



LEILANI CRAFTS ULRICH
Chairwoman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

Draft Minutes
Park Ecology Committee
October 2015 Agency Meeting
October 27, 2015 3:00 p.m.

**MINUTES OF THE PARK ECOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING
October 8, 2015**

The Committee meeting convened at approximately 1:05 p.m.

Park Ecology Committee Members Present

Arthur Lussi, Acting Chair, Daniel Wilt, Bradley Austin, Robert Stegemann.

Other Members and Designees Present

Lani Ulrich, Karen Feldman, Sherman Craig, Richard Booth, Dierdre Scozzafava, William Thomas.

Local Government Review Board

Fred Monroe.

Agency Staff Present

Terry Martino, James Townsend, Ed Snizek.

Park Ecology Division Report (Ed Snizek, APA)

Mr. Snizek reviewed the monthly activities for the RASS Division. He noted the public comment period ends November 3 for the proposed general permit GP2015G-2. The General Permit will be presented to the Board for final review and approval at the November Agency meeting.

Mr. Snizek spoke of the boat inspection pilot program sponsored by the Lake George Park Commission and the Town of Lake George. The pilot program was approved for two years and will end in December. He stated that he would like to have the LGPC Executive Director, Dave Wick, present an overview of the program to the Agency during the winter months. In addition, he talked about the Adirondack AIS Spread Prevention Pilot Program and its notable success this summer. Mr. Snizek also intends to ask APPIPP and the Adirondack Watershed Institute of Paul Smith's College to visit the Agency and share information regarding their programs. He reviewed the Lake George Asian Clam Survey that was done for 2015 and discussed a new sighting of Hydrilla in Henrietta, New York.

Ms. Ulrich asked about a report given by NCPR regarding the City of Montreal proposing to dispose of raw sewage in the St. Lawrence River. Mr. Snizek stated that he had heard a similar report, but also heard that the International Joint Commission (IJC) has asked the City officials to explore other options to dispose of the sewage.

Ms. Feldman asked about funding for Invasive Species initiatives. She noted that it has been both a private and public endeavor and that partnerships should continue perhaps with a 5 or 10 year plan in place. Mr. Snizek responded he believed the Invasive Species Council is looking at using EPF funds to sustain programs and possibly fund the boat launch steward program throughout the State.

Mr. Monroe stated that local governments have stepped up and provided some of the funding which is one of the reasons the Lake George projects have been successful. He stated he felt this should happen region-wide and should not rely solely on EPF funding.

Mr. Stegemann stated that the partnerships are important.

Eurasian Watermilfoil Management in Upper Saranac Lake (Guy Middleton, Lake Manager, Upper Saranac Lake Foundation)

Mr. Middleton provided an historical overview of Milfoil management in Upper Saranac Lake, current status of the milfoil population, and challenges associated with managing aquatic invasive species in a large lake.

Mr. Middleton noted there are two invasive species on Upper Saranac Lake - Eurasian watermilfoil, which was discovered in 1996, and Variable Leaf watermilfoil, discovered in Fish Creek Campground in 2008. He reviewed the harvesting history and the operational results since discovery of the invasives. He stated that the monitoring and management methods have been consistent and are indicating success. Eurasian watermilfoil density has declined to its lowest levels since it was discovered.

Mr. Booth asked what is done with the plants after they are harvested. Mr. Middleton responded they are given to local farmers as they are good fertilizer. Mr. Booth asked if the plants survive and Mr. Middleton responded no.

Mr. Middleton reviewed the financial costs of maintenance of invasives on the lake. He noted that funding is a concern. Mr. Monroe asked if there was any interest in forming a tax district and noted this is a way to spread the costs. Mr. Middleton responded that it has been considered but his concern is that donors might opt out resulting in less funding being available to maintain the controls necessary to combat the invasives.

Mr. Middleton then reviewed the prevention and preparedness plan prepared by the Adirondack Watershed Institute of Paul Smith's College. The preparedness plan was developed in response to concerns of keeping new invasives out.

Mr. Stegemann stated the Department has talked about invasive species funding. He spoke of a new grant program that is being rolled out which might be something that can be considered. He also noted the need for early detection and rapid response and added the discussion is on-going.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.