

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

Tuesday, November 16, 2021



Attendance: Jean Pillo, ECCD and TLGV WQM Coordinator; Lois Bruinooge, TLGV; Dan Mullins, ECCD; Judy Rondeau, Therese Beaudoin, Robert Smith, MA DEP; Eric Thomas, Meghan Lally, CT DEEP; Ernie Benoit, Webster Lake Association; Ziggy Waraszkievicz, Charlton Lakes and Ponds; Pat Monahan, Amos Lake Association; Gary Lussier, Thames Valley Trout Unlimited; Cindy Wright Jones and Grant Jones, TLGV volunteers.

Meeting notes from the May 2021 meeting were not available. Approval of meeting notes tabled until the next meeting.

TLGV Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator's Report

- HOB0 monitoring – 10 sites located, access permission obtained, units checked for calibration by Dennis Latchum and were deployed May 21. Seven units were given QC checks in August following a flashflood on July 17 and all were located. Two additional heavy rain events occurred (TS Henri and Hurricane Ida). Four units were not recovered at the end of the season. On the remaining HOB0s, the data has been downloaded and they are going through QC checks with Dennis Latchum. Data has not yet sent to DEEP. There is a clear relationship between stormwater runoff and elevated temperature from surface runoff in all the brooks where the loggers were retrieved.
- E. coli monitoring – This year the team tracked down potential E. coli sources in Bungee Brook (Eastford/Woodstock). Nine monitoring sites were selected, permissions to access the sights acquired, supplies obtained. Paul Shaffer served as the Team Leader. The team monitored Bungee Brook in 4 locations bracketing three tributary streams and repeated the Still River sites above and below the Bungee Brook confluence. The data indicates that Safford Brook in Woodstock is the main source of E. coli in Bungee Brook. Three upstream sites were added to further bracket the sources, which are agricultural runoff. In 2020, the E. coli spikes in Bungee Brook were diluted but still present as far south as Diana's Pool in Chapin.
- Following the E. coli monitoring, an additional method was used to potentially identify the source of E. coli found in the Bungee Brook watershed. Using equipment provided by DEEP, several streams were assessed for the presence of optical brightener chemicals, an additive to laundry detergent that makes cotton reflect UV light. If optical brightener agents were detected, it is a sign that the brook may have either an illicit grey water discharge or receiving sewage from a failed septic system. Folded, untreated cotton pads were placed in plastic coated cages and dispensed in small streams in the study area. They were retrieved after a week. If the unfolded cotton pad glowed under a UV lamp after a week in the water, the stream would be considered positive for the chemical agent. If the pad did not glow under a UV light, the results were categorized as non-detect. None of the sites tested positive for the laundry detergent additive. Gary Hoehne assisted with this project.

- The new pilot initiative to install an array of temperature data loggers in Crystal Pond in Eastford/Woodstock was completed. The Crystal Pond Association water quality monitoring team was able to secure a DEEP compliant informational buoy. All temperature equipment for creating the array was borrowed from DEEP except for the compliant informational buoy marker. The Crystal Pond Association also collected other water quality data including a temperature and DO depth profile, and secchi disk readings. Monthly nutrient samples were also collected and submitted to a lab for analysis. The TLGV Manta multiprobe was used once for a QC test of their temperature and DO data.
- Assisted the Amos Lake Association in their late spring and summer lake monitoring, which included a depth profile of the lake using the Manta multiprobe, nutrient sampling, secchi disk monitoring. Grab samples for algae were reviewed by Cindy Wright Jones and Grant Jones.
- Cyanoquest 2011. A list of 11 lakes for potential cyanobacteria monitoring was sent to EPA. With the heavy rain events this summer, and less days above 90°, there were less reported cyanobacteria blooms in Summer 2021. Only one sample was submitted to the EPA Cyanobacteria Monitoring Collaborative this summer (Avery Pond, Preston). Pachaug Pond, Doaneville Pond and Glasco Pond and in Griswold were scouted for a cyanobloom, as well as Amos Lake (Preston), Gardner Lake (Montville, Salem, Bozrha) West Thompson Lake (Thompson). Witches Woods Lake and Roseland Lake (Woodstock) did not have blooms after the kits were available. Two kits were also ordered for Webster Lake in MA.
- Data from the 2020 cyanobacteria monitoring is still not available from EPA.
- Fall 2020 Riffle bioassessment results were published less than a week before the RBV Fall 2021 season began. Of the 5 samples submitted in 2020, all 5 had the minimum required diversity of pollution sensitive bugs and all streams met the CT water quality guidelines for aquatic life support. Two streams had not previously been assessed. This season, over 30 new volunteers were using a hybrid training method this year (this includes 15 students from Susan Lovegreen's Ecology Class at Woodstock Academy) Eight samples have been collected so far. The season ends on November 30. Additional sampling will be scheduled as time and weather permits.
- Biodiversity data is an indirect program TLGV volunteers participate in while conducting other monitoring. 2 fresh water mussel samples and several cray fish images will be submitted with the RBV samples this fall.
- Two lakes were monitored using the DEEP Lake Watch protocol. Mansfield Hollow (Gary Hoehne) and Ashford Lake (Sue Orcutt). Secchi disk and surface water temperature information was collected multiple times at each site.
- The final report for Fiscal year 2020/21 is due to Lois by December 1. For all team leaders that haven't submitted their volunteer hours, please do so as soon as possible. Your contribution to The Last Green Valley matters more than you think!

