



**South Lake Champlain Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)
August 17, 2023, at 1:30 PM**

Online

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8n8frj>

Phone 802-440-1368 Conference ID: 825 112 251#

In Person

67 Merchants Row, Downtown Rutland, 3rd Floor Conference Room, Rutland Regional Planning Commission

1:30 Welcome

1:35 Approval of the Agenda

1:36 Approval of Minutes – June 15, 2023, and July 27, 2023

1:40 Final review of RFP Round 2 projects

- Arnold Bay Boat Launch, Panton
- Merck Forest & Farmland Center, Pawlet
- FY24 Early-Stage Project Development Fund

2:50 Public Comment

2:55 Next meeting – Oct 26/Nov 23?

3:00 Adjournment



South Lake Champlain Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

July 27, 2023, 11:00 am

Online and in-person at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission offices.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order 11:05

Council Members present: Erin Rodgers, chair (TU) was present at the beginning, but lost cell phone service; Shayne Jaquith (TNC); Adam Piper (VLT); Katy Crumley (PMNRCD); Mike Winslow (ACRPC); Rob Terry, (BCCD/Merck)

Staff present: Barbara Noyes Pulling, RRPC/CWSP; Hilary Solomon; PMNRCD/CWSP.

VTDEC present: Angie Allen, Basin Planner; Alison Marchione, Lakes and Ponds

Partners/public present: Katie Raycroft-Meyer, ACRPC/Otter Creek CWSP; Andy Sample, Otter Creek Engineering; Mary Beth Poli, Otter Creek Engineering

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda made Katy Crumley, seconded by Rob Terry. Motion was tabled after Erin dropped off the call and we lost quorum. We proceeded through the agenda as written, however.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes as written from June 15, 2023, made by Mike Winslow, seconded by Shayne Jaquith. Vote tabled because we did not have a quorum.

INITIAL REVIEW OF PROJECTS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THE JULY 20 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

I. ARNOLD BAY BOAT LAUNCH

This project, located at a busy boat launch in the town of Pantton, was submitted by the Addison County RPC/Otter Creek CWSP and presented by Katie Raycroft-Meyer. The project budget is roughly \$18,225 for a final design with a check-in with the BWQC at completion of the 30% design (to check the phosphorus reduction/cost benefit). The project involves regrading the site and adding several small bioretention areas to capture runoff from the

upper parking area and access road, in conjunction with upgrading the site for multiple uses, including high levels of recreation.

Meeting attendees asked about 1) requiring the check in with the BWQC at 30% design and asking for a budget number for the 30% design (from the total), 2) reporting back the phosphorus and cost numbers so we can make sure the project is a good fit for the formula grant, 3) enquiring if the CWSP (or any project manager) can use more than 15% of the project cost for administration costs, 4) if after the 30% design comes back, can we consider using funds from other sources (transportation related for example) to cover costs of various components.

Alison Marchione reminded the group that we need to notify the DEC permit staff ahead of time for new projects. Mary Beth Poli added that permittees should be notified for comments at the initial project stages, but they need the final design for the final permit approvals.

II. MERCK FOREST/METTOWEE SCHOOL WETLAND RESTORATION

This project was presented by Rob Terry the director of Merck Forest, which owns 150 acres adjacent to the Mettowee School in West Pawlet and would like to design a wetland restoration project to reduce phosphorus from adjacent agricultural lands, while providing ongoing educational opportunities for the students. The project is a 30% design, and the proposed budget is \$6000. Mary Beth Poli and Andy Sample (present) with Otter Creek Engineering (OCE) worked to identify the project and the wetland has been delineated by Zapata Courage (DEC wetlands).

Because the project is not completely conceptualized, the exact details are not available, however, the project team plans to map the watershed draining to the wetland and use the FFI tool to inform design and to plant native vegetation in the areas with invasive reed canary grass. Shayne asked if there was a stream restoration component to the project. Rob responded that the stream is more like a farm ditch and restoring it may be part of the design, but they do not have enough information at this time. Mary Beth noted that the project area is associated with a stream, but that the stream fans out and loses its channel in the vicinity of the project. There is also an old stock pond on site that contributes to changes of the natural hydrology of the area.

Barbara noted that Merck Forest has not submitted their qualifications with the CWSP and Rob agreed to follow up with requested information. Merck will need to use their procurement process to secure OCE (ideally put the project out to bid or request three price quotes).

III. WEST RUTLAND MARBLE STREET WETLAND RESTORATION

This application is for a conceptual design of a wetland restoration project along Marble Street in West Rutland. The conceptual design (and related work) budget is \$7,000. The Town of West Rutland is the project manager and OCE assisted with the application and presented the project information.

The Town of West Rutland owns much of the lands in the marsh complex including the area where this restoration would occur. The town is proposing to remove part of Marble Street where it often floods and restoring the wetland in this location.

