



Rhode Island Rivers Council  
c/o RI Water Resources Board  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908  
www.ririvers.org



Minutes of the February 12, 2014 Meeting  
RI Department of Environmental Management  
Office of Water Resources - Room 280  
235 Promenade Street, Providence, RI

## ATTENDANCE:

### A. Members Present

Veronica Berounsky (Chair)  
Rachel Calabro (Vice Chair)  
James Cole  
Paul Gonsalves  
Judith Hadley  
Chuck Horbert  
Guy Lefebvre  
Lisa McGreavy (Secretary)  
Elise Torello

### B. Guests in Attendance

Ann Morrill, Kickemuit River Council  
Marcia Pena, Buckeye Brook Coalition  
David Urban, Kickemuit River Council  
Dana Warren, Kickemuit River Council

1. **Call to Order.** Dr. Berounsky called the meeting to order at 4:11 pm.

2. **Review and Approval of January 8, 2014 Meeting Minutes:** Ms. Hadley moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Speaker Series: URI Watershed Watch, Linda Green, Program Director:** Ms. Green gave an informative and interesting presentation about the URI Watershed Watch Program which was created in 1988 with only 14 lakes and now has approximately 400 volunteers who have monitored 550 sites throughout the state. The presentation summary has been appended to this document. One of the many accomplishments of the program has been collaborating with the USDA in the development of a Guide for Growing Programs which contains 18 online factsheets and links to many helpful topics and resources. The Guide is available online at [www.usawaterquality.org/volunteer](http://www.usawaterquality.org/volunteer). Also, the program has been developing a water quality database which will include over 25 years of data amounting to 500,000 lines of data and will help staff respond to requests for data reports. Some of the challenges have been through a loss of federal funding that had been available for the last 12 years; however the program has received a grant from the URI Coastal Institute and continues to rely on their dedicated volunteers, many of whom have been volunteering for over 20 years. The RI Rivers Council has also been providing grant funding to assist designated watershed groups fund monitoring for sites in their watersheds. If anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer, the next series of classroom training sessions will be offered on March 23 at 1pm or March 26 at 6pm at the Weaver Auditorium, URI Coastal Institute and field training sessions have been tentatively scheduled for April 12 or 19, 2014. More information about the program

and view monitoring results, see the URIWW website <http://www.uri.edu/ce/wq/ww/>. A lively discussion followed Ms. Green's presentation.

#### 4. Reports by RIRC Representatives on State Committees:

- a. **Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) – Rachel Calabro:** On behalf of Mr. Galloway, Ms. Calabro reported that she attended a meeting of Watershed Counts which has decided to focus their efforts on water quality impairments leading to beach closures.
- b. **State Guide Plan Advisory Committee – Rachel Calabro:** Ms. Calabro reported that the RIRC subcommittee met with Ernie Panciera of DEM and decided that the RIRC Classification Plan will be included in the water quality element of the State Guide plan, possibly as an appendix, noting that municipalities are required to reference the Classification Plan in developing and updating their local comprehensive plans. The group confirmed that the other RIRC-related topics of recreation, historic landscapes, and open space/greenways are sufficiently covered in other parts of the state guide plan.
- c. **Bays, Rivers & Watersheds Coordinating Team (BRWCT) – Veronica Berounsky:** Dr. Berounsky reported that the BRWCT has invited the RIRC to submit funding proposals for next year that are due April 13, 2014 and RIRC members are encouraged to submit ideas by the next meeting.

#### 5. News of activities in Local Watershed Councils:

Salt Ponds Coalition as reported by Ms. Torello: Ms. Torello invited members to visit the Coalition website at <http://www.saltpondscoalition.org/> "Hot Topics" page to see three newly uploaded SPC documents: 2013 Annual Report, Status and Trends data report, and an article contributed to *LakeLine* magazine entitled *The Coastal Lagoons of Southern Rhode Island* written by Elise Torello and Rhonda Smith. The Coalition is reviewing potential impacts to a fragile marsh area from a proposed new hotel/mixed use development near Succotash Road in South Kingstown.

Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone as reported by Ms. Hadley: The council was given a presentation by the Mayforth Group seeking support for the Herring Alliance which is concerned with the depletion of river herring and shad in the Atlantic Ocean which are being unintentionally caught and discarded as by catch by fishermen targeting other fish species.

Kickemuit River Council as reported by Mr. Urban and Ms. Morrill: Members have started to work on the fish ladder model that is the subject of the 2014FY RIRC grant. The Council is objecting to CRMC proposed rule amendment Section 110C regarding applications for Category A and C Assents which expands the types of applications eligible for administrative review by CRMC.

Narrow River Preservation Association as reported by Dr. Berounsky: Dr. Berounsky provided an update to the Town of Narragansett's purchase of property on Middlebridge Road along Narrow River and efforts by the town to receive appropriate bids for the use of the land. Twelve students from the Harvard Graduate School of Design visited the watershed and expressed interest in developing designs for work along the river to be funded by grants from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Army Corps of Engineers. The US Fish and Wildlife has funds from Hurricane Sandy restoration grants to investigate water quality issues in Narrow River. Science Fair awards will be presented at the next NRPA meeting.

