

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
 South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
 September 11, 2024

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Land Use Committee (“Committee”) of the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”), of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”), took place on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at the Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant, 1 Saltonstall Parkway, Branford, Connecticut.

Committee Members Present: M. Levine, P. Betkoski, G. Malloy, J. Oslander and Jamie Mowat Young

Committee Members Absent: P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, and M. Horbal

RPB: C. Havrda

Authority: S. Sack

Management: S. Lakshminarayanan, W. Henley, J. Hill, and J. Tracy

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

The Committee held a moment of silence for the victims and responders of 9/11.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Mr. Oslander, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of its August 14, 2024 meeting.

Mr. Tracy, the RWA’s Forester II, and Mr. Henley, the RWA’s Aquatic Resource Scientist, provided a tour and update of the water chestnut harvest at Furnace Pond in Branford. They reported on the status of the water chestnut harvest since July 2024.

Committee members discussed current conditions, total harvest area, method, disposal, and monitoring,

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Lakshminarayanan, the RWA’s Vice President of Engineering & Environmental Services, reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
August 31	87%	91%	74%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
August 2024	6.31	4.90	3.98
Fiscal YTD (6/1/24 –	15.49	14.46	11.44

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

- Hamden – Corresponded with property owner of 4+/- acres.

- Cheshire, Bis/Bowman property – Received award packet for the OSWLA grant. Closed on the property by the end of the month.
- North Branford, Beech St., and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Notified by NBLCT that they were ready to execute the P&SA.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. – Discussed the resubdivision for the lot to go with the house with Juliano.
- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Met with owners and potential buyer at the house. Discussed the deed restrictions.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – 75% complete.
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – The harvest was halted in early June, and the logger pulled his equipment off the property on June 13th. It is uncertain at this point whether the buyer will continue with the salvage operation even if a market is found - 15% complete.
- Guilford - Menunketuc High-Grade Rehabilitation Cut and Conifer Release (GU12/12A) – 20% complete.
 - Joined DEEP wildlife division staff at Lake Gaillard for a night of mist netting bat at the hibernaculum.
 - Worked to plan and implement the first field season of the Landscape Scale Restoration grant.
 - Gave a tour and demonstrated steam weeder unit to USFS LSR grant administrator.
 - Finalized details of a forest products sales agreement for witch hazel stems. The witch hazel will be sustainably harvested from Genesee and Nathan’s Pond tracts within the bounds of three timber sale harvests.
 - Completed and mailed USDA’s survey request regarding RWA’s Conservation Practices Adoption history and motivations.
 - Worked with volunteers from the Native Plant Trust to report on a recently re-located population of swamp cottonwood.

Recreation

- Held botany walk at Harry Field Rd., Madison with 30 participants.
- Issued latest newsletter.
- Ordered walleye for stocking Lake Saltonstall this fall.
- Two permit holders had their permits revoked for using live bait at Lake Saltonstall.
- Cleared trails at Woodbridge Greenway, Big Gulph, Sugarloaf, Genesee, Lake Chamberlain, Lake Saltonstall, and Lake Bethany.
- Responded to request for trail off of Dogburn Rd. in Orange and Johnson Rd. in Woodbridge.
- The Water Wagon attended five events in August.

	August		July	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
Permit Holders	4,880	4,883	4,929	4,879

Special Activity Permits

- (nothing in August)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Hamden, 14 Russell St. (HA 6B) – Fence was installed and checked.
 - Hamden, Lake Whitney dam access (HA 4) – Signed license agreement with United Illuminating to clarify our access to the dam area.
 - Hamden, Hamden Hall athletic fields (HA 9A) – Exchanged appraisals with the school to set the annual fee for the remainder of the lease.
 - North Haven, Wharton Brook Industrial Park water main – Signed license agreement that extends until 2049 for water main that runs under train tracks.
 - West Haven, Allings Crossing Rd. (WH 6) – Executed license agreement with United Illuminating for access across our property to remove old electric poles along the railroad tracks.
 - West Haven, Shingle Hill Tanks (WH 7) – Completed the license agreement and approved the exhibits to be attached.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in North Branford, Bethany, Woodbridge, and Branford. Steamweeded roadside vegetation at Lake Gaillard. Flew drone mission at Furnace Pond to complete the post-harvest drone map from July.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	9 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	1.7 acres

- Deer hunt – Check station volunteers were chosen and contacted. Prospect and Ansonia areas were reflagged. Special permittees were notified about the hunt via US mail.
- New Haven, Sachem St. watermain – Contacted Yale staff about getting a former easement from them for the portion of the road that the city discontinued.
- Northford water main – Fielded call from Northford business owner about extending a water main up our Diversion Rd. to Reeds Gap Rd. Forwarded the request to others at RWA.
- Hamden, Clark’s Pond parking – Responded to town that they can put up “no parking” signs.
- Woodbridge, Rt. 69 ROW – Replied to fiber optic consultant about vegetation management along Rt. 69 under the utility poles that run parallel to the road.
- Water main easement encroachments – Discussed approach to documenting and dealing with encroachments over water main easements with GIS staff.
- North Branford, West Pond Tank (NB 10) – Answered questions from Engineering staff about our property and our ROW to the tank for a planned second tank at the site.
- Milford, Ford St. tanks (MI 12) – Answered questions from Distribution staff about our property for a planned booster chlorination station at the site.
- Pollinator garden – Real Estate staff worked on the pollinator garden at 90 Sargent Dr., New Haven. Also worked on new planting area at Furnace Pond.
- Drone missions – Conducted flight in Prospect to document construction at the Prospect Reservoir.

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Committee members discussed the status of the grant for the bat study.

The committee assigned volunteers to attend the upcoming Regional Water Authority meetings on:

- October 24, 2024
- November 21, 2024
- December 19, 2024
- January 23, 2025

The next regular meeting is on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. at Lake Saltonstall. The committee will hold its annual pizza dinner. All members of the RPB and management are invited to attend.

At 5:25 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Ms. Young, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Mark Levine, Chair