana, our summer intern, is working on two surveys: one for Troy about the covered bridge to help the selectboard gauge the desires of the town, and one for Lowell to gauge interest of residents in expanding the Wild and Scenic designation.

Troy Covered Bridge: farm equipment needs 15' clearance; does have weight constraints.

The stone steps at Lawyer's Landing are a nice addition – where shall we target next year? Big Falls to North Troy? East Richford? Brownway Trail – Missisquoi St parking area? John will connect with Don Gross about possibilities in East Richford. The gentleman that owns the property above the North Troy dam allows people to access the river here [might he be interested in becoming a Town Rep???]

Longley Bridge Road bank stabilization update: field work is underway; likely to find the need for a Phase 1B archeological study – which will probably be about an extra \$6,000. Questions: how long will the survey last? As long as the river bed stays pretty steady; this study will result in a record of what they found, and what that indicates about the history of this location.

Upcoming Meetings: Are people still comfortable with in-person meetings? Yes, small group. Shall we plan to do some Zoom meetings in winter – likely yes. Was the pizza a fun addition? Should we consider doing dinner meetings, and support local restaurants in this fashion? Maybe after we get through COVID (someday).

Our next meeting will be September 16 at Berkshire Town Hall. October 21 in Orleans County?

Wrap up and Adjourn: JL motioned; DS seconded; meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.