# The Eightmile River

## Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee

### Meeting Minutes – July 27, 2015, Lyme Town Hall

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**Present**: Eric Belt, Linda Bireley, Gloria Fogarty, Jaime Fosburgh, Bernie Gillis, Anthony Irving, Parker Lord, Sue Merrow, Rob Smith, Eric Thomas, Melvin Woody, and Pat Young.

**1. Call to Order** – 5:05 PM

1. **Next meeting**: September 28, 2015
2. **Acceptance of Minutes**: Minutes of June 1, 2015 meeting presented. Bernie Gillis moved to accept, seconded by Linda Bireley. Motion unanimously carried.
3. **NPS updates** – Jamie spoke of activities planned to help celebrate the 100th anniversary of the NPS. A special Newsletter will be created to document the accomplishments of respective Partnership Rivers organizations. . New funding requests are being accepted for the 2016 season. A primary goal is to engage urban youth. NPS funding has not yet been finalized for the upcoming year.
4. **Regional Activities:** Other local regional activities that several board members are participating in, include the Land Trust Exchange coordinated by the CT River Valley Council of Governments. The group is focused on trying to broaden the strength of local Land Trusts by exploring the possibility of sharing services, such as legal representation and stewardship needs.
5. **Subcommittee Updates:**

**Outreach and Education:** Pat gave a report summarizing recent Outreach efforts at Devil’s Hopyard State Park. She, Liz Robinson and Linda Bireley recently worked to provide one-hour morning programs for children and familes on 3 separate days. Enrollment was free, programs focused on local wildlife, stream bugs and reptiles. Attendance ranged from about 10-30 attendees. Participants seemed to enjoy the programs, though Pat felt the effort may have needed a bit more visibility. The provision of small signs (.i.e. “SNAKES”) seemed to help. In future conversations, the committee will be discussing whether more efforts of this type should be attempted and if so, how to make them more effective.

There was a recent workshop featuring the biofilter garden at Lake Hayward. Kathy Connolly was the featured speaker. Sue and Bernie (and Pat joined near the end) were able to attend.

Recently, Salem School system allowed us to present the Enviroscape program to approximately 46 middle-school students during their normal Science Class time frame. Two teachers from the Children’s Museum of Southeastern CT and two ERWSCC volunteers (Gloria and Barbara) led the presentations and assisted the students in their efforts to deal with polluted water. The program was well-received, and comments from the Salem staff indicated strong interest in bringing the program back next year.

**Protection & Management –** Rob Smith reported that plans for the foot bridge in East Haddam are going well. Decking materials, railings, posts and hardware are now available in Rob’s yard. The original target date of 10/1 for beginning the construction is “iffy”, though it is definitely possible by 12/11/15. The redecked bridge will be 75’ long, sand 6 ft.wide to allow access for emergency vehicles. It appears that the trail grant submitted by East Lyme is moving forward. While final sign off regarding archeology impact is still pending, it appears that based on discussion with state Trail Coordinator that is should be signed off on shortly.

The Town of Colchester has submitted a grant request for a design of a link that would extend the trail system from RT 16 to RT 149 which would then connect to Day Pond State Park, which could then link to Salmon River State Park/Forest and then the Airline Trail.

Pat has been working with two student interns to complete an inventory of all public road culvert crossings. This has now become a 13 state initiative and Pat is working on combining several different databases to ensure all public road ROW culverts in the watershed are mapped. This includes reviewing some older mapping and some culverts that have been replaced. The data is being used to assess fish and wildlife passage as well as resiliency for storm events.

**Science & Monitoring** – Linda Bireley noted that there have been no recent committee meetings. The video system at the Moulson Pond Fishway was just removed but will be put back in place to monitor fall runs. The fish camera has worked very well this year. Water sampling efforts have been hampered by the early windstorm event, and some problems with equipment, but data collection will continue until the end of August. Pat had requested that temperature loggers be relaunched above and below Ed Bill’s Dam, which Neal Hagstrom has done. Neil has also asked if we would be interested in helping seine for bridle shiners in the Eightmile. They are a species of concern, but he believes that there are some populations in various locations in this watershed. Eric T. noted that DEEP is also seeking any comments on the proposed “Wildlife Action Plan”. The plan is organized by types of habitat, species and focus areas.

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**Project Review** – Rob, Tony and Pat attended a meeting with the East Haddam Fish & Game Club to discuss preliminary plans to construct a new Club House near an old ice pond. The club would like open water adjacent to the club. Further review will be scheduled as necessary.

**Finance –** No discussion.

**Old/New Business** Pat is in the process of organizing materials for our annual Newsletter. All Committee members are welcome to submit ideas, articles and pictures.

Motion by Bernie Gillis to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Melvin Woody.. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria Fogarty