



Schoharie Watershed Advisory Committee

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October 28th, 2015 Meeting

Schoharie Watershed Program, Tannersville, NY MINUTES

Town of Ashland
James Lawrence

Town of Conesville
Eric Dahlberg
Bill Federice, Alt.

Town of Gilboa
Val Riedman
Rebecca Wilburn, Alt.

Town of Hunter
David Kukle
Anthony Coiro, Alt.

Village of Hunter
Michael Tancredi
Alan Higgins, Alt.

Town of Jewett
Michael McCrary
Jim Pellitteri, Alt.

Town of Lexington
Lynn Byrne
Beverly Dezan, Alt.

Town of Prattsville
Kory O'Hara

Town of Roxbury
Joseph Farleigh
Tom Hynes, Alt.

Village of Tannersville
Leigh McGunnigle
Robert Janiszewski, Alt.

Town of Windham
Steve Walker
Don Murray, Alt.

Highway Superintendent
Erik Allen

Educator
Elizabeth LoGiudice

Fisheries Guide
Judd Weisberg

**Greene County
Legislators**
James Hitchcock
Larry Gardner

Members in attendance: James Lawrence (Town of Ashland), Eric Dahlberg & Bill Federice (Town of Conesville), Val Riedman (Town of Gilboa), Michael McCrary (Town of Jewett), Lynne Byrne & Beverly Dezan (Town of Lexington), Bob Janiszewski (Village of Tannersville), Steve Walker (Town of Windham), Erik Allen (Highway Superintendent), Liz LoGiudice (Educator), Judd Weisberg (Fisheries Guide), Jim Hitchcock (Greene County Legislator)

Others: Jeff Flack, Michelle Yost, Abbe Martin, Samantha Root (GCSWCD); Dave Burns (DEP); Joanne Noone (Conesville resident)

Meeting chaired by Lynne Byrne.

1. Meeting minutes from April 22nd, 2015 SWAC meeting were approved. Motion made by Mike McCrary seconded by Bill Federice all present in favor.

Abbe presented on the following SMIP projects and budget updates:

2. Education and Outreach

- Welcome to Samantha Root, the new Education and Outreach Coordinator. Sam joined the agency on September 1, 2015 and will be working on the District's educational programming including the annual Watershed Summit, Schoharie Watershed Month, Stream Crossing and roadside ditch workshops, and supporting the overall SMP.
 - Revived Education & Outreach Subcommittee, met on October 1st, 2015.
 - Training and educational opportunities were announced:
 - Schoharie Watershed Summit 2016
 - Spring SWAC Meeting will have an educational component to provide a better understanding of SMIP applications
 - Stream Crossing Workshop will provide education to highway departments and others interested in learning about stream crossings and culvert design
- Lynne Byrne gave a summary of the Education and Outreach offered at the Lexington Watershed Awareness Workshops:
 - Students were able to learn about the diversity and importance of the watershed
 - Students painted a stone tile that was left at the park
 - Between 8-18 students attended the events
 - Most attendance at the Night Critters program
 - Students came from far away (e.g., Grand Gorge, NY)
 - Parents also stayed for the events

- The program was a success in that the children that participated benefited greatly from the four workshops. Although the attendance ranged from 8 – 18, there was a core group of children that attended all four workshops and, along with their parents, thoroughly enjoyed the program.
- Bob J. inquired how the kids were recruited. Flyers were sent home through the Elementary Schools, radio advertisements and emails. Beverly D. noted getting kids to the Park was a challenge, otherwise more would likely have attended.

3. Habitat and Recreation Funding Guidelines

- As discussed at the April 2015 meeting, funding guidelines for Habitat and Recreation SMIP applications were formed by GCSWCD staff to provide direction on fundable items in proximity to a stream and associated risk level (funding guidelines provided in meeting handouts).
- Floodway eligible: Riparian plantings, public stream access, low impact fishing trails, and stream access that must be constructed with pervious surfaces except in certain cases when providing ADA compliant stream access.
- Floodplain eligible: Riparian plantings, public stream access, rain gardens, interpretive signage and kiosks focusing on stream and floodplain management, and stream access that must be constructed with pervious surfaces except in certain cases when providing ADA compliant stream access.
- Judd Weisberg inquired about low impact walking surfaces and boat launches. Both are possible, will depend on the material and risk level and would be reviewed on a case by case basis.

4. Budget Update

- Since the program started in 2008, there have been 11 rounds of funding with \$2,277,735 allocated for 49 projects. Most are complete, some are ongoing and some in process. Break out as follows:
 - i. Landowner Assistance (7 awards): \$1,050,000.00
 - ii. Stormwater & Critical Area Seeding (3 awards): \$72,285.50
 - iii. Recreation & Habitat (6 awards): \$81,569.37
 - iv. Education & Outreach (16 awards): \$71,750.02
 - v. Planning & Assessment (4 awards): \$118,259.35
 - vi. Highway & Infrastructure (9 awards): \$566,148.02
 - vii. Flood Hazard Mitigation (4 awards): \$317,722.50
- The funding goes in five year cycles with contracts renewed between GCSWCD and NYCDEP (next contract January 2016).

