

APPROVED Minutes Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee
February 28, 2023 Meeting
Remote meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Ashland: Kathleen DeWolfe

Bridgewater:

Bristol:

Campton: Suellen Skinner, Sherrill Howard

Holderness: Carl Lerner

Lincoln: OJ Robinson

New Hampton: Barry Draper, Lewis Mundy Shaw

Plymouth: Bill Bolton, Lisa Doner

Thornton: Myrtle Lewis

Woodstock:

At Large: Tyson Morrill, Merrimack River Watershed Council

LRPC: Dave Jeffers

Guests: Emma Ayotte

1. Quorum established and meeting called to order by Sherrill Howard at 6:33 PM
2. Approval of minutes from our January 31st meeting: Suellen motioned, Barry seconded. Lisa and Sherrill abstained; unanimous approval of all others in attendance.
3. Joe Schmidl – Update on the Instream Flow Program. Everyone had seen the map with the proposed locations for testing for the next three seasons. A season is from May until October, when the data loggers would be removed until the next season. Joe was seeking feedback on the proposed locations so that he can nail down the sites in advance of the season. Joe pointed out that the sites are generally different than our VRAP collection sites. Two sites will be recording upstream and downstream in the Baker River before it enters the Pemi. Most are to document where the 68 degrees Fahrenheit breakpoint is that differentiates warm-water from cold-water fisheries. Lisa proposed putting a data logger at the Common Man Bridge, but she and her volunteers already do this testing. Track long-term trends with the 24 hour data loggers. The period for RFPs ended yesterday. Two proposals were submitted for the Pemi with regard to protected instream study. Applicants will be interviewed around March 21st or so, and we will know who is going to do the study in a month or so. Tyson asked if there is any synching up with the USGS monitoring sites. Joe indicated that they will attempt to synch, and although the Pemi gauge in Plymouth currently only does stage, he said that temperature will be added to it for the 3-year monitoring period. They will also incorporate the VRAP data to establish trend analysis, and Joe said that they will proposed 23 stations up and down the Pemi this year. The only ones doing stage/water depth are the USGS gauges. The Pemi is really well monitored, so they don't see many data gaps. Lastly, we were informed that EPA was going to do a large electro-fishing project going along the Pemi.

4. Rt.49 Bridge Project: Sherrill attended the meeting in Campton. It was mostly an informational meeting involving 2 engineers from DOT who wanted feedback from the Campton Selectboard and anyone in attendance. Won't be doing anything to the bridge until 2030. Bridge was built in 1928, so it won't be a repair but a replacement. It is a high-trafficked area and will probably make the bridge wider and accommodate a snow-mobile path and pedestrian path. There is not enough space on either side to put in an expensive temporary bridge, so DOT will be using exit 29 and exit 27 to reroute traffic until the replacement bridge is built. Myrtle asked if DOT was going to put in traffic counts to integrate with their plan. Dave Jeffers said that the traffic data is likely already available at the [DOT site](#), and they have records of road counts going back to the 90's.
5. Permit Applications:
 1. Alteration of Terrain (AoT) Bureau Permit Application (RSA 485-A:17); NHDES File Number: 230124-014 Project Name: The Preserve at the Pemigewasset Subject Property: Tax Map# 227, Lot# 2: The Thornton Planning Board met to review the project and members of the Conservation Commission were present. There were several concerns: where the railroad tracks were in relation to the project, as well as the distance to the River. Steepness of the area that went down to the Pemi. There were mixed issues, such as how many residences were being built, if the town accepts the road going to the subdivision, and whether emergency vehicles can use the road. Initially, the developer stated that the project would be less than 100,000 square feet, and only have one house. Ultimately, there will be over 20 houses built. Myrtle will go to the next Campton/Thornton Planning Board in the next couple weeks to get an update.
 2. Ashland Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrade Project. Kathleen described that this was an upgrade to the current treatment facility regarding the aeration of lagoon 3. The project is in reality an ongoing process. Over the years, Ashland continues to keep the lagoons functional until DES tells the town that they will have to go with a full-blown wastewater treatment plant. One lagoon has already been shut down due to leakage. There are only around 500 customers that use the wastewater facility, with no real increase in customer base, so it won't make fiscal sense to expend the money for a treatment plant. It was noted that during Northern Pass discussions, there was one lagoon that was leaking and had to be shut down.
6. Management Plan update. Dave Jeffers (LRPC) presented an update regarding the River Corridor Management Plan. Dave offered thanks to those who have provided input for the resources section, and images that will be included in the final plan. A draft has been sent out that Matt had been collecting information and coordinating with Fish and Game to acquire history about fish habitats and history of the dams. Dave is combining the historic material from the previous plan, as well as incorporating the new

information that is being collected by Matt and submitted by PRLAC members, and then making sure that linkages are working, and that it is a readable document and not just a list of information. DES came out with a helpful guide in the fall on how to make an effective Management Plan. It is a helpful document and will be utilized as a guide. The state requires 12 elements that must be addressed in the plan, and most of them fall into the resources section. Dave said that a bit more needs to be finalized before it comes to us for feedback. It's taking a little bit longer for this to happen, but it will be ready to review before March meeting. The next step is to look at corridor protection rules and laws related to water quality and water usage. Dave is applying these to the document. Dave prepared a chart of the metrics that will need to be updated for the latest management plan, and he will send these out to all of us to update and send back to him from each community. There are a dozen topics that Dave will use to create these checklists, and the members that were present all volunteered to obtain updates from their towns' Planning Boards within the month. Dave will also send out the updated resources section of the plan. After that, we'll be looking at identifying problems and looking for recommendations.

Dave also presented the older implementation matrix containing such things as, water quality impairments, consult with PSNH about impoundments, etc. Some of these are no longer pertinent, and we will look at these in further months. These sixty items should be reduced to 20 or 30. We will review these in our next meeting, and decide what we cut and what we bring on board. Dave would like help with the resources section, to include discussion of things like gravel pits and mining operations. Kathleen brought up Ashland's Pemi overlay for excavations and gravel pits, as well as their wellhead protection overlay. One thing that was brought up is invoking regional impact, because many projects go far beyond the specific area of a project, and affect other neighboring landowners and towns. Dave admitted that they are 50 percent there, regarding completion of the Pemi Corridor Management Plan. Lastly, Barry contributed the fact that we could put in our Management Plan the things we've worked on, versus the projects that we were not allowed to participate on because they are implemented without plan submittal, but are contributing to the possible degradation of the river system.

Other business... Tyson announced that his organization is posting a position called "NH Water Resources Project Manager". By the time these minutes are posted, the position will most likely be filled.

7. Adjourn: Suellen motioned to adjourn at 8:07, OJ seconded. All in favor

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<http://www.lakesrpc.org/prlac/prlacindex.asp>