

**Representative Policy Board  
Land Use Committee  
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District**

**Minutes of March 8, 2023 Meeting**

The regular meeting of the Land Use Committee of the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”) of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”) took place on Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut. Chair Betkoski presided.

**Committee Members:** P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, R. Harvey, M. Levine, G. Malloy, J. Oslander, and J. Mowat Young

**Authority:** C. LaMarr

**Management:** J. Hill, S. Lakshminarayanan, and J. Triana

**Resident Beekeeper:** Vincent Kay

**Staff:** J. Slubowski

Chair Betkoski called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, and seconded by Mr. Harvey, the Committee approved the minutes of its February 8, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Kay provided an update on beekeeping activities on RWA properties. He stated that the honeybees produce 20,000 pounds of honey annually. Mr. Kay discussed food availability for bees, environmental parity and the need to replace plants that are removed. Some of the food consumed by honeybees include white clover, red clover, cranberries, blueberries, pears, and apples.

He also discussed the effects of pesticides, contamination, and lawn treatments on honeybee mortality. Mr. Kay stated that the use of pesticides kills the bees, destroys the environment, and can seep into the water supply, especially in areas with wells. Mowing during the day is discouraged and can kill bees, if possible, mowing should take place later in the day when bees are not present.

Mr. Kay discussed best beekeeping practices such as education, handling of parasitic mites, correct ways to dispose of contaminated hives, laws & regulations, cleaning & sterilization, and overall good housekeeping habits.

Committee members discussed bee vaccines, production, environmental threats, beeswax, travel radius, environmental stress, and costs to maintain the hives.

At 6:10 p.m., Mr. Kay and Ms. Young withdrew from the meeting.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Triana, the RWA’s Real Estate Manager, reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	<b>Current Year</b>	<b>Previous Year</b>	<b>Historical Average</b>	<b>Drought Status</b>
February 28, 2023	92%	97%	82%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
February 2023	0.88	4.40	3.33
Fiscal YTD (6/1/22 – 2/28/23)	29.63	38.21	34.01

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Prospect, off Roaring Brook Rd. – Reviewed title report. Inspected property. Owner contacted those he previously gave permission to hunt the property to remove anything they still have on the property. Reviewed the title objection notice that Murtha was sending to the owner.
- Madison – Corresponded with property owner of 7+/- acres.
- North Haven – Corresponded with property owner of 14+/- acres.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Met with surveyor and Murtha staff to discuss progress. Murtha will contact town staff to see if they are ready to make whatever administrative cuts are possible.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Have not heard back from Asst. Town Attorney about the condemnation.
- Guilford, 1155 Great Hill Rd. – Inspected property. No watershed issues found. The unapproved shed was removed.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – 70% complete.
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – Not started yet. May be pushed to summer due to ground conditions.
- Killingworth - N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) – **40% complete.**
  - Corresponded with Seymour town staff about water ponding on Haddad Rd. near the log landing. Made more changes on the log landing to divert water to the north.
  - Received notification from USDA that our grant application was ranked 20th out of 30.
  - Met with Eversource staff and contractors who plan to control vegetation within their ROW at Lake Saltonstall from the UI lines to the substation.
  - Met DEEP staff to discuss the summer bat monitoring season.
  - Looked into the request to extend PA 490 forest-land classification for two parcels in Guilford, and researched information on the Tax Assessor’s webpage regarding the open space application program.

Recreation

- Winter tree walk at Lake Saltonstall had 15 participants.
- Trails were cleared at Sugarloaf, Hammonasset, and Chamberlain.
- Continued process for hiring new recreation staff for the 2024 fishing season.
- Spring newsletter was published and distributed.
- Responded to abutter’s question about horse trails off of Sperry Rd., Woodbridge.
- Rejected inquiry about installing a new trail behind Glendower Rd., Hamden.
- Met to discuss recreation proposals including other trails in Hamden.
- Repaired plank bridge at Pine Hill.
- Issued a warning to a permit holder seen parking and walking in unauthorized places.