5. Project Proposal Scoring Process

- Scoring criteria is used for technical projects involving landowner assistance (stream restoration) and highway and infrastructure. The scoring process rates projects in 9 categories and looks for consistency with program goals, stream stewardship principles, sound methodology and threat level among others. A minimum of 50/100 points is needed for funding. Staff from GCSWCD and DEP rank projects individually

and the average of the total score determines what is funded. (Copies of the scoring sheet were handed out).

- Examples of previously funded and implemented SMIP projects were highlighted to show proposals that passed the scoring threshold - including the Holden Stream restoration project in Ashland and Glen Ave. Culvert upgrade in the Village of Hunter.

6. Proposals Submitted and Decisions Made

For more information on each proposal, see the Summary of Round 12 Applications. If anyone wants to see the actual application contact Abbe.

- **Education and Outreach**

- No applications submitted.

- **Landowner Assistance**

- Malegiannakis Streambank Stabilization Project

- *Proposal:* restore eroding streambank along Batavia Kill.
- Site visits and scoring revealed that headcuts (erosion) into the fields are due to surface runoff (not stream-related).
- *Project score:* 45.6 (ineligible for funding).
- *GCSWCD staff recommendation:* referral to Watershed Agricultural Council Small Farm Program. WAC will work with small farm owners to develop Whole Farm Plans. Stream buffer protection is generally a component of these plans. GCSWCD has reached out to Rob Birdsall from the Watershed Agricultural Program to determine whether this landowner would meet the criteria for participation in the Small Farms Program. He encouraged GCSWCD to have the landowner submit an application. GCSWCD will send the landowner a WAP Farmer Application.

- Sawicki-LaPierre Schoharie Riparian Buffer Project

- *Proposal:* stabilize approximately 275' of erosion along the Schoharie Creek by installing rip-rap and planting ecologically appropriate trees, shrubs, and herbaceous vegetation. This is the second application submitted by these landowners; the first, which requested rock armament, re-grading and riparian plantings, was denied in December 2011, it did not score high enough for funding. This application requested assistance with riparian plantings and was revised to include riprap along the streambank after a site visit with a GCSW technician.
- *Project score:* 44.4 (ineligible for funding)
- *GCSWCD staff recommendation:* referral to the Catskill Stream Buffer Initiative, a program offered by GCSWCD in partnership with NYCDEP.

- Laura Weyeneth, CSBI Coordinator at GCSWCD, has been made aware of this project and will follow up with the landowners.

- **Planning & Assessment**

- No applications submitted.

- **Highway & Infrastructure**

- Riverside Drive Culvert Upgrade – Village of Hunter

- *Proposal:* Replace a culvert that conveys stream flow from an unnamed tributary to the Schoharie Creek under Riverside Drive. The funding request is for engineering services, materials, and construction costs. At a minimum, the culvert upgrade will be designed to convey flows equal to the 25-year frequency event. The primary goal is to reduce risk and provide safe conveyance of storm flows. The applicant's proposed project may also address multiple objectives, such as improving native fish passage, providing for sediment transport, and reducing impacts to stream morphology.
- *Project score:* 41.6 (ineligible for funding).
- *GCSWCD staff recommendation:* Work with GCSWCD to identify culverts that have an impact on stream system stability leading to water quality degradation, while also providing for other benefits, such as improved fish passage and reduced flooding. The Stream Management Implementation Program is not intended for routine culvert maintenance, but GCSW can model culvert sizes for highway departments to ensure the properly sized conveyances are installed.

- Siam Road and Old Road Culvert Upgrades – Town of Windham

- *Proposal:* Replace two culverts. One culvert conveys stream flow from an unnamed tributary under Siam Road to Mad Brook (Batavia Kill sub-basin). The second culvert conveys flow from an unnamed tributary under Old Road to the Batavia Kill. The funding request is for engineering services, materials, and construction costs. The goal is to reduce risk and provide safe conveyance of storm flows. The applicant's proposed project may also address multiple objectives, such as improving native fish passage, providing for sediment transport, and reducing impacts to stream morphology.
- *Project score:* Siam Road culvert scored 44.4 and Old Road culvert scored 43.4 (projects both ineligible for funding).
- *GCSWCD staff recommendation:* Work with GCSWCD to identify culverts that have an impact on stream system stability leading to water quality degradation, while also providing for other benefits, such as improved fish passage and reduced flooding. The Stream Management Implementation Program is not intended for routine culvert maintenance.
- *Jim Lawrence* noted the banks along the tributary under Siam Rd. are eroding because the culvert is undersized and questioned why it didn't rank high enough. Jeff responded the culvert projects that SMIP funds have more direct benefits to stream stability, this did not, it is an old culvert that is corroding and due for replacement.

