

**Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee
Minutes**

Thursday, February 13, 2020 – Richford Town Hall, Richford

Attendees: Jacques Couture, Russ Ford, Ellen Fox, Carol Hickey, Cynthia Scott, Wendy Scott, Dan Seeley, Ranier Lucas, and Lindsey Wight

Meeting called to order at 6:33. Ranier was our secretary for this meeting. Thank you Ranier!

Review of the January minutes: DS motioned; RF seconded; minutes were approved with spelling error corrected.

River Community Grants: Ranier went over the 14 grant applications that we received during this round. The requests came to \$77k. We have \$30k budgeted for grants. We received requests from a variety of groups and for a variety of projects – which is great! The grants subcommittee had a tough job making recommendations, and shared their thoughts with the full Committee. After discussion, it was decided that we would move some dollars around to enable us to fund 8 of the projects, at \$45k.

Montgomery purchased 17 sets of snowshoes and poles that are publicly available. Montgomery Rec also held three youth canoe trips. NCSU Encore had their week-long canoe trip. Missisquoi Headwaters Search and Rescue purchased a backcountry rescue sled. Cold Hollow to Canada began the database work for their Keeping Track Monitoring Program. Green Mountain Club will be converting the Privy at Journey's End during the 2020 field season.

We also funded several “special projects” in 2019: food for Richford River Fest; scholarships for the River Explorers trip; sponsored the Paddle/Pedal; stone steps at the Lowell/Westfield line; overages for the Enosburg Conservation Commission's Kiosk; removing an old water tank from the Missisquoi River; and Bugworks.

Please keep reminding folks that our 2020 River Community Grant round is active, and that application are due on February 3rd.

Administrative Business: Lindsey went over the quarterly report for October-December 2019, then also went over our income/expenses overview for 2019. We brought in more money than we spent. We will need to spend this down – discussed using our funds to repair damage from the Halloween storm; possible cost-sharing to bring culverts up to WQ and wildlife passage standards. We can spread the word about these funds through legislative representatives, and also directly reach out to towns. Lindsey will work up an RFP about this work to bring to the February meeting, where we will discuss all things financial: grant decisions, next year's budget, and how best to spend our remaining funds.

Thanks for your responses to the Committee Satisfaction Survey; Lindsey also sent around a contact information list for Committee members to verify that she has the correct contact information.

Should we do a fun Committee-only paddle trip this summer? Positive response; Lindsey will send around a survey for people to select their desired level of paddle and possible dates.

2019 Annual Report/Newsletter: Lindsey and Ranier will endeavor to get this finalized by the end of the month.

Internal Projects Update: Ranier is working with Noah to get our mapping project actually completed. Needs pictures of landmarks.

Signage on town roads – Ranier will get these printed; then we will go to towns to request having them installed at the crossings. As more VTrans projects happen, we will ease into getting signage on state roads. Some discussion about how to have these conversations – district maintenance crews? Not this time of year, but perhaps in the summer, just to plant the idea.

2020 Events: Events poster is mocked up; we just need dates. Snowshoes Feb 8th and Feb 22; June 6th Paddle and Picnic on the Trout River (Riverwalk to East Berkshire); June 20th Paddle/Pedal (Lindsey will confirm date

with NFCT); August 1st and 2nd Adult overnight trip (need better name); September 5th/12th for the Montgomery River Clean-Up. W&S Gathering at Big Falls? Yes – July 26th.

Other events: Leave No Trace workshop this spring. Fishing Derby – need a pond to stock. Russ's pond could work for ~15 or so kids?

White water event? 2021... Sheldon Springs does a release – class 5 in flood level. But below the designation... what are these release dates?

Art event – sculptural installation? Should be something that reflects an homage to the river, but should come from the communities. Land art outside... Several contacts discussed.

Other/Public Comment: Carbon sequestration; global warming solutions act. Looking at forestry for climate change effort; ag land as carbon sink?; forest preservation.

Partnering: NC High School has a Kingdom Course – kids are outside 3 days/week, and have some community service requirements, too. We could tie in with this group.

Other partners: GMC is doing 200k of work on the northern Long Trail – some of this will be focused on stream crossing, wetland protections, and minimizing erosion.

Upcoming meetings: March 19 – Orleans County – North Troy?
April 16 – Franklin County – Berkshire?
May 21 – Orleans County – Westfield? Committee fun paddle?

Wrap up and adjourn: DS motioned; JL seconded. All in favor; meeting ended at 8:35.