	February		January	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Permit Holders	4,822	5,601	4,847	5,605

Special Activity Permits

- CT Forest & Park Assoc. (CFPA) (Elizabeth Merow) conduct tour of property, Master Woodland Manager Program, forestry ecology, Rt. 79 Madison, (3/4/23)
- Bryan M. Tirrell, Forester, US Forest Service NRS FIA, completion of Northern Research Station Forest Inventory Plot as part of a national inventory study, Goat Lot Road, Madison (6/1/2023-9/30/2023)
- CTDEEP (Ansel Aarrestad, Environmental Analyst II) - To monitor and assess the surface waters across CT as part of a probabilistic study. Install temperature logger, diatom community survey, fish community survey, macroinvertebrate community survey, swap temperature logger, remove temperature logger. Mill River (41.394847-72.892324) off of Riverside Drive, Hamden (3/20/2023-3/20/2024)
- New Haven Youth and Recreation (Shashinka) – Fishing Derby to allow inner city children a fishing experience, Maltby Lakes, (4/22/23 raindate of 4/23/23).
- Yale University Film and Media Studies (Kilga) – Yale thesis film about a group of young students who retreat to the forest to reconnect with nature, Maltby Lakes, (4/20/23 – 4/23/23).
- UConn, Dept of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology (Dr. Mark Urban) – Research on pond amphibians - Totoket mountain in Northford; ridge north of Lake Gaillard; 60 ponds distributed to the west and east of Big Gulph Brook (3/1/2023- 3/1/2024)
- Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (Dr. Chris T. Maier, Agricultural Scientist)- Conduct research on insects, particularly longhorned beetles (continuation of 2022 projects), and flower flies and to survey for abnormal emergencies of periodical cicadas, Near Lake Gaillard and Totoket Mountain complex (North Branford); near Beaver Head Road, especially Beaver Head Swamp (Guilford); forest off Dogburn Road (Orange); and along Hosley Avenue (Branford), (3/15/2023 – 11/30/2023)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
  - Agricultural agreements – Executed amendment to Christmas tree agreement Miscio to have them manage the fields by North St. in North Branford.
  - North Branford, 215 Forest Rd. (NB 17) – Sent draft license agreement to Regan.
  - Guilford, Great Hill Rd and Cooks La. (GU 9) – Sent letters to two abutters regarding encroachments. Sent draft license agreement to Wall.
  - Guilford, Beaver Head Rd. (GU 6) - Sent letters to two abutters regarding encroachments.
  - West Haven, Shingle Hill tanks (WH 7) – Continued to correspond with consultant for Yale to place radio repeater at the tanks.
  - Hamden, 364 Putnam Ave. (HA 8) – Inspected property and emailed owner about having sediment and erosion controls in place.
  - Cell phone towers – Sent email to TMobile for them to use with town officials authorizing the work on the Rabbit Rock Tank (NO 1) generator.
  - Hamden, New Haven Country Club (HA 5) – Met with NHCC staff about the license agreement for overflow parking which is expiring at the end of the year.
  - Trespassing – Recorded instances of trespassing including ATV’s, hikers with dogs and horseback riders at Sugarloaf, and hikers in unpermitted areas, note on logger’s machine at Hammonasset, illegal parking at Hammonasset, and illegal fishing at Hammonasset.

- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in North Branford, Seymour, Guilford, and Orange. Met with UConn staff to look at data they collected at the two slash wall harvests using a LiDAR camera.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	60 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	0.5 acres

- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain – Met with consultant who will help compile the DEEP permit application.
- Deer hunt – DPH annual report was submitted. Presentations about the 2022 hunt were given to the FMA, CAC and LUC. One hunter was barred from future hunts since he left his tree stand on the property.
- Hamden, tire dumping – Forwarded information on all the tire dumping we were aware of to Amy to check with local tire businesses.
- Bethany, Rt. 69 driveway – Gave information to Environmental Planning staff about a new driveway coming off Rt. 69 in Bethany south of Gaylord Mt. Rd. No sediment or erosion controls were observed.
- Boundaries – Completed remarking of boundaries in Durham, Madison, Guilford, Killingworth, and Woodbridge. Contacted Guilford Land Trust about possible unapproved activity on one of their easements.
- Solar projects – Discussed possible locations for solar arrays with various RWA staff. Attended virtual meeting with RWA staff and a consultant to discuss sites.
- Hamden, Eli Whitney Museum – Answered question from Operations staff about the responsibility for grounds maintenance. Corresponded with Eli Whitney Museum staff about proposal for a bioswale at the WWC and EWM parking lot.
- Drone flight – ISMT and NRA performed a drone flight at Shingle Hill Tanks.

Committee members discussed police staffing on RWA properties with management.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 5:30 p.m., and will be held in-person at 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut. The committee will meet with management to review the FY 2024 budget.

At 6:40 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Oslander, and unanimously carried, the committee meeting adjourned.

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Peter Betkoski, Chairman