



Regional Planning Commission Meeting Meeting Summary

March 29, 2017

Mount Eustis Commons – 1st Floor Conference Room
262 Cottage Street
Littleton, NH

Present:

Bob DeAngelis, Dalton
Jo Lacaillade, Haverhill
Sandra Butson, Lisbon
Robin Irving, Northumberland
Dennis Lunn, Stark
Charles Goulet, Stratford
Vicki DeLalla, Stratford
Sam Chase, Whitefield
Chris Dowd, UNH T2
Dianne Timmins, NH Fish & Wildlife
Kaela Gray, NCC
Michelle Moren-Grey, NCC
Kathy Frenette, NCC
Barbara Robinson, NCC
Tara Bamford, NCC
Regan Pride, NCC

Vice Chair Jo Lacaillade welcomed everyone at 4:07 PM and facilitated a round of introductions. She explained that since there wasn't a quorum, no decisions could be made, but we would proceed with the presentations from our guests.

The minutes of August 24, 2017 and October 27, 2017 were reviewed and no corrections noted.

Chris Dowd, Manager of the Statewide Asset Data Exchange System (*SADES) gave a presentation on the background of SADES and how it is being used. Chris explained that SADES is a central data repository that will reduce the duplication of effort and standardization of data collection. Advances in technology have enabled streamlined mobile data collection using ipads and ESRI's ARC Collector. Right now the data is stored on a UNH T2 cloud server. Once uploaded to SADES, the data is available for modelling, analysis, and reports. NCC participated with NHDOT in piloting the system in 2014 and it was launched in January 2015. Right now there are modules for culverts, pedestrian infrastructure,

guardrails and road surface management system (RSMS).

Chris suggests users obtain an iPad mini with a waterproof case for \$330-\$400. He said UNH T2 provides training on the hardware, software, and specific attributes. He explained that this training is required prior to having access to the system.

Chris noted that the RPCs have been a key player in SADES; with partners we have collected data on 7,499 culverts. NCC staff have participated in 7 trainings and have assisted with inventorying culverts in the Ammonoosuc River watershed and in addition did an RSMS pilot. NHDOT is now using the SADES culvert data to prioritize replacements.

There is no guest login yet but it is in the works for viewing data.

Dianne Timmins, NH Fish & Game Coldwater Fisheries Biologist discussed how SADES was used last summer to bring fish passage concerns together with transportation infrastructure needs to assist towns with resilience planning in the Ammonoosuc River watershed. ARSCAP, the Ammonoosuc River Stream Crossing Assessment Project, involved NH Fish & Game, Trout Unlimited, Ammonoosuc Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Plymouth State University and NCC. It was the first time data were collected to meet the needs of DES, DOT and F & G all at once. Dianne explained that this watershed was a logical choice because a lot of data on trout had been collected through the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, local natural resource inventories, and Clean Water Healthy Trout. In addition the entire mainstem of the Ammonoosuc River is in the state's River Management and Protection Program. A total of 781 crossings were identified.

Dianne said that the Eastern Brook Trout Conservation Strategy includes protecting the best habitat and reestablishing what has been lost. She explained that trout are a good indicator species for the health of cold water aquatic habitat.

One important issue discussed regarding crossings was blocked fish migration. Dianne reported that she has done research showing ranges of up to 75 miles in the Androscoggin watershed. More important to municipalities is the fact that stabilizing the stream and stabilizing the road goes hand in hand. Some culverts have become undersized due to increased stormwater flow. A right-sized culvert is at least as wide as the top of the riverbank would be in that location.

Dianne next showed the results of the modeling performed on the culvert data collected in the Ammonoosuc. Crossings were assessed for aquatic organism passage, geomorphic compatibility (how much the crossing does or doesn't interfere with the natural course of the stream, and hydrology (how big a flood the crossing can handle). Only 30% of the culverts assessed in the watershed were fully passable to aquatic organisms. Only 25% were fully geomorphically compatible. Trout Unlimited's Streamworks model was used to look at hydrology (infrastructure vulnerability). According to the model, 81% of the crossings can pass 2-year flood flows, but only 41% can pass the 100 year flow. Dianne pointed out that there have been 7 flood events in the past 10 years that meet the definition of 100 year flood.

Dianne explained that the next step will be community workshops and assistance with grants if towns are interested. NCC staff are assisting with outreach for the workshops and with the grants. Discussion followed focusing on town involvement. Robin noted that this should be a state-wide

effort. Northumberland is redoing a crossing on Roaring Brook as part of another project. The conservation commission should be a target for this information. Jo reported that Ron Rhodes, CRWC, has been assisting with two crossings in Haverhill. She observed that people don't always make the connection between lack of trout and impassable crossings. Vicki reported that Stratford has a new conservation commission. Sanda observed that road agents will be the key officials to get on board. It was noted that although there are NH Stream Crossing Guidelines, they aren't applied in an emergency, such as when a culvert blows out. It was agreed that it is harder to communicate the fact that spending more to fix a crossing correctly now will often save municipalities money in the long run, e.g., by preventing blow-outs and undercutting. Dianne said the next assessment planned in the region will be on the Androsgoggin where The Conservation Fund is providing money from a fine that was awarded to them.

In other business, Tara announced that the next NCC Commissioner meetings will be June 21 with an update on solid waste, and August 16 on the New Ruralism initiative and case studies.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.

Meeting summary by Tara Bamford