

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee Minutes
Thursday, July 20th, 2023 6:30 PM – in-person at the Office in East Berkshire

Attendees: Sarah Lunn, Jacques Couture, Wendy Scott, John Little, Russ Ford, Bryan Dickinson, Susan Staples, and Lindsey Wight

Meeting was called to order at 6:37pm.

Review of the June meeting minutes (Thanks Wendy!): JL motioned to approve; BD seconded; minutes approved as written.

Updates on business from the June meeting: The signs for the office building have been ordered from Premier - \$435, metal, 6ft x18 inches; Postcards for recruiting members will be ordered once Lindsey has figured out how many people are in each town that is currently in need of membership.

Event Overview: It's been a tough summer for on-water activities: thunderstorm predictions cancelled the flatwater paddle instruction and postponed the Nature Paddle (rescheduled for August 11th!). High water and closed Rail Trail canceled this year's Missisquoi Paddle-Pedal. We were able to hold a River Clean-up with the ECO AmeriCorps members on July 5th, and were able to hold the swift water instruction tour on July 9th – a fun and appreciated day on the water. Maybe next year do a full-day “workshop” (provide lunch?) instead of trying to hold it over 2 days?

Grants/Projects: Final reporting from Franklin County NRCD for the Montgomery BioBlitz (see above for event details). The town of Troy has requested to alter their grant – instead of ditching along Veilleux Rd (which will qualify for FEMA assistance), they'd like to address a culvert on River Rd. Discussion about making sure that they get appropriate workers to do the work and ensure it meets Better Back Road standards. JL motioned to approve provisionally (who is doing the work; what is the oversight); SS seconded. Motion carried.

2024 River Community and Municipal Grants timelines and details: RCGs will be due Oct 1; Municipal grants will be due Nov 1. RCGs: 2024 emphasis is Water Quality. Ideas to share in application: sediment testing; some WQ testing program; contaminants on ag land (esp with flooding?); planting buffers; education about WQ – both in schools and otherwise; forestry management practices; fish health (check on wildlife and the impacts of stocking); wildlife surveys.

Videography Interns – watched the first of the films that they have produced – about paddling from Westfield to Troy. Would like to set up some interviews with Committee members on July 25th; let Lindsey know who is available. It would be great to get some of these videos out on local tv.

New access steps are now in East Richford – thanks to the NFCT!

Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi canoe experiences – may be able to provide some canoeing as part of the Circle of Courage camp August 7-11

Wild and Scenic Film Festival: We're in the countdown! Time to start getting sponsors and raffle prizes. Fun “local” films – We Leaf (on youtube): a couple doing the NFCT.

Watched a short film made about protecting rivers: 6,000 miles made by Cal Wild.

2023 Upcoming Events: **August 11:** the rescheduled Nature Paddle with Jared Nunery. **September 9:** Swimming Hole Clean-Up. **September 30:** Paddle and Picnic. **October 13-14:** Wild and Scenic Film Festival, in conjunction with Jay Peak's Bean and Brew festival.

Other: ANM River Celebration at Mac's Bend in Swanton on August 26th; MRBA Community Water Walks in Enosburg- Giddings Brook on September 5; October 31st Knotweed event – Montgomery River Walk Park...hoping to do a knotweed maze!

Other/Public Comment: Please send Sarah pictures and bios for the website; we want to highlight our amazing Committee members!

Upcoming meetings: August 17th on site at the North Troy property? Westfield Community Center as a back-up if inclement weather. September 21: UMATR office (possible date conflict for Lindsey – will know by next meeting)

JL motioned; SS seconded: meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.