



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council

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www.Stlawco.gov/Departments/Planning/AdvisoryBoards/EnvironmentalManagementCouncil

Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 15, 2025 6:00 p.m.

Classroom A, One Stop Career Center, Human Services Center

80 State Highway 310, Canton, NY 13617

- I. Call to Order:** Chair called the meeting to order 6:03 p.m.
- A. Land Acknowledgment** S. Rau read a land acknowledgement provided by Tony David, Director of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe Environment Division, and used with his permission: “As we meet today, let us first give thanks and acknowledge that the land upon which we are gathered is part of the traditional indigenous territories, including the Rotinonshionni (Low-dee-no-SHOO-nee), the People of the Longhouse, also known as the Iroquois Confederacy; and the Kaniienkehaka (Ga-nyun-geh-HA-gah), the People of the Land of Flint, also known as the Mohawk Nation.”
- B. Roll Call and Introductions** 11 of the 12 members present. **Quorum was obtained**
1. Members Present: L. Bage; L. Hanss; R. Graham (new member); M. Iversen; A. Pearson; S. Rau, *Chair*; L. Rudiger; N. Terminelli, *BOL Liaison*; B. Washburn, *Vice-Chair*; M. Weaver; N. Woodworth, *Secretary*.
 2. Members Absent: S. Hurlbut.
 3. St. Lawrence County: S. Joseph, *Planner II*; J. Pfothenauer, *Director*.
 4. Government Officials: R. Young, *DEC Director Region 6*; J. White, *Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator Region 6, Water Inspection Steward Coordinator Region 6*.
- C. Acceptance of Order of Business** (accepted)
1. **Items for Unfinished Business**
 2. **Items for New Business**
 - a. **Added** topic of trees managed on St. Lawrence County owned property
- D. Approval of Minutes** (November 20, 2024)
1. Motion to amend minutes in section II. B. 3. e. striking the words side by side and replace with UTV (Washburn / Woodworth) (passed unanimously)
 2. Approval of Amended minutes (Washburn / Woodworth) (passed unanimously)
- E. Council Logistics**
1. Combined meeting with County Planning Board (CPB): Interest in combined meeting with the EMC and CPB proposed for the month of April meeting to discuss new New York State wetland regulations. The CPB meets on second Thursdays at 7 p.m. and so suggestion is to move the EMC meeting date to the second Thursday of April at 6 p.m.
 2. Motion to approve proposed meeting calendar (Pearson / Hanss) (passed unanimously)
 3. Member update. Suggestion to have a member or two report about what is going on in their area or things that are of interest to them. L. Bage agreed to do the first month. Her report is as follows:
 - a. Deer River: Reached out to contacts that live along the Deer River that experienced pollution. They are continuing to monitor the sewage fungus pollution that emerged last spring. They mentioned official forms available at Town Clerks to report signs of the pollution.
 - b. Town of Colton Black Fly and Mosquito remediation program Andrea Malik, would be willing to come speak to the EMC. Start up late March early April. Might be of interest to us because of Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile outbreaks that occurred last summer and the discussion on mosquito control for public health reasons.
 - c. John Matthews of St Lawrence Valley Sportsman Club (SLVSC) participated in the DEC Walleye stocking program. It has been so successful that the population is stable that the DEC stocking program is no longer necessary, but the DEC will keep the SLVSC in mind if need to start the stocking program

again in the future. Jana Lantry of DEC Region 6 Fisheries Management will move toward telemetric survey to monitor the population and the egg laying locations.

- d. Lives along the multi-use trail and is a part of a loose coalition of residence along the multi-use trail that meet occasionally to discuss issues, and one of the members is on the trail advisory committee.
 - e. Interest in learning more about carbon sequestration and conservation easements for personally owned land.
 - f. L. Bage and L. Hanss met to discuss possible Earth Day events that the EMC could host and hopefully become part of a the yearly tradition.
 - g. B. Washburn will do the member update for February and N. Woodworth with do March.
4. Meeting Location discussion:
- a. Suggestion for meeting in different parts of the County. Two different locations per year. Suggestions include Ranger School in Wanakena, Cranberry Lake, Massena Nature Center, Massena Eisenhower Locks, NYPA visitor center,
 - b. Suggestion to include some special topic or issue that is important to that area. Some suggested topics new Hydrogen Plant opening in Massena,
 - c. Contact staff or E board with location and topic suggestions
5. County Representation: Specific Gouverneur/ Fowler / Edwards

II. Reports

A. Report of Board of Legislators

1. Greenhouse project was first mentioned 3 years ago. Glad to see that moving forward to provide jobs in the area
2. Walleye restocking. Mixed feelings by BOL and member groups. Happy that their efforts have been successful, but concerns that if the program stops will the Walleye population fall again.

