

**The Last Green Valley, Inc.
Water Advisory Committee**

**Tuesday, February 14, 2017
9:00 am –11:30 am
TLGV Conference Room
203B Main Street
Danielson, CT**



Meeting notes

Meeting attendance: Jean Pillo ECCD/TLGV WQM Coordinator; Dan Mullins, ECCD, Lois Bruinooge, TLGV; Pat Monahan, Amos Lake Association; Jack Jostii, French River Connection; Dennis Latchum, Lebanon IWC; Ray Covino, Matt Snurkowski, USDA NRCS, Luke DeCesaris, TLGV intern.

November meeting notes approved by consensus.

TLGV Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program Coordinator's Report:

Welcome Luke DeCesaris, interning with TLGV through April 2017. Luke is currently attending Goodwin College for Bachelors in Science Environmental studies with a focus on River Studies and Health care track. Luke will be assisting with the WQM program as needed.

Fall 2016 RBV samples were submitted to DEEP. Eight samples were submitted to DEEP from TLGV team leaders. An additional 5 samples were submitted to DEEP by CT Audubon, utilizing TLGV trained volunteers. Drought conditions early in the monitoring season limited sampling sites. One site was deliberately monitored twice after early season results didn't match the expected water quality for that stream. Formal results have not been released by DEEP.

Spring 2017 RBV sampling is now allowed by DEEP, but only in streams that were or will be monitored in fall. If there is interest in this monitoring by previously trained volunteers, it will be supported by the coordinator.

Luke is comparing previous year's RBV volunteer data sheets to the actual results of DEEP voucher sample identifications to see if there is a trend in misidentified bugs by the volunteers. This information will be used to tailor the training to where any identification weakness is prevalent.

HOBO temperature loggers

The summer metrics were calculated by Meghan Lally of CT DEEP. Loggers are still in place over the winter. They will be retrieved in late April/early May to download winter data. With assistance from Dennis Latchum, they will go through the required calibration check process before redeployment. Additional sites may be included based on availability of loggers from DEEP and the battery life in the loggers from EPA. An offer was made to MA volunteers who wish to deploy loggers to bring them to the coordinator for a calibration check prior to deployment.

Bacteria Monitoring

- Planning for Shetucket River bacteria report card data collection is under way for 2017 season.
- Support for the ECCD Broad Brook Track Down in Preston is planned contingent on ECCD being award a grant contract for the project.
- A 2nd year of monitoring in Lebanon is also planned.
- All the bacteria monitoring is contingent on whether the CT DPH microbiology lab can assess the samples as part of their EPA funded beach monitoring program.

Roseland Lake Nutrient Monitoring– the final set up tributary data was collected in mid-November 2016. The lake sampling was completed in July 2016. The data interpretation will begin once a Nutrient Modeling QAPP is approved. Stay tuned.

Roseland Lake sediment sampling took place on October 31 to determine the amount of “legacy” phosphorus available to support algae blooms. The preliminary report indicates that it is a significant source of nutrients impacting algae growth in the lake. How significant will be determined once the tributary loading has been calculated.

Other upcoming monitoring projects that will involve TLGV WQM volunteers:

- TLGV RCPP Edge of Field Monitoring – nutrients and turbidity – still working on recruiting eligible farmers to permit our volunteers to conduct this monitoring on their land. A fact sheet about this monitoring was shared. Ray Covino of NRCS suggested a modification to the factsheet.
- UCONN RCPP project – bacteria including DNA marker studies to identify the source of bacteria by species. E. coli in each species of warm blooded animal has different markers on it so it is possible to speciate the source (bovine, equine, waterfowl, human, etc.) Passive stormwater collection systems will be set up in known impaired streams downstream of agricultural activity to determine the % contribution of fecal bacteria by species. This will assist with matching remediation projects to the source of contamination. Volunteers will retrieve the sample containers after it rains and the samples will be transported to UCONN for further processing. A lab in Florida will be utilized for some of the more sophisticated analysis.

The draft 2016 CT DEEP water quality assessment report is available for review and comment. Several changes in the impaired status in this draft report are directly linked to data collected with assistance of TLGV WQM volunteers and submitted to CT DEEP. The coordinator will verify which proposed changes can be credited to TLGV data. A press release will be developed once this has been completed.

The coordinator noted that the deadline for data submission to be considered in the 2018 CT Water Quality Assessment report is November 1, 2017 and will target all data submission from TLGV sources to be submitted within the require timeframe.

2017 volunteer appreciation event update

Volunteer team leaders requested a workshop focused on Long Island Sound. The coordinator tentatively lined up three presenters. Potential dates are March 24 or March 31 or April 28

Ralph Lewis – Geology of Long Island Sound

Ron Rozsa – vegetation change in tidal marshes (mostly related to mosquito ditching)

Jamie Vaudrey – LIS ecology

March 31 was selected as the best date. Next step is line up a venue for the program.

