

Representative Policy Board  
**Land Use Committee**  
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District  
April 10, 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, April 10, 2024 at the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut and via remote access. Chair Betkoski presided.

**Committee Members Present:** P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis (R), B. Eitzer (R), C. Havrda, M. Horbal, M. Levine (R), G. Malloy, J. Oslander and J. Mowat Young (R)

**Representative Policy Board:** R. Harvey and N. Campbell

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

**Staff:** J. Slubowski

Chair Betkoski called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, and seconded by Mr. Horbal, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of its March 13, 2024 regular meeting.

Josh Tracy, the RWA’s Invasive Species Management Technician, provided an update on innovative methods to eliminate invasive species on RWA owned properties. He shared that the RWA was granted the Landscape Scale Restoration grant in 2022 to manage invasive species near Lake Gaillard. Mr. Tracy emphasized the need to preserve the environment and water quality due to the presence of endangered bat species that have been utilizing a pipe tunnel for several decades from Lake Gaillard to Menunkatuc.

The grant also allowed the RWA to hire interns to help with invasive species control and forestry operations and has allowed the RWA to purchase a steam weeder, which uses high-pressure steam to burn herbaceous material. The Japanese stiltgrass continues to be a problem and the steam weeder will help eradicate this plant and reduce sedimentation in the reservoirs. This new technology is expected to increase the amount of acreage that can be treated and is a more efficient alternative to heavy machinery contractors.

Committee members discussed bat population, internship program, invasive species controls, treatment progress and other grant opportunities.

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
March 31	100%	98%	91%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
March 2024	9.57	3.83	4.34
Fiscal YTD (6/1/23 – 3/31/24)	54.99	33.46	38.46

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

- Branford, Cherry Hill Rd. – Executed quit claim deed to address title issues and filed on land records.
- Cheshire, Bis/Bowman property – Money wired to their attorney for the deposit. Authorized Juliano to start survey.
- Bethany – Corresponded with property owner of 35+/- acres.
- Hamden – Corresponded with property owner of 10+/- acres.
- North Haven – Corresponded with property owner of 15+/- acres.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Corresponded with land trust staff about the purchase.
- Seymour, Squantuck Rd. (SE 5) – Discussed plans for open space with the town. Authorized the preliminary assessment and appraisal.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, Skiff St. house (HA 9A) – Received check from court through Murtha for the condemnation.
- Woodbridge, 1955 Litchfield Tpk. (WO 1) – Met Environmental Planning staff at the house to inspect the house, barn, and old treatment building.

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.
- Killingworth - N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) – 100% complete. Equipment removed, but some firewood logs still at the landing.
- Guilford - Menunketuc High-Grade Rehabilitation Cut and Conifer Release (GU12/12A) – 20% complete.
  - Contractor completed clearing of Harry Field Rd., Madison.
  - Scheduled and participated in several meetings related to necessary road repairs and improvements at Menunketuc watercourse crossings.
  - Identified additional white oak saplings in BE 13 clearcut to expand CAES release study.
  - Conducted LSR grant planning and administrative duties related to revised budget for steamweeder, capital spending procedures, and award letter amendments.
  - Surveyed hemlock stand in BE23 for hemlock wooly adelgid.

Recreation

- Easter egg hunt had 36 kids attending with their families.
- Participated in a PayTrac migration meeting to discuss accepting credit cards for boat rentals.
- Amended the boat rental form.

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- Hired one new staff member and started training.
- Ordered trout for stocking Maltby Lakes and filed the liberation permit with DEEP.
- Worked on plastic bait recycling program.

	March		February	
	2024	2023	2023	2022
Permit Holders	4,827	4,954	4,771	4,822

Special Activity Permits

- Boys Scouts of America Troop 610 (Michael Collins) – hiking trip to Camp Whiting on Route 69, Woodbridge, (3/16/2024).
- Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (Dr. Chris T. Maier, Agricultural Scientist)- Conduct research on insects, particularly longhorned beetles (continuation of 2023 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); River Road Hamden (3/12/2024-11/30/2024).
- CT DEEP (Christopher McDowell, Fisheries Biologist)-To assess the fish community via night boat electrofishing at Lake Saltonstall to assess stocked Walleye population on 3/20/24 and 4/3/24 and all species on 5/15/24. (3/20/2024 - 5/31/2024).
- Trinity Baptist Church (George Hayner)-to walk Lake Chamberlain with international students bible study group at Trinity Baptist Church (3/23/24).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
  - North Branford, 67 Woods Hill Rd. (NB 7) – Tree house was dismantled and removed from our property.
  - Orange, 845 Alling Rd. (OR 6) – Executed license agreement with abutters to allow the lawn and drain pipe.
  - Orange, 849 Alling Rd. (OR 6) – Abutters said they would move their materials back over the property line.
  - Orange, 854 Greenway Rd. (OR 4) – Had surveyors remark corners of the property so that we could properly mark it.
  - Woodbridge, 888 Greenway Rd. (OR 4) – Sent letter to abutter about extensive lawn over the property line.
  - Seymour, 284 Roosevelt Dr. (SE 1) – Sent letter to abutter about materials over the property line.
  - West Haven, 20 Saw Mill Rd. (WH 8) – Sent letter to abutter about dumpsters over the property line.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in Seymour, Branford, East Haven, and North Branford. Attended state invasive plant subcommittee meeting to discuss plants to be added to the ban list. Attended CIPWG planning committee meeting.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	44.6 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	9.7 acres

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- Hamden, Hamden Hall scoreboard – The school notified us that the application for the scoreboard was approved by the P&Z commission. Sent email to P&Z commission stating our permission for the scoreboard to be installed.
- East Haven, Borrmann Rd. – Met with abutters about water coming from the ridge.
- Deer hunt – Notified one hunter that they will not be allowed to apply for the 2024 hunt. 381 applications for 2024 were mailed out.
- Branford, Yowago Ave. easement – Corresponded with consultant working at 15 Yowago Ave. about an old watermain and easement that crosses that property.
- Boundaries – Checked and remarked boundaries in East Haven, North Branford, Madison, Seymour, West Haven, Orange, Woodbridge, and Hamden.
- Genesee tunnel inspection – Corresponded with Engineering staff about their plans to inspect the tunnel east of Lake Menunketuc.
- Woodbridge, DOT sediment basin property – Completed research about this property and sent summary to Engineering. Filed documents in the vault that we missing.
- Cell phone towers – Met with consultant at High Rock Tank in Hamden.
- Hamden, Lake Whitney dam project – Corresponded with UI staff about signing the license agreement about our access.

Mr. Malloy discussed a recent discolored water incident in West Haven. Mr. Hill, the RWA's General Manager & Head of Operations, will look into the complaint and get back to Mr. Malloy with more information.

Mr. Lakshminarayanan, the RWA's Vice President of Engineering & Environmental Services, congratulated the team on their efforts in pursuing and receiving the Landscape Scale Restoration grant.

Chair Betkoski reported on upcoming meetings:

- a. Joint meeting of Consumer Affairs and Land Use – Monday, April 15, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. (FY 2025 Budget Review – All *RPB members are invited to attend*)
- b. Next regular meeting - Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Triana reported that the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting is expected to be held at Lake Saltonstall for a discussion on Oak Species.

At 6:20 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy, and seconded by Mr. Oslander, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

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Peter Betkoski, Chairman

(R) = Attended remotely.