

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

**Tuesday, August 18, 2020**



Meeting attendance: Jean Pillo, ECCD and TLGV volunteer water quality monitoring program coordinator; Dan Mullins, ECCD; Lois Bruinooge, TLGV; Grant Jones and Cindy Wright Jones; Gloric Ricker, Webster Lake Association; Ziggy Waraszkievicz, Charlton Lakes and Ponds Committee; Bill Purcell, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

The meeting was held via Zoom.

**TLGV WQM Coordinators Report**

Jean Pillo attended a meeting on volunteer safety during Covid-19.

HOBOS were calibrated by Dennis Latchum in late May and deployed on 5/28/2020. Summer QC checks were completed by Gary Hoehne. Water level in first order streams was very low and stream flow may have been limited to subterranean flow in certain streams. HOBOS pick up will take place in September.

E. coli team lead by Paul Shaffer completed 10 weeks of sampling in the Natchaug watershed. A few new team members assisted along with Paul and Kathleen Boushee. Data has been transcribed to a shareable report by Cindy Wright Jones. A significant source of E. coli bacteria appears to be coming into the Natchaug River from Bungee Brook out of Eastford and Woodstock.

At the request of Tracy Lizotte of CT DEEP, expanded secchi disk monitoring was initiated this summer. Gardner Lake in Montville/Salem and Amos Lake in Preston were monitored by local monitoring teams. Volunteer Gary Hoehne assisted by collecting secchi disk readings from Mashapaug Pond, Bigelow Pond and Morey Pond in Union, Mansfield Hollow Lake in Mansfield, Halls Pond in Eastford/Ashford and Black Pond in Woodstock. All lakes were in the mesotrophic range when compared to the CT Water Quality Classification and Standards with the exception of Mashapaug Pond, which was in the oligotrophic range.

Also at the request of Tracy Lizotte, and supported by Region 1 EPA, TLGV volunteers were prepared to sample 6 Connecticut lakes for cyanobacteria. These are lakes that reported algae blooms in the past. These lakes included Roseland Lake in Woodstock, Amos Lake and Avery Pond in Preston, Gardner Lake in Montville/Salem (may not have been sampled yet), Pachaug Pond in Griswold and West Thompson Lake in Thompson. Water samples were surface grabbed and shipped to the EPA lab in Chelmsford for analysis of cyanobacteria types (fixative added to preserve the sample), cyanotoxin microcystin concentration (bottle frozen before shipment) and a sample control. Sampling was to accompany use of the BloomWatch app, but two volunteers reported issues with uploading data through the app. DEEP was notified when each sample was submitted.

No other sampling occurred in Roseland Lake this season due to the restriction on boat monitoring. The Town of Putnam contacted with Ponds and Lakes Solutions to install a

monitoring buoy but no monitoring buoy has been observed. Pond and Lake Solutions staff have been observed doing lake monitoring several times. It has been reported to me that Roseland Lake has been treated 3 x this season with SeClear, a form of copper sulfate. The Northeast District Department of Health has been sharing their beach monitoring data from Woodstock this season. No exceedances of E. coli were reported from Crystal Pond Park beach or Muddy Pond beach.

CT DEEP still uncertain about supporting the Riffle Bioassessment program this fall. Most recent information is that they are leaning towards not supporting it.

Stream flow is below normal in most of in MA and CT. CT in moderate drought to abnormally dry. Significant drought conditions were declared across Massachusetts.

### **Agency Reports**

**MA DEP** - MA DEP 319 funding, Matt Reardon pointed out that there has never been a 319 project in the French River watershed in Massachusetts! And that the most recent 319 grant awarded within the Quinebaug watershed was: 07-04 319 Improving Water Quality in the Hamilton Reservoir Watershed.

**Water Quality Standards:** The proposed Surface Water Quality Standards amendments are available online at <https://www.mass.gov/regulations/314-CMR-4-the-massachusetts-surface-water-quality-standards#proposed-amendments-public-comment>.