#### 6. Committee Reports

**Environmental Monitoring Collaborative:** Ms. Torello and Mr. Galloway have volunteered to assist Mr. Gonsalves in representing the RIRC at meetings of the Collaborative.

## **7. Officer Reports:**

Vice Chair: Ms. Calabro reported that the proposed Shady Lea Dam Removal project has received additional funding and will be submitted for permitting to RIDEM Wetlands Program. A request for expedited review will be made due to funding deadlines.

Treasurer: Ms. McGreavy distributed the monthly financial report.

## **8. Other Business:**

Landscape Architecture, future speaker idea, and remarks on the January 8, 2014 keynote address given by Mr. Ken Payne entitled "The Origin and Uniqueness of the Rivers Council and its Role in the Future": Mr. Lefebvre said having Ken Payne as the speaker at the RIRC annual meeting in January reminded him of an initiative that Ken Payne led in the 1990s related to his involvement in the founding of RIRC. Mr. Payne convened a series of meetings at the RISD Architecture Department calling on landscape architects to lead efforts with other concerned citizens to define projects for the betterment of quality of life in RI. The effort was entitled "Vision RI" and involved about 125 people. A series of design workshops were held identifying fifty to one hundred projects, many of which were undertaken. A *Vision RI* newsletter was published for about seven years by architect and landscape architect Paul Pawlowski. Mr. Pawlowski relocated his practice to Portland, Oregon, in 2007. Mr. Lefebvre said the Pawtuxet River Walkway in West Warwick came about from a preliminary landscape architectural plan that Mr. Pawlowski made. The preliminary plan and several related documents were included in a 2002 general obligation bond put on the state ballot by the General Assembly and passed by the voters providing three million dollars for the project. Mr. Lefebvre said he often notes the URI Landscape Architecture Lecture Program mentioned in the RI Statewide Planning Program digital newsletter and he has attended about a half dozen of these lectures. He said he discussed RIRC collaboration with the URI Landscape Architecture Department Chairman Will Green who pointed to the Community Development Block Grants program as a good source of funding for riverfront public projects. Mr. Lefebvre said that the trade magazine *Landscape Architecture* published by the American Society of Landscape Architects is an especially good source of information, and a subscription might make a good investment for RIRC. Mr. Lefebvre pointed out that URI has a bachelor's degree program in landscape architecture and RISD has a masters degree program in landscape architecture. Both programs involve students in service learning projects. He provided meeting participants with a one page diagram that contained extended definitions of landscape architecture and landscape design as well as some of the related elements mentioned above. He encouraged RIRC members to think about whether RIRC might develop a strategy to foster a landscape architecture and design knowledge base and related skill sets among its membership and with local watershed councils. Mr. Horbert said that RIDEM generally requires plans for projects to be done by licensed design professionals such as landscape architects and civil engineers. Mr. Lefebvre said RIRC could seek to foster landscape architecture and design concepts and preliminary planning tools, and not seek to bypass design professionals who are definitely needed and required for stream and wetland related projects. Dr. Berounsky encouraged RIRC to consider having a speaker to address this topic. It was agreed May or June might be a good time to schedule a speaker to address this topic. Also, Dr. Berounsky asked Mr. Lefebvre to look into subscribing to *Landscape Architecture* magazine.

**9. Chair's Report:** Dr. Berounsky reminded members that the RIRC will be hosting a table at the *Party for the Planet* Earth Day Event at Roger Williams Park Zoo April 21-25 and encouraged anyone interested in volunteering to contact Ms. McGreavy to sign up for a time slot for the table. There will be a workshop entitled *The Biogeochemistry of Rhode Island's Rivers* on Wednesday February 26, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. at Save the Bay in Providence.

**10. Adjournment:** There being no further business, Mr. Horbert moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Hadley. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 pm.



### Watershed Watch Program Sponsors

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

COASTAL INSTITUTE

Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring  
Rhode Water Resources Board

### Contributing Program Sponsors...

- Communities
- Watershed organizations
- Environmental organizations
- Sporting organizations
- Fire Districts
- Lake Associations
- Businesses (QDC & RIAC)
- Endowments
- Individuals

**77 since 1988**

**46 currently**

... we support their efforts

### Each Site Needs a Sponsor – we're cost effective but *not* cost free

Each site needs a volunteer monitor, or two, or three...

Each volunteer needs training – Classroom sessions – 3/23 or 3/26  
Field sessions Saturdays in April

### Each volunteer needs to get to & on the water!

Early morn for rivers & salty sites  
midday for lakes and ponds

We provide –  
manual – supplies – bag 'o bottles  
schedule – monitoring results – support

**Volunteers get the job done!**

### What We Monitor

| Field                          | Laboratory          |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Water Clarity (Secchi Depth) | • Nutrients         |
| • Water Temperature            | • Bacteria          |
| • Dissolved Oxygen             | • CH <sub>2</sub> a |
| • Algae (CH <sub>2</sub> a)    | • pH & alkalinity   |
|                                | • Chlorides         |

**State-certified laboratory**





