

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

Minutes of May 10, 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, May 10, 2023 at Lake Gaillard, 105 North Street, North Branford, Connecticut. Chair Betkoski presided.

Committee Members Present: P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, R. Harvey, M. Horbal, G. Malloy, and J. Mowat Young

Committee Members Absent: J. Oslander and M. Levine

RPB: Authority: S. Sack

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

Staff: J. Slubowski

Chair Betkoski called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, and seconded by Mr. Horbal, the Committee approved the minutes of its April 19, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Tracy, the RWA’s Invasive Species Management Technician, provided an update on the management of invasive species at Lake Gaillard. He reported that five acres of Japanese Barberry was cleared using a mini excavator and grapple head. Mr. Tracy also discussed negative impacts of the species on regrowth and erosion to the existing forest. The committee also toured Lake Gaillard to identify plant regrowth and discuss treatment outcomes in the future. Mr. Tracy stated that the RWA is happy with the progress using this procedure.

Chair Betkoski reported on a Non-Substantial Land Use Plan Amendment for the relocation of the New England Trail in Guilford. The Committee discussed the completeness of the application and found the request to be non-substantial. Bob Harvey moved for approval of the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (“RWA”), on April 28, 2023, filed an Application to the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”) for the approval of a Non-substantial Land Use Plan Amendment to the Land Use Plan for the Relocation of the New England Trail on Authority property in Guilford (“Application”); and

WHEREAS, the Land Use Committee of the RPB reviewed the Application and recommends that it be accepted as complete and considered non-substantial without a public hearing required; and

WHEREAS, the RPB concludes that the Application is non-substantial and the proposed action is consistent with and advances the policies and goals of the RWA, has no expected impact on the public water supply, no conflict with the trail and the existing Land Use Plan designation of “Non-water System Land,” and no financial impact on the Authority.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the RPB hereby accepts the Application as complete and approves, without a public hearing, the RWA’s Application for a Non-substantial Land Use Plan Amendment for the Relocation of the New England Trail on Authority property in Guilford, filed April 28, 2023, in accordance with Section 18 of Connecticut Special Act 77-98, as amended.

Mr. Malloy seconded the motion. After discussion, the Chair called for the vote and the resolution passed unanimously.

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)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
April 30	99%	98%	94%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
April 2023	6.03	3.87	4.28
Fiscal YTD (6/1/22 – 4/30/23)	39.49	44.57	42.59

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

- Prospect, 200 Saddle Ct. – Closed on the property. Marked boundaries. Tree stands have been removed. Surveyor will install additional pins.
- Madison – Corresponded with property owner of 24+/- acres.
- Cheshire – Corresponded with property owner of 56+/- acres.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Pumps La. properties (NB 4) – Assessor signed off on separating the “island” parcel from 105 North St. Disposition application expected to go to FMA in May or June.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Spoke to Asst. Town Attorney. Reviewed draft of Order that was going to the Town Council.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – **90% 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) – **85% complete.**
 - Participated in planning work around expected receipt of the US Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration grant.
 - Planted Christmas trees at Lake Gaillard.
 - Planted ~375 tree seedlings at Maltby Lakes, Saltonstall, Peat Swamp, and Nathan’s Pond properties for a large-scale restoration project and a long-term study testing species migration potential related to climate change.
 - Attended the American Chestnut Foundation annual meeting. Requested backcrossed chestnut and chestnut seedlings for planting in deer exclosures.
 - Conducted follow-up communications regarding a landscape waste dumping incident at the log landing for the Crosby salvage operation.
 - Spoke to Engineering about using some of the forestry budget to regrade and reseed the landing off of Haddad Rd., Seymour.
 - Met with logger at HA 36 about need to use some of the field. Relayed information to the tenants of the fields.

Recreation

- Held training class for new and existing recreation staff.
- Easter egg hunt was cancelled due to inclement weather.
- Attended kids fishing derby at Maltby Lakes.
- Blocked off unapproved trail at Coan Pond.
- The Water Wagon was brought to three events this month.
- 1800 trout were stocked in the Maltby Lakes.
- Boats were brought from storage down to Lake Saltonstall in preparation of our boat rental season. Boats started being rented on the April 29th.
- Melted and recast used soft plastic baits as part of our recycling effort.
- Trail cleared of downed tree at Lake Chamberlain.