**Monitoring:** MA DEP are not conducting monitoring in the F&Q this year.

**Assessment:** As part of the 2018/2020 Integrated Report cycle, MA DEP is completing the assessments for over 50 Assessment Units (segments) in the French/Quinebaug for the Aquatic Life Use. They expect to have a draft report for public review later this year.

**TMDL:** MA DEP is working on the draft freshwater bacteria TMDL that includes bacteria impaired segments in the F&Q. At this time, we need to go through the internal review process but we expect to submit a draft for public comment this winter. There is still checking to see if the FRC data is being used in this analysis, but she did confirm that the data did pass the QC checks and met the high bar set by MA DEP standards for DEP use.

**TLGV** – staff still working remotely

Walktober is going to take place with about 130 events planned, either virtual events or outdoor events with limited capacity. Limited brochures to be distributed this year but the Walktober calendar is available on their website [www.TLGV.org](http://www.TLGV.org).

Nine new board members were elected at their annual meeting.

### **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Wrapping up applications for Farm Bill programs. They will be spending \$5.4 million in the first round of applications this year. Many projects could not be funded. Applications include 3 major agricultural waste projects in Brooklyn, Woodstock and Thompson.

### **Eastern Connecticut Conservation District**

Two new contracts were initiated with DEEP

- Purchase new equipment for use in Little River watershed Woodstock including manure injection equipment and precision planning equipment
- Niantic River 4 town stormwater project

Upper Natchaug Project heading towards completion.

- Draft Natchaug Healthy Watershed Protection Plan was posted on line and stakeholder meetings held on August 25 and 26 to review and comment on plan. Plan comments due by September 7, 2020.
- Virtual TRBP Floating Workshop to be scheduled in September and will feature a Natchaug Watershed Storyboard
- Pre-development review checklist for compatibility with the Plan to be featured in a September workshop.

Eastern Connecticut Stormwater Collaborative initiative moving along. Purchased monitoring equipment to be shared by municipalities in the collaborative. Beginning to develop stormwater outreach materials as part of a Think Blue Connecticut campaign.

Shewville Fishway project (Ledyard) progressing. A-2 survey and archaeological assessment of dam area underway.

Anguilla Brook Watershed Based Plan progressing. Summer workshop hosted a Southeast Coastal Water Quality Workshop series in September 2020.

Regional Conservation Partnership Project (RCPP) UCONN led project focused on reducing pathogens from agriculture runoff – ECCD is developing a manure storage facility for a horse farm in Pomfret.

RCPP TLGV soil health – edge of field monitoring in Baltic is continuing as rainfall allows.

### **Team Leader Reports**

**Webster Lake Association** used a grant from the Jante Mouser Foundation for Maple Cove in the south pond to treat and cut back weed growth.

Bond applied for \$250K to focus on the Birch “Island” area. A dam previously installed, and was only supposed to be temporary, but was not removed. This caused flow issues and sediment buildup. Not sure if project will be supported.

Conservation group in town will not extend permit for weed treatment in the lake. A new permit will cost \$10K

WQM limited this season to secchi disk and surface grab samples in the lake, testing for TN, TP and Chlorophyll A.

Streams to be samples June, August and October.

No algae blooms have been reported.

Wave boats on the lake are causing shoreline erosion. Water clarity has decreased.

The Webster Lake eagles that previously nested on an island in the lake have not been reported this year.

Charlton Lakes and Ponds WQM monthly on South Charlton Reservoir. No other lake or pond groups have expressed interest in testing their lakes this year. Water clarity appears to have improved in South Charlton Reservoir this year.

Sixty acres of milfoil were treated in South Charlton Reservoir. Meetings of the Charlton Lakes and Pond committee have been suspended due to Covid-19. New town administration interested in the Charlton Lakes and Ponds committee.

Other business – there was no other business to report.

Next meeting to be held on November 17, 2020 – the third Tuesday of the month.

Jean Pillo, TLGV WQM Coordinator