



July 19, 2016

LRWP Meeting Minutes

- I. Attendees: Nick Tufaro (Middlesex County Planning), Bill Schultz (Raritan RIVERKEEPER), Lorraine McCartney, Elizabeth Schuster (The Nature Conservancy), Heather Fenyk (LRWP), Susan Edmunds (LRWP), Sara Malone (Rutgers Sustainable Raritan River Initiative), John Keller (coLAB Arts), Tom Boccino (Somerset County Planning), Andy Still (Central Jersey Stream Tream), Jose Rosales, David Hsu, Tian Ruan (LRWP), Linnette Morel, Janet Camrillo

- II. Special Presentation by Raritan RIVERKEEPER Bill Schultz on public access sites from Branchburg to the Raritan River. Find the tour as the “Raritan River Access Points Guide” in pdf here: <http://nynjbaykeeper.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/raritanriveraccess.pdf>
 - a. Raritan River Access Point #1: Old York Road, Branchburg (launch)
 - b. Raritan River Access Point #2: Headgates Dam, Bridgewater (hazard)
 - i. Paddling is all downstream, too dangerous to paddle upstream (2 car trip required). Tom Boccino: Somerset County has prioritized this dam for removal. The challenge is maintaining the flow through the canal. Also Bridgewater Twp has a major sewer line that removing a dam would lead to creating a new sewer line.
 - c. Raritan River Access Point #3: Duke Island Park, Bridgewater (launch)
 - i. Does not have adequate flow, w/ remediation it could have slow moving current appropriate for kids. No landing or launching point in the park.
 - d. Point #4: Robert Street, Raritan (launch)
 - i. Bikeway meets up with “Edgewater Drive”
 - e. Point #5: Former Robert Street Dam (left footings on the River when dam was removed)
 - f. Point #6: Former Nevius Street Dam – depth is ok for kayak
 - g. Point #7: Duke Park, Manville – municipal park, often floods. River is eroding around root system - several trees (looked like Manville DPW mows up to River’s edge)
 - h. Point #8: Manville Weir
 - i. Point #9: Island Farm Weir @ confluence of Millstone & Raritan. This is more or less the absolute stop for salt water coming up the River. The dam will probably remain. The fish ladder is a maintenance nightmare & very ineffective – poorly designed. Not much there to encourage fish to go up the ramp – considering a series of rocky pools to orient the fish to final go over the top. Dam itself is problematic – series of steps, not safe. Water company makes a right-of-way to through the property to portage.

- j. Point #10: Former Calco Dam, Bridgewater (hazard). Former Calco chemical dumping ground.
- k. Point #11: Fieldville Dam, Franklin Twp. – more than half of the dam structure has been removed. What is left speeds the flow up a bit, some fisherman like it because it's some structure in the water
- l. Point #12: Behind Piscataway Elks "Danger: River Ahead, Keep Out" – Riverside Park (430 River Road) – result of SRRI, ANJEC, NPS collaboration. Unfortunately sewer line at the park has to be rebuilt & the park will be torn up.
- m. Point #13: Johnson Park, Piscataway
- n. Point #14: New Brunswick (launch) – adjacent to the Rutgers boathouse
- o. Point #15: Donaldson Park Boat Ramp (see application submitted for revamp of ramp – Trident Environmental submitted an application to NJDEP for a waterfront development permit to make improvements to "Red's Arena" in Highland Park. This will include piles and a gangway.
- p. Point #16: Edison Boat Basin
- q. Point #17: Sayreville Boat Ramp (fee based launch – attendant there all summer)
- r. Point #18: plan to install a boat ramp, dog park – from Cornucopia Princess down to Route 35 Bridge
- s. Point #19: Second Street, Perth Amboy (launch). The Perth Amboy HS sailing team sails out of this location.

Question & Answer with Raritan RIVERKEEPER

Q1: Does the RIVERKEEPER document info on who owns / maintains that area?

A1: No

Q2: Has there been an observed increase in access and/or other picnicking, fishing, etc?

A2: paddling is a fast growing sport + fisherman have discovered kayaks

Q1: How should we encourage developers to allow public access?

A2: This is a conversation for the LRWP + RIVERKEEPER to pose in coming months as we explore access issues in general.

Additional discussions focused on prioritizing parks development in flood plain areas (e.g. Sadowsky Park is where significant damage from Sandy occurred) and on prioritizing dam removal. LRWP membership is interested in putting these on the on-going agenda.

- III. NJDEP Flood Hazard Rules – hearing rescheduled to July 22: The LRWP will participate in the NJDEP rescheduled public hearing on proposed amendments and new rules in the Flood Hazard Area Control Act (FHACA) Rules, N.J.A.C. 7:13, Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Rules, N.J.A.C. 7:7, and Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules, N.J.A.C. 7:7A, PRN 2016-084. Friday, July 22, 2016, at 10:00 A.M. NJ Department of Environmental Protection

Public Hearing Room, 401 East State Street, Trenton, NJ 08625
Submit comments by August 19, 2016, electronically at
<http://www.nj.gov/dep/rules/comments>.

- IV. LRWP on Capitol Hill + at EPA Urban Waters Training Workshop in Washington, DC - July 25-28. Partner discussion re: issues to discuss with Senator Booker's office & Congressman Pallone's Office.
 - a. Need for resources when, for example, County or municipal entities purchase contaminated lands and becomes clean-up party.
 - b. Need to incentivize clean-up of contaminated lands owned privately (or industrial)
 - c. How to encourage retrofits of sewer pipes by municipalities?
- V. Ongoing LRWP Project Updates
 - a. LRWP Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring
 - i. Visual Habitat Assessments wrapped up in June. We monitored more than 2 dozen streams, including several new sites. We plan to grow our stream monitoring program to include at least one stream monitoring site in each of our 47 sub watersheds.
 - ii. Pathogen Monitoring has just kicked off. We are monitoring four sites, three in Perth Amboy, one in South Amboy.
 - iii. Save the date: October 14-15 for macroinvertebrate assessment training with Stroud Water Resources
 - b. Project WADES
 - i. Watershed Sculpture Project in the Schools wrapped up in Highland Park High School and the Greater Brunswick Charter School. August 1-31 the HPHS sculptures will be on display in the Highland Park Public Library (31 north Fifth Avenue)
 - ii. The LRWP is looking for volunteers to help with the sculpture project gallery event in October