	April		March	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Permit Holders	5,021	5,792	4,954	5,712

Special Activity Permits

- CT Forest & Park Assoc. (CFPA) (Elizabeth Merow) conduct tour of property, Master Woodland Manager Program, forestry ecology, Rt. 79 Madison, (4/22/23)
- Native Plant Trust (formerly New England Wild Flower Society) – (Micah Jasny, Botanical Coordinator) – survey and seed collection of CT endangered plant species with DEEP approval, Totoket Mountain North Branford, Beaver Head Swamp Guilford, Lake Saltonstall Branford, (4/15/23-12/1/23)
- Quinnipiac University (Professor Scott Davies)-Study bird nest boxes and record bird nesting activity and success, band the adults and chicks, and collect tissue samples for analysis during breeding season, Lake Chamberlain Recreation Area, Sperry Rd. Farm Field, Lake Watrous, and Lake Dawson, (05/01/23 – 11/31/23)
- Menunkatuck Audubon Society (Tom Kelly) - Monitoring of Barn Owl nesting boxes - North Guilford owl box locations: Menunkatuck Reservoir (RT 77); Beaverhead Road; (04/01/2023 to 07/01/2023).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Orange, 43 Pine Crest Dr. (OR 3) – Contacted abutter again about the license agreement.
 - Guilford, 797 Beaver Head Rd. (GU 6) – Abutter moved the materials to their property.
 - Hamden, New Haven Country Club (HA 5) – Sent comments to NHCC staff and set up meeting to discuss new license agreement for overflow parking area.
 - East Haven, 9 Pardee Pl. (EH 6) – Executed license agreement to allow the fence, lawn, gazebo, and other yard materials.
 - Bethany Horsemen – Sent the annual agreement for BH to execute.
 - Hamden, 33 Rolling Ridge Rd. (HA 12) – Send letter about encroachments and offered a license agreement.
 - Hamden, 47 Rolling Ridge Rd. (HA 12) – Send letter about encroachments and offered a license agreement.
 - East Haven, 161 Saltonstall Pl. (EH 7) – Observed our fence was taken down. Abutter put up a new fence in its place. Talked abutter and sent letter letting them know the fence was entirely on our property.

- West Haven, Shingle Hill tanks (WH 7) – Continued to correspond with consultant for Yale to place radio repeater at the tanks. Waiting for confidentiality agreement to be signed.
 - Cell phone towers – New generator installed at the Rabbit Rock Tank by TMobile.
 - Trespassing – Recorded instances of trespassing including kayak being launched at Lake Saltonstall, horses in unapproved locations, illegal fishing, ATV's, and hikers without permits in unapproved locations.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in Madison, North Branford, East Haven, Guilford, West Haven, Woodbridge and Branford. Madison staff/volunteers cut phragmites at Coan Pond. Contractor cleared field of invasives in Guilford.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	44 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	4.5 acres

- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain – Murtha sent email to all property owners updating them with the status of the project.
- Regional Conservation Partnership – Attended meeting about reinvigorating the RCP.
- Hamden, Olin Powder Farm Ponds – Answered question that came into Environmental Planning about our interest in this property. Noted that we conveyed our conditional option to purchase the property to the Hamden Land Trust.
- New Haven, Edgerton Park wall – Responded to New Haven Park staff about gaining access to part of the Edgerton Park wall that had collapsed in order to repair it.
- New Haven, Whalley Ave PRV (NH 5) – Staff from the Livable City Initiative called about tires and other refuse dumped behind RWA property. Informed them about where the property line was and that most of the dumping was on City property.
- Whitney Water Center parking lot – Corresponded with WPCA staff about plans for a bioswale in the parking lot.
- New Haven Arbor Day event– RE staff helped plan, coordinate and execute the event which included planting trees at DeGale Field in New Haven.
- Boundaries – Completed remarking of boundaries in Woodbridge, North Branford, Madison, Guilford, and Bethany.
- Performed multiple drone flights at the Derby tank site, as well as the DAF project at West River. Acquired new drone for use in places where GPS navigation is not available.

There were no other land items to report.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

At 5:45 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Horbal, seconded by Mr. Malloy, and unanimously carried, the committee meeting adjourned.

Peter Betkoski, Chairman