

# Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic River Study Advisory Committee

## Minutes

June 17, 2010, 7pm

Town Public Safety Building, Montgomery Center, VT 05471

Attendees: Sue Brassett, Jonathan and Jayne Chase, Edward Ellis, Debbie Foote, Ray Giroux, Mark Higley, Bob Johnson, Todd Lantery, Dianne Laplante, John Little, Jim MacCartney, Brenda MacDonald-Kuper, Mike Manahan, Carol McGregor, Anne McKay, Staci Pomeroy, Keith and Lori Sampietro, Ken Secor, Cynthia Scott, Shana Stewart.

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

Vice Chair Todd Lantery called the meeting to order at 0705pm. Short self introductions were given by those present.

### 2. Review minutes from last meeting

Last month's minutes were approved as written.

### 3. Updates from Shana

#### a. Outreach materials

- i. Newsletter – We had agreed on one postcard per landowner and one newsletter for each landowner along the rivers. Shana continues to id the landowner addresses along with the help of Bethany Remmers, Staci Pomeroy, and Anne McKay. Our first newsletter should go out in a week or so, and is dropped off the materials for print at FedEx.
- ii. Mission Statement – After many recommended changes to the suggested mission statements, Shana feels she can rewrite a statement which will include these recommendations. She will email the final draft to council members by email in the next few days and those wishing to suggest further change should do so before the next meeting – otherwise we will pass it as written.

### 4. Outstanding Remarkable Values, ORVs (Shana and Jim from NPS)

Jim MacCartney gave another talk on ORVs and got a lot of questions. He passed out a handout titled "Identifying Outstanding Remarkable Values" which will be included in our first newsletter and gives a good rundown on what they are and what we should be trying to do with them in our study. He distributed another handout on Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers (on private lands) which appears to be a good reference document as well. This is an ongoing discussion. Please send any questions to Shana, Jamie or Jim. We will submit updates of FAQs to Rolf to post on the website which continues to be under development.

Jim suggests that we approach the study not by identifying ORVs, but identifying all resources along the rivers, and deciding about which may be considered ORVs later in the process. We do not need to reinvent the wheel, and this is why we are bringing in folks to the study committee meetings to talk to us about their knowledge of the river. Once we identify what exists, we can see if there are still questions, or areas in which we need additional information. Thank you to Anne, Sue and Mike for volunteering to help with historical/cultural studies, to Mike, Todd, John Cote, and Parma for volunteering to help with fish studies, to the Sampietros for volunteering to help with the recreational studies, to Ken for continuing to take pictures, and to Bob Johnson for volunteering to get our info hooked up to Google Earth.

It was suggested we might get a fisherman to talk about fish in our rivers and how fishing has changed over time. Mike Manahan has fished both rivers since 1976, and volunteered to help with this one. John Cote, Parma Jewett and Todd Lantery all fish for trout somewhere in our river systems of interest, so we probably can solicit help from them on this one as well.

The management plan is part of the study process developed by our study committee to allow an opportunity for the community to have input in the process of river management. This plan will identify strategies to protect and recommendations for the management of the resources that we identify. These are totally voluntary, and may be valuable to communities even if designation isn't sought.

### 5. Implications of Designation

We discussed the possible implications of designation, and asked some questions about designation with Jim from NPS.

- a. Some questions that came up that we need to answer at a later date in the study...
  - i. What is defined as the headwaters of each river?
  - ii. What are the final boundaries of our study? Other Wild & Scenic studies have used just the main stem, some have used the main stem and appropriate tributaries. We need to talk to folks about what they would or would not like to see included in the study. For now we should look at all, and narrow down our boundaries later for the management plan and the designation (if sought). So far our only boundary is the dam in Enosburg Falls.
- b. Possible benefits of designation:
  - i. The biggest seems to be federal dollars to help with projects that protect the ORVs identified in the study process. Decisions about these funds would be made by the advisory committee of local folks.
  - ii. We are also more competitive for grants that we may apply for for watershed projects.
  - iii. Outreach and education about the rivers to the community
  - iv. A committee made up of local folks watching out for the health of the river
- c. Limitations after designation:
  - i. There will be no new dams on the designated sections of the river.
  - ii. If there are projects for which federal funds are requested in the designated area this triggers Section 7 review. These projects will be reviewed to be sure that they do not damage the ORVs, and if they do the NPS will open a dialog to discuss recommendations for changes to the plan to allow for the project to continue with the resources in mind. This rarely, if ever, results in stopping a project, and usually just gets best practices implemented. This does not include any decision making that occurs at the local level, only those projects which would require federal funds fall under Section 7 review. The town regulations will continue to govern practices at the local level.

Keep in mind:

- no new local regulations come from designation
- it would take an act of Congress to remove designation, and that has never happened to date
- as long as the river has at least one ORV and we show community support, designation usually is passed by congress if sought.

## 6. Other

- a. Dianne Laplante – Newport Chamber of Commerce  
Dianne Laplante made a motion that we spend \$100 to join the Newport Chamber of Commerce. This will include perks such as getting our web site as a link on their website, and can take advantage of joint publicity which will be possible with bigger events taking place on that side of the mountain this summer. All agreed and the motion passed.
- b. Someone suggested that a good map of our river systems (including tributaries with names and highways) would be nice.
- c. We heard about a dam/power project near Lowell owned by a fellow named Warner for the first time tonight. This reminds that we have things about our river systems that we don't yet know, and need to work on.

7. Our next meeting – 7pm, Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup> – Lowell, with a tour of the Chase's property/hydro site in Troy beforehand at 5 (more information to follow). Upcoming meetings dates and tentative locations: August 19<sup>th</sup> Berkshire?, September 16<sup>th</sup> Enosburgh?, October 21<sup>st</sup> Westfield.

## 8. Upcoming Events

- a. MRBA is sponsoring a clean-up of the upper Missisquoi River on Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup> from 9am-3pm in the Westfield/Troy area. For more information please contact Cynthia Scott at [mrba@pshift.com](mailto:mrba@pshift.com) or 802-933-9009
- b. The Wild & Scenic Study Committee is hosting a paddle on Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup> on the upper Missisquoi from Richford to East Berkshire. For more information and to RSVP please contact Shana at 802-393-0076 or [shana.stewart@vtwsr.org](mailto:shana.stewart@vtwsr.org)

The meeting adjourned at 0900pm.

Submitted By Mike Manahan,  
Secretary