- Mountaintop Highway Ditch Stabilization Program – Highway Superintendents Subcommittee
 - *Proposal:* This program proposes an organized approach to working with local, county, and state highway departments to encourage greater use of innovative stabilization materials and practices that are available in the modern market place. This program would encourage the application of those materials and practices by offsetting the cost of the more advanced stabilization methods. Municipalities would apply to GCSWCD which will conduct a site visit to determine suitability of proposed treatments given slope and soil conditions.
 - *Bill F.* questioned the life expectancy of material, it depends on what is used, some biodegrade, some do not.
 - *GCSWCD staff recommendation:* fund at level requested.
 - **Resolution #8 of 2015** – motion to approve request by Mike McCrary, seconded by Bill Federice all present in favor. Committee approved \$50,000 in funding for the Mountaintop Highway Ditch Stabilization Program.
- Mountaintop Sweeper/Vacuum Truck – Greene County Highway Department
 - *Proposal:* This is a modification to the original application for the purchase of an additional sweeper/vacuum truck. The second truck will increase the capacity of watershed municipalities to remove winter abrasives and potential pollutants from watershed roadways. The original application was for \$40,000; the current request is for an additional \$10,000 which will provide for a total match of \$50,000.
 - *GCSWCD staff recommendation:* fund at level requested.
 - **Resolution #9 of 2015** – motion to approve request by Mike McCrary, seconded by Erik Allen all present in favor. Committee approved \$50,000 in funding for the Mountaintop Sweeper/Vacuum Truck.

- **Recreation and Habitat**

- Prattville Conine Recreation Field Fishing Gateway – Town of Prattville
 - *Proposal:* Part of a redevelopment and expansion of the Conine Field Recreation Complex in Prattville, this project will focus on repairing and improving the fishing area and canoe launch at Conine Field. The goal of this project is to develop a fishing area that may be used by residents and visitors to the region.
 - *Judd Weisberg* asked to see the full application, noting this stretch of stream is conducive for developing a kayak or canoe launch with mini-flows. Getting around the barrier dam would need to be considered but is not insurmountable. He questioned how the Japanese knotweed would be maintained. The town will develop a maintenance plan to include, which will likely be the highway department.

- *GCSWCD staff recommendation:* fund up to \$20,700. Funding is contingent on approved site plan and permitting, as well as a written agreement for operation and maintenance of the project.
 - **Resolution #10 of 2015** – motion to approve request by Judd Weisberg, seconded by Mike McCrary. Erik Allan opposed. Remaining members present in favor. Committee approved \$20,700 in funding to the Prattsville Conine Recreation Field Fishing Gateway.
- **Flood Hazard Mitigation**
 - Conesville Local Flood Analysis – Town of Conesville
 - *Proposal:* The Flood Mitigation Analysis will provide baseline hydraulic modeling, evaluate the mitigation alternatives, and a Flood Engineering Analysis Report. The work completed through the local flood analysis will identify potential projects that may reduce the impacts of flooding for the Town of Conesville.
 - *GCSWCD staff recommendation:* fund at level requested.
 - **Resolution #11 of 2015** – motion to approve request by Bob Janiszewski, seconded by Judd Weisberg all present in favor. Committee approved \$40,000 in funding to the Conesville Local Flood Analysis.
 - Bill F. thanked GCSW and DEP for the stream restoration project

7. Local Flood Analysis (remaining communities)

- Communities within the Schoharie Basin with population centers (those with DEP Hamlet Designation Areas) are eligible for funding to conduct a Local Flood Analysis (LFA) to determine if flood mitigation practices can reduce flood risk. Below is the status of communities in the LFA program:
 - i. Windham – almost completed. Potential for two flood mitigation projects in the business district that would reduce surface water elevations to a number of structures in the floodplain.
 - ii. Prattsville – done. Potential for flood mitigation projects in the business district that would reduce surface water elevations to a number of structures in the floodplain. Town working through benefit/cost analysis on some.
 - iii. Hamlet of Ashland – intend to start this winter, need to form a flood advisory committee (FAC) and put RFP out.
 - iv. Tannersville – intend to start sometime in 2016, Village has a number of projects occurring where the LFA results would be useful to have.
 - v. Village of Hunter – the hamlet designation area along Main Street will go through the LFA sometime in the next year.
 - vi. Jewett – need to work with the town on the study area.

Next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 21st, 2016. Location to be determined. Round 13 SMIP applications due on March 15, 2016