

Derrfield River Watershed Association Board Meeting

Tuesday December 18th, 2007

Shelburne Falls, MA

Attending: Peter Buell, Dina Kail, Marie-Françoise Walk, Polly Bartlett, Robert May, Ted Merrill, Michael Cole, David Boles and Jay Rasku

Meeting chaired by Robert May

- 1) Approving Minutes
 - a. Approved minutes from October 2007 meeting. Moved by Robert, seconded by M-F
 - b. Approved minutes from September 2007 meeting. Moved by Polly, seconded by M-F

- 2) Mount Snow Meeting update- Robert
 - a. Mount Snow has dropped the project to build the pipeline from Somerset Reservoir because most groups were coming out against it. The major issues that groups were opposed included 1) The pipeline was going to cross land that was in permanent conservation, and 2) FERC would have required unanimity between the settlement agreement groups, and that was not looking promising to Mount Snow.
 - b. Mount Snow is now proposing a temporary (inflatable) dam – the inflatable dam will be about 4 feet high on the North Branch of the Deerfield River. This will hold back water to be pumped uphill several miles through a 48 inch pipe to an off-stream storage reservoir. The reservoir will have 120 million gallon holding capacity. This will serve as a backup when there isn't enough water in the North Branch for them to pump.
 - c. This new proposal will increase Mount Snow's current snow making capacity from 350 million gallons/ year to 484 million gallons/year.
 - d. The inflatable dam will have a concrete flume which will ensure "minimum flow" – set by the State of Vermont – which would be the equivalent of "median February flow."
 - e. Mount Snow would still like to eventually restore Cold Brook and Snow Lake, but not in this proposal. The Chamber of Commerce and the realtors made it clear at the meeting that they would fight any effort to take away Snow Lake because it is "very desirable" lakefront property.
 - f. Members of DRWA wondered how the dam would impact the movement of organisms, and how the inflatable dam would work when it was not in use.
 - g. The proposal has to work its way through Vermont Act 250, which reviews all major environmental projects. The Vermont fisheries staff will have a chance to comment at this point.

- 3) M and M Trail- Polly

- a. DRWA maintains an 8 mile section of the trail, and Polly has for years been following up with TransCanada to fulfill its promise to build a footbridge across the South River, which is part of the Settlement Agreement
- b. Polly felt like TransCanada was still nowhere close to moving forward on the project. It will cost about \$80,000 to build.
- c. In other news, a meeting chaired by Paul Jahnige from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation is showing great interest by a number of groups in helping to maintain the trail. One idea is to have a hike day on the trail on the Sunday after Riverfest.

4) Water Quality- Mike

- a. We thought that the Colrain Central School was the likely source of E. coli contamination in the North River, but the DEP said we were wrong. The DEP has determined that the E. coli is not from a human source.
- b. Mike is going to follow up with DEP to see how they reached that conclusion, and to make sure they were testing on days where the E. coli concentrations were high.
- c. No new information about CRWC's effort to build a citizen water testing lab at their offices in Greenfield.
- d. Ashfield Lake volunteer water quality monitoring will occur this summer.
- e. So far, Benthic macroinvertebrate monitoring has been completed for the Green, South and North Rivers. The Water Quality Committee will meet to figure out where to go next – likely will keep moving upstream and tackle the Chickley, Davis Mine Brook, Clesson, Clark, etc.
- f. Overall, Mike has found that the biological health of the river is good, even in inner city Greenfield. One major problem site is Cherry Run in Greenfield. More follow up needs to happen there.

5) 2008 Budget

- a. A new budget for 2008 was discussed and approved.

6) Watershed Waltz

- a. Polly proposed a watershed educational program for Shelburne students. The cost would be \$500, and a Shelburne teacher could apply to the DRWA small grant program to fund.
- b. Robert will review the material to get a second opinion about the quality of the program.

7) DRWA officers were nominated by Polly and Seconded by Robert:

- a. Marie-Françoise Walk, President
- b. Robert May, Vice-President
- c. Joan Adler, Treasurer
- d. Jay Rasku, Secretary

8) Next meeting: January 15th, Greenfield, CRWC building

- 9) No meeting in February. Following meeting will occur on March 18th in Shelburne