Agency Reports

TLGV – federal authorization for funding expired on September 30, 2021 but was continued through December 3 via a continuing resolution. TLGV Board of Directors, faced with funding

uncertainty, has only continued the Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator position through December 2021. Of the 55 existing National Heritage Programs across the country, 30 face the same funding discontinuance. They are hopeful the popular National Heritage Program will receive additional funding and their program can be sustained in 2022.

MA DEP

Below is the link to the draft water quality standards.

- <https://www.mass.gov/regulations/314-CMR-4-the-massachusetts-surface-water-quality-standards> This website has both the current and proposed standards

The draft inland freshwater pathogen TMDL has not yet been released.

There was no monitoring focused in the French and Quinebaug watersheds this season. The Reference Site Network (RSN) has been discontinued. Some sites were repeated each year, but some were rotated out and replaced with new ones. Browns Brook in Holland, Breakneck Brook in Sturbridge and Rocky Brook in Douglas were used as reference sites in recent years.

A water quality monitoring grant will be released very soon with an expanded scope and with more funds than in the recent past. For more information, contact Robert Smith at Robert.F.Smith@mass.gov

Volunteer data submission deadline for the 2024 IR will be in 2023 at a date TBD.

MassDEP has been developing multimetric Macroinvertebrate Indices of Biotic Integrity, and recently posted relevant documents on our MassDEP web site <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/water-quality-assessments>

Judy Rondeau, formerly from ECCD is now representing MA DEP as an NPS Coordinator and CT DEEP

Developed by ITRC's Harmful Cyanobacterial Blooms (HCB) team with support from the Lake Champlain Basin Program, *Learn to Identify Cyanobacteria Blooms* identifies and describes different types of cyanobacteria and offers guidance on best management and safety practices involving harmful blooms.

For additional information on HCBs, view ITRC's [Strategies for Preventing and Managing Harmful Cyanobacteria](#) guidance and stay tuned for the release of ITRC's new Benthic Cyanobacteria guidance early next year!

To stream all of ITRC's online training materials, visit ITRC's [YouTube Channel](#).

CT DEEP Fisheries Division hired Joe Cassone in the Habitat Conservation and Enhancement program. This HCE Biologist position was formerly held by Brian Murphy who retired earlier this year. Joe works primarily out of the DEEP Eastern District HQ in Marlborough. His geographic assignment area is eastern CT except for the coastal area of Lyme through Stonington. Joe can be reached at Joe.Cassone@ct.gov and at (860)295-9523.

Also, I put information in the meeting Chat suggesting MA French and Quinebaug stakeholders could consider applying for a MA DEP 604 water planning grant to extend watershed-based planning in the 83% of the French River basin not detailed in coverage in the 2017 ECCD-authored French River Watershed-based Plan, at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/water/watershed_management/wm_plans/french/frenchrivernoappendicespdf.pdf.

CT DEEP Water program work has been focused on the statewide lake nutrient TMDL, the Bantam Lake technical appendix to the TMDL, and the draft Bantam Lake watershed plan addendum. Two CT DEEP topical presentations were provided last evening at the CT Regional Lakes Communities Symposium. The information is posted on the CT DEEP project webpage at [Bantam Lake Watershed Projects](#).

The CT DEEP FY2022 Section 319 NPS Management grant round RFP is open until December 22, 2021. Depending on when these WAC meeting minutes go out, you could list the link to the RFP, at [DEEP Section 319 Request for Proposals for Nonpoint Source Pollution](#).

The biennial CT Integrated Water Quality Assessment document could be out in draft form for public comment around the time of the next WAC meeting. I will forward an announcement/document link when it becomes available. The current (and previous) CT IWQ report is posted online at [Water Quality 305b Report to Congress \(ct.gov\)](#).

Lastly, I have not heard any recent update, but Connecticut DEEP was scheduled to release another grant funding announcement for the **Aquatic Invasive Species** grant program around this time. Interested WAC members within CT should keep their ears and eyes open for the announcement, and I can share that link with you to distribute when it becomes available. As previously reported, there were a handful of [grant awards](#) made for projects in northeast CT in the first, and highly competitive, statewide grant round.