B. Report of DEC

1. Response to questions about funding for the Aquatic Invasive Species harvesting in Heuvelton. SLU got a grant from DEC for hiring a harvester to cut the tops off water chestnut before they can fruit. The Town of Oswegatchie received a grant from the DEC to purchase their own harvester (echo puller) which pulls the roots out. They have a 40 acre primary infestation that last year they were able to remove 90% of it. The objective is to continue to do that to wear down the population, prognosis looks good to be able to control with those efforts. There is a report of infestation at the outlet of Black Lake, but SLELO PRISM thinks they will be able to get that under control. Investigating getting the harvested material back on to the land for fertility. Cutting and pulling are both useful, cutting improves navigability and prevents spreading if timed correctly, pulling eradicates the plant directly.
2. Hydrogen Plant: issued the SPDES permit and have their Storm Water Construction Permit.
3. Q: Bti question from L. Bage's report. Does the DEC regulate Bti applications? Yes they need a DEC aquatic pesticide applicator permit. Just controls black fly not mosquitoes. Does NYS provide funding for Bti application? Will investigate and get back to us. (email from R. Young states that there is no state funding for blackfly control) Does DEC do anything to monitor mosquitoes? DEC does not, but NYS Department of Health does monitor mosquitoes across the state and depending on if any outbreaks potentially enhanced monitoring.
4. Q: Has the analysis of PFAS from those wastewater treatment plants been done? Have not received data yet, but sampling has been done.
5. Q: How can we help DEC? Keep our ears open for any environmental issues that people of concerns and pass the information on to the DEC.
6. Deer River: Water engineers met with the North Country Dairy facility's wastewater management and company's engineers to discuss what they are doing for their waste water treatment and the new targets in the new permit.
7. J. White will work with Village of Heuvelton, Town of Oswegatchie, and the Black Lake Association regarding the water chestnut issue. Will do some hand pulling in areas that the mechanical harvester cannot get to close to such as river and lake banks, logs, or near obstacles. Will also be working with Wilson Hill on water chestnut and phragmites control. J. White is based out of Brownville.

III. Unfinished Business:

A. **National Marine Sanctuary:**

1. Brief overview: Lake Ontario Marine Sanctuary 1,700 square miles. Eastern Lake Ontario up to Cape Vincent, it was a seven year process, started in 2017 and officially sanctioned June 2024. There was the potential that the sanctuary would extend up to Chippewa Bay in Hammond and so St. Lawrence Planning office engaged in discussions with NOAA about the process. In order for it to extend to Chippewa Bay the St. Lawrence County would need a resolution in support of the sanctuary. There was a proposed resolution about extending the sanctuary all the way up to Massena. This was debated in July 2021. Some members of the BOL expressed concerns that the sanctuary would lead to more federal regulation on fishing or other impacts on the River. It was debated and was defeated. The National Sanctuary was adopted in smaller size. To add additional space to the established sanctuary would be an immense task and highly unlikely considering the amount of effort that was put in the first time.
2. Q: Benefits or purpose or regulation: NOAA said that there would not be new regulation of shipping or commercial fishing. Promoting tourism and historical preservation. They build interpretive centers and funding for historical preservation and education. There might have been some anchor regulations around ship wrecks to protect those sites with established moorings. It does not include land use / water use / zoning statutes. Discussion about jurisdictional control of the water.
3. Discussion: about next steps in this process. It was decided to table this for now and revisit if the BOL decides they would like to pursue in the future.

IV. New Business:

A. **Sustainability Day:** Saturday March 29 at SUNY Canton. Was started by the Associated Colleges as Sustainability Day, local community members were hosting a “Green Living Fair.” They decided to combine the two events into one event. It is on an eighteen month cycle and alternates between spring and fall. Staff was there to represent the EMC in the Fall of 2023. Would we like to participate this year and what does that look like?

1. Suggestion of promoting the directory, get people to fill it out. Have a form or laptop
2. Some other volunteers would be nice rather than just staff. Will follow up

B. **Repair Fair:** Sustainability committee of Canton is hosting a repair fair at the pavilion May 3. It is an event to divert waste from the waste stream to encourage repairing items. They are looking for volunteers to participate to guide people through repairs such as bike repair or sewing. Staff will send out the email to sign up to volunteer and EMC will help advertise.

C. **Earth day / Week:**

1. L. Bage and L. Hanss expressed interest in doing some event for that. Staff mentioned might be taking some time off around that time because of expecting a child.

D. **Trees management on County owned property:**

1. Concerns about trees that are planted on County property in the village that keep getting cut down or mowed down by County building and grounds. Is there a plan or figure out why they are cutting them down? Staff will get more info and return to the group to discuss future goals with this.

E. **Road side mowing and invasive species:**

1. Concerns about road side mowing spread knotweed. The mowing is to improve visibility and plowing, but the swath appears larger than necessary. Concerns about it getting into water ways and spreading. Also parsnip brought up.
2. JT talked with Town and County highway departments in the past. Staff will look in the past information
3. Discussion on who manages which roads. Federal, state, county, and town roads all have different contracts on who manages them. Some town roads are managed by highway and vice versa. Complex to wrap our heads around who manages what. Lack of equipment or staff and cause different schedules to mow.

V. Announcements:

A. Sustainability Day and Green Living Fair Saturday, March 29, 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. SUNY Canton

B. Repair Fair May 3

C. NYS Invasive Species Expo September 14- 16 in Saratoga Springs, no cost for general attendance

VI. Adjourn: Washburn / Woodworth 8:05 p.m.