



OTTER CREEK BASIN

clean water service provider

2025-01-22 Otter Creek Basin Water Quality Council Agenda

Present: Ellen Cronan (ACRWC), Arabella Holzapfel (ACRPC-chair), Kate Kelly (LCA), Barbara Noyes-Pulling (RRPC), Katie Stiles (RNCD), Adam Piper (VLT), Gioia Kuss (Weybridge), Pam Stefanek (OCNRCD - vice chair)

Absent: Hilda Haines (Danby)

Public: Angie Allen (DEC), Matt Witten (ACRWC), David Brynn (VFF), Mary Beth Poli (DU), Chris Robbins (ACRWC)

Staff: Mike Winslow, Danelle Birong, Leander Ruhl

1. Amendments to the Agenda
 - a. Arabella asked to provide an update on the BWQC chairs meeting. Added to the end of the agenda
2. Approve [Minutes of July](#). **Moved by Gioia, second by Barbara. All in favor**
3. Introductions
 - a. Staffing Changes - Mike introduced Danelle Birong, a recent ACRPC hire that will be assisting with CWSP work, and Leander Ruhl, ACRPC's Eco America volunteer.
 - b. Reappointment status - Mike informed the BWQC that ACRPC has been reappointed as the Otter Creek CWSP for a full five year term. ACRPC was the first entity to go through the reappointment process.
4. Review of Proposed Projects. Mike noted that all projects have been deemed eligible by DEC
 - a. Vermont Family Forests - Watershed Center. David Brynn was on line to give an overview of the project.
 - i. Ellen asked for clarification about the location of the proposed project within the Watershed Center. The northern boundary of the property connects with the Monkton Town Forest, but the project would terminate about 600' south of the boundary, because that's where the truck road ends.
 - ii. Barbara asked about the proposed lifespan of the project. David hopes for a 20 year lifespan because it's mostly flat and shouldn't require much



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- maintenance, but Mike noted that DEC assumes a five year project life based on the P calculator.
- iii. Gioia asked if there would be connection and truck access. David noted the trail is presently being used for walking, skiing and biking, but is a recreational access. They are working on a new access. The road does have a future and use.
 - iv. Gioia asked about the maximum grade for a road in AMPs. David noted there are options but his project is shooting for no more than a 7% grade.
 - v. Gioia asked about installation of culverts. David noted that culverts would be removed and replaced by broad based dips lined with geotextile
 - vi. Kate asked about the seeps, and if that raised concerns about headwater seeps being protected by wetlands rules. David noted that Zapata Courage has been contacted and no wetlands permits would be needed.
 - vii. Kate asked if there had been other feedback from DEC staff. Mike noted that all appropriate DEC staff had been contacted and none indicated permit concerns. Dave said he would connect with VFPR before initiating the project.
 - viii. Adam commented that the project lifespan estimation was conservative, and that any investment should be for a longer time period. David has written based on the history of similar projects, but considers the lifespan a minimum.
 - ix. **Gioia made a motion to approve the project. Adam seconded.**
 1. Ellen asked the BWQC about maintenance costs, and whether they should be included in the cost.
 2. Angie pointed to Appendix B which requires a 10-year minimum O&M plan signed by the applicant. She does not feel it's appropriate to package the O&M as part of the project. Who does O&M is a separate project from approval of the project itself.
 3. Katie asked, if O&M plans are required, then is there tracking of that. Mike answered that tracking is a responsibility of the CWSP.
 4. **All in favor**
- b. Smokey House Center
- i. Mike mentioned that if maintenance were removed the project cost would reduce to \$76,088.57
 - ii. The project length is about seven times the VFF application



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- iii. Kate is not comfortable approving the project as written without seeing the budget broken out.
 - iv. Mike mentioned that permits would not be necessary following consultation with DEC staff
 - v. Barbara had concerns about maintenance costs being included
 - vi. Gioia was excited to see maintenance included, and thought it was a good addition to the application
 - vii. Ellen was also concerned about the project. The road sections considered are listed as trails and others were listed as rutted roads. She wasn't clear about what sections were included and where work was to be done.
 - viii. **Barbara moved to table the project. Ellen moved to second. All in favor**
 - 1. The BWQC asked for a representative to be available to answer questions.
 - 2. Ellen noted that when people are available to answer questions, projects are typically approved.
 - 3. Kate suggested that if need be we could call a special meeting if funding were needed prior to April
 - 4. Gioia wanted to know more details about the road and what the future use would be
1. Mendon - Bilodeau-Tondorf Kalish
- a. Mike gave a quick overview of the project. VFPR is planning a timber sale on state land. Access to the sale would take place over an existing privately owned road. VFPR suggested CWSP funding could be used to improve the road prior to the sale taking place. Mike and Leander visited the site along with VFPR staff in October to conduct a preliminary assessment.
 - b. Barbara was more comfortable with this project as the CWSP would be managing
 - c. Gioia was surprised to see road grades near 15%
 - d. Ellen feels VFPR needs to better understand the process, and should have applied for a WPD-ID. Mike suggested he had provided guidance to them otherwise. Angie noted there was a string of email coordinating across agencies and the CWSP.
 - e. Kate asked about eligibility. She found a footnote in the funding policy suggesting other funding sources should be explored. Mikes noted that he



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requests eligibility determinations from DEC and accepts their assessments on such questions. input on eligibility

- f. **Gioia moved to approve with an increase in management costs from 10% to 15%. Katie seconded. Ellen abstained. All others in favor.**
 - i. Angie expressed appreciation of the diligence of the reviews. She appreciates the confusion around O&M, and noted that the manual about that has not yet been released. Rachel Wood is the lead within DEC on that.
 - ii. Angie noted that the forest road erosion inventory app will be upgraded in the near future to include trails. David Wilcox and Silas Rainville will be doing some trainings on how to use the app and pre and post construction assessments will be required as part of the projects.
5. Funded Projects Status update. Mike will send an email to the group summarizing the project status
6. Chairs update - Arabella will send an email to the group summarizing the chairs meeting
7. Adjourn: Kate moved. Barbara seconded 15:22
8. Next Meeting - April 23, 2025 at 2PM

2025-01-22 CWSP Project Summaries

Lake Dunmore Fern Lake

- Westside Driver road improvements - site access agreements finalized; implementer procurement next phase
- Lake Dunmore shoreline stabilization - documented no need for permits; a few tweaks to final design and then release for bids
- Silver Lake trail - final edits to design proposal still needed

Middlebury College

- Archeological investigation completed; conceptual plans being reviewed; construction anticipated in spring

West Rutland ID

- Project prioritization on-going

Shoreham ID

- Town needs to confirm which projects to advance to conceptual design

Vergennes ID

- City needs to confirm which projects to advance to conceptual design

West Rutland wetland design

- Final design completed; awaiting town approval of plan

West Rutland dam removal

- No progress over winter; tree clearing and construction of access road anticipated in spring

Bristol Flats design

- Kick off meeting held; field work initiated

Baker Brook final design

- Phased implementation timeline developed; Preparation of permit documents pending

Sargent Brook preliminary design

- Finalized 30% design; anticipating project close out soon

Weybridge riparian planting

- Project completed, final report submitted

Seth Hill forest road improvements

- Project completed, final report submitted

Common Ground road design

- Consultant selected

ACRWC ID

- Outreach efforts on-going