

**Minutes of Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee Milford Police  
Facility, Milford, NH  
April 20, 2023**

In attendance were members Celeste Barr (Milford), Cory Ritz (New Ipswich), Marshall Buttrick (Greenville), Peter Howd (Wilton), Rob Clemens (Amherst), Eric Doberstein (Amherst), George May (Merrimack), Rich Hart (Amherst).

**Approval of March Minutes-** All in favor. Eric abstained.

### **New Business**

#### **Outreach Events**

Earth Day- Most towns have Clean-up Days scheduled.

A townwide cleanup will take place in Milford April 22. People can get coffee, donuts, and trash bags at Keyes Field starting at a.m.

Cleanup in Amherst is scheduled for May 6. Sponsored by Amherst Conservation Commission. The focus will be on the canoe ports. Contact Rob for more details.

Greenville town cleanup is April 22, meet at town hall at 9:00 A.M.

Wilton has been doing townwide cleanup April 15-April 22.

**Wilton Sustainability Fair-** had a booth on April 15<sup>th</sup> at WLC High School. We received 5 new volunteers that signed up with interest in water quality sampling or other SoRLAC activities.

We agreed that our booth looked good and was engaging. We have access to 2 different Enviroscope models: through Beaver Brook Assoc and Hillsborough Co. Conservation District that we may use in the future.

Our group wishes to update the color guide to the Souhegan River and reprint. (ChristyAnn Rothmel, original designer). Also we have some labels to replace on the SoRLAC display before we use it next time.

We would like to add a page to the display with a land/river acknowledgement of the indigenous people who lived on and named the Souhegan "waiting and watching place" [Abenaki].

### **Public Outreach**

At our next meeting, make a list of events and locations where the SoRLAC display could be set up. We can try to get maps of the river into conservation kiosks in our towns (ie. Emerson Park on the River has 2 kiosks, the Souhegan

River Trail has 2 kiosks).

**Facebook-** we need to find out who is the administrator and start posting more. Make all members editors so they can post photos, events, meetings, canoe trips and sampling info.

**Canoe Trips-**We made a schedule for canoe trips  
June 10 Milford to Amherst, 9:00 A.M. Start will be at Rt 122 Canoeport near Amherst Country Club to Souhegan High School.  
July 8- Locations to be determined.  
Aug. 5- Locations to be determined.  
Aug. 28- Merrimack rapids, for the brave at heart.

### **Other Business-**

#### **Corridor Management Plan Update**

Members can add information on river resources from their towns Master Plans in this shared document:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1szU9K9HZVB4zVYHDqIWbKUMORBibVbwQ/edit?usp=share\\_link&ouid=116063050519300167776&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1szU9K9HZVB4zVYHDqIWbKUMORBibVbwQ/edit?usp=share_link&ouid=116063050519300167776&rtpof=true&sd=true)

EPA is not able to support the DNA sampling and analysis on the Souhegan. They can provide E. coli and nutrient analysis for our regular monitoring as well as the wet weather sampling. We agreed that we would use them as a last resort because it would mean driving the samples to Chelmsford MA. We also decided that wet weather sampling will be too difficult and not worth it without the DNA analysis (since we have done it before without conclusive information about source of E. coli).

Let's gather MS4 data from our relevant towns: Milford, Amherst, Wilton and Merrimack. Peter has access to macroinvertebrate sampling equipment and we could look into doing some rapid stream assessments and training.

Cory would like to get the SoRLAC stakeholder survey into the hands of other potential respondents in the area. He is offering to attend Conservation Commission meetings in river towns to share about the River Corridor Plan and bring surveys. Amherst will be initiating a Water Resource Plan (via Rob) and Cory can coordinate with them.

Peter has had Wilton Con Comm and Planning Board members fill out our survey and keeps them updated.

Tracie says the State is still processing our grant funding.

## **Local Updates**

**Souhegan Watershed Association-** Eric has reached out to Merrimack, Milford, Nashua and Manchester WWTPs for water testing assistance. Not all the plants have responded with their lab capacity yet. Eric has reached out to past and new sampling volunteers. He is still waiting to hear back from many of the past samplers.

Eric participated in a Fish Passage Conference call with NOAA, NMFS, DES, NH Fish and Game and other organizations to discuss dam removal and dam assessments on the Souhegan River. The Dam assessments are funded by NHDES with funds from NRCS. 4 dams (The 4 dams are in watershed but not on river directly) .

**June 3<sup>rd</sup> will be a party at George's house for SWA sampling monitors and SoRLAC members.**

**Ipswich-**Nothing to report.

**Greenville-** nothing new.

**Temple-** Cam attended the Con Comm meeting. Temple has a new Natural Resource Inventory which has not been reviewed by the planning board and is not yet ready for distribution. They were interested in SoRLAC's plans.

### **Wilton-**

Peter filed a complaint with NHDES about the Arcidi construction.

River's Edge – met with Wilton PB last night with a plan for 8 houses and only one on the river. Conservation Easement has disappeared from the plan but Planning Board would like it back in.

### **Milford-**

Milford held “Envision Milford” charettes led by NRPC to outline important topics for the Master Plan update. Celeste participated to represent SoRLAC. There were many other participants that stressed the importance of the Souhegan River and river trails in the Town providing conservation value as well as providing connectivity and walkability in town.

The NH State Historical Resources will reopen in May after flooding at which time Celeste will pursue research historical resources and information on the pre-European history along the Souhegan.

SoRLAC could consider and land/river acknowledgement esp. during canoe trips when discussing the meaning of the word “Souhegan’ and the use of it as a travel way by Abenaki residents of the region.

Milford Planning Board has requested a 2<sup>nd</sup> continuance of the Site Plan request to pave the Permanent Trail section of the Souhegan River Trail. They have not supplied a complete grading and drainage plan and they have an ability to meet the Development Regulations on buffers. Concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety.

An appeal was filed on the Alteration of Terrain permit on the Gardent Property North River Road. The appeal was denied. (Marshall reported this update).

Con Comm 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat hike is on the Souhegan River Trail West from trailhead on North River Road south of Fitch’s Farm. 9-11 am

### **Amherst-**

Rich has been working with SHS students on their senior projects. He is asking for topics related to the Souhegan River that would make for a good senior project between Feb-April.

**Merrimack-**Canoe launch at Seavern’s Bridge needs work. DPW found pipes when they started upgrades in the past and stopped. It still is in the town plans to upgrade this spot and possibly add another canoe launch in town.

**RMAC (River Management Advisory Council)-** Cory attended his first meeting as a voting member in April. Tracy gave an update on the upcoming Souhegan River corridor plan. Had a speaker from the state Office of Planning & Development who talked about updated flood maps. RMAC and LMAC have created a new mapping tool with ecological grading.

Next Meeting start at 6:30 P.M. May 18, 2023 at the Amherst Country Club Rt 122 Amherst. We can walk on the ACC footbridge over the river.

Summer meetings:

June 15 Wildcat Falls Currier Road Merrimack 6:30 Hike then meet at Town Hall. (George will request a meeting room).

July 20 TBA

Aug 17 TBA

Sept 21 Wilton walk Label Art Dam and meet at Wilton Police Dept.

Submitted by Celeste Barr, acting secretary April 20, 2023