Presentation of 2017 Water Quality Monitoring Plans:

The monitoring plans submitted to the TLGV monitoring program coordinator were presented to the group, reviewed and approved.

Agency Reports:

ECCD report:

- At a Woodstock dairy farm, ECCD is involved with a two part project to reduce nutrient runoff. Part 1 involved the purchase of a new precision corn planter that can plant corn through the standing cover crop, reducing the time the soil is exposed to erosive forces. Part 2 is to install a woodchip bioreactor to intercept and treat the flow from subsurface field drainage. This project will include a water quality monitoring component to measure the reduction of nitrates before and after the water goes through the treatment process. This project is being funded by an EPA 319 grant through DEEP.
- At a second Woodstock dairy farm, ECCD is working cooperatively with NRCS to reduce NPS pollution. NRCS will be installing twin 2.6 million gallon storage tanks. ECCD will be helping to improve the silage bunkers and subsurface drainage to direct NPS runoff to the tanks, and keep clean water runoff away from the silage storage area. This project is also being funded by an EPA 319 grant through DEEP.
- ECCD staff is providing technical assistance for an urban agriculture project, focused on improving soil conditions and reducing runoff from community gardens. A free workshop schedule will be shared through the ECCD Facebook page.
- A watershed based plan is being completed for the CT portions of the French River, and project to improve water quality is in the planning stages in partnership with the Town of Thompson.
- ECCD will resume their comparison of Edge of Field Monitoring protocols at a dairy farm in Woodstock this spring once freezing temperatures are no longer a threat to the equipment.
- ECCD staff will be providing technical assistance for the UCONN Regional Conservation Partnership Project.

USDA NRCS Report:

- NRCS staff have been working with dairy farms in Windham County to complete Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans. CNPMs are nearly complete for four dairy farms, 3 in Little River watershed and one in the Five Mile River watershed.
- A waste storage facility was recently completed on a dairy farm in the Little River watershed. With this structure completed the farmer was able to relocate the heifer cows to an area away from a wetland in another part of town.
- NRCS is working with a dairy farm in Woodstock on a demonstration project to show the difference between various planting methods. An onsite workshop is in the planning stages and will take place at end of May 2017.
- Information was shared regarding the date for end of the application round for EQIP signups.
- Five Conservation Stewardship Program applications were submitted in the last round in Windham County. Three applications were for practices on crop land and two were for forest land. These applications are currently under review.

TLGV Report:

- The TLGV annual report is being prepared in a magazine format. This year's magazine will feature water resources and water trails. It will include an article about native trout.
- TLGV is accepting proposals for the 2017 Spring Outdoors program. These events can be any public event scheduled between spring equinox and summer solstice.
- Shetucket River Trail dedication ceremonies are in the planning stages.
- The Willimantic River Fest will be May 20, 2017 this year

Updates from Water Quality Monitoring Teams:

The French River Connection is in the process of preparing a MA DEP 319 grant application for work in Sucker Brook, a tributary to Webster Lake.

The Amos Lake Association has been distributing welcome packets to new Preston homeowners with information on best management practices for homeowners to reduce NPS. Nine packets were distributed since they began the project.

Amos Lake Association is coordinating a "Free Soil Test Day" for area homeowners to drop off soil samples. These samples will be delivered to the CT Agricultural Experiment Station for analysis.

Amos Lake Association is wrapping up the final reports for 2 Aquatic Invasive Species grants from CT DEEP. Through this project, trained volunteers reported previously undocumented areas of the lake with variable milfoil. One grant funded a formal aquatic weed resurvey, which confirmed that the area of the lake with milfoil increased from 2 to 7 acres since it was last surveyed in 2013. These grants also helped pay for herbicide treatment for some of the infested areas.

Amos Lake Association requested CT DEEP to spray paint a "Clean, Drain, Dry" message to boaters that use the state boat launch on the access ramp to remind them to prevent the spread of invasive aquatic species.

Woodstock Conservation Commission report:

WCC is continuing to work with the Atlantic States Rural Water and Wastewater Association on the development of voluntary aquifer protection regulations in an area identified as a significant sand and gravel aquifer. Once completed these proposed regulations to restrict regulated

activities over important aquifer recharge areas will be presented to the town Planning and Zoning Commission to consider adopting into the town zoning regulations. WCC will be distributing septic system BMP information at Celebrating Agriculture Day in September.

Preston Conservation Commission

A “dating” program to match up excess land suitable for agricultural activities with homeowners looking for a place for a garden is ongoing.

Other business:

The Thames River Basin Partnership Floating Workshop #17 will take place on June 9, 2017.

These meeting notes will not be considered final until approved by consensus at the next TLGV Water Advisory Committee meeting. The next meeting will be held on May 9, 2017 in TLGV conference room.