IV. SHOREHAM GULLY RESTORATION

This project may remain with the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (VACD) Design Implement Block Grant (DIBG), where it has an initial contract, for the additional funds needed. We will continue to follow up with the applicant and VACD staff. The project request was for roughly \$6,000.

V. FY24 EARLY-STAGE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FUND

The South Lake CWSP would like to set aside \$30,000, with BWQC approval (and the related project management funds to be used (as needed) to administer the project subcontracts or task orders). The funds would allow for up to \$1,500 per identified project to be used by project partners or the CWSP to hire a limited amount of environmental consultant or engineering time for a field visit and some desktop evaluation. The results of the hired work would include a recommendation about the amount of phosphorus that might be mitigated, the type of project that might be suitable, the rough cost for the project type, and a recommendation about which funding source would be most appropriate for the project to move forward to conceptual or final design (or a recommendation to not move forward if significant barriers exist or the project is otherwise not feasible).

This project brought lots of questions and discussion. Shayne verified that the BWQC needs to approve CWSP spending of the Formula Grant, which they do. Mike was concerned that the language was vague about how projects would come to be identified or funded through this source. He preferred a stormwater master plan as a vehicle. Hilary pointed out that the South Lake watershed (at least the Poultney/Mettowee area) already has recent stormwater master plans, so it would be hard to justify another one so soon. This funding is for projects that were not identified in those plans or for projects identified in older plans where we don't have enough information for the Formula Grant. Mary Beth thought the funds would be helpful to consultants who had to do much of this work for free right now, so that it would incentivize new project development. Angie advocated for both SWMP and this type of flexible funding source. She pointed out that SWMPs are best suited for stormwater projects, where this type of funding would be useful for any sector. Katy requested that the CWSP share with the BWQC the projects that are funded through the fund and noted that they would come back to the BWQC if they were selected for additional funding.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Beth Poli asked if Otter Creek Engineering needed to officially notify the CWSP that Andy Sample was replacing her as the wetland biologist who would represent the firm on projects. Hilary noted that the CWSP planned annual communications with qualified partners/subcontractors to identify any major changes that might affect project work. Mary Beth will submit a new resume for Andy, and we will add it to the OCE file.

NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting in August will include a vote on projects.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Shayne Jaquith and seconded by Mike Winslow.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:46 PM

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Noyes Pulling & Hilary Solomon



South Lake Champlain Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

June 15, 2023, 11:00 am

Online and in-person at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission offices.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order 11:05

Council Members present: Erin Rodgers, chair (TU); Shayne Jaquith (TNC); Adam Piper (VLT); Katy Crumley (PMNRCD); Adam Lougee (ACRPC); Paul Donaldson (Town of Poultney); and Mary Ann Goulette (Town of West Rutland).

Staff present: Barbara Noyes-Pulling, RRPC/CWSP; Hilary Solomon; PMNRCD/CWSP.

VTDEC present: Angie Allen

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda made Paul Donaldson, seconded by Adam Lougee. Motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes as written from April 28, 2023, made by Shayne Jaquith, seconded by Adam Lougee. Motion carried.

FINAL REVIEW FOR REQUEST FOR PROJECTS PROPOSAL – SUGAR HOUSE LANE

Erin Rodgers and Katy Crumley recused themselves from voting because they are partners of the project; staff member Hilary Solomon is also a partner.

Erin Rodgers described the project – Sugar House Lane Fish Passage Barrier Removal and Bridge Replacement in Dorset and answered questions. Project partners are seeking \$15,000 to finalize the project budget. This is a small part of the total project cost, which is funded mostly through Federal funds. Staff member Barbara Noyes Pulling reviewed the staff recommendations and project scoring for the project (64 out of 80). Acting chair Shayne Jaquith led the group through the scoring of co-benefits which scored 11 out of 20. The project's total score was 75 out of 100. A motion to approve the project was made by Adam Lougee, seconded by Shayne Jaquith. The motion was amended to be contingent on the project getting all necessary permits.

There was some discussion about the staff recommendation to make it contingent on getting an Operations & Maintenance (O&M) agreement with the primary landowner. Angie Allen indicated that it would be good best practice to execute an O&M agreement prior to funding, but she recommended that

since the concerns raised were going to be part of the public record of the meeting that the group could proceed with the grant vote as worded. Motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

ACT 76 GUIDANCE CHAPTER 5 – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Staff member Barbara Noyes Pulling informed the council that Chapter 5 of DEC Guidance was in a public comment period until July 12, 2023. She asked if members had any comments to get them to her or Hilary Solomon by July 10.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public present. Hilary Solomon and Barbara Noyes Pulling indicated a potential need for some up-front funds from the BWQC to do preliminary project ID/Development work with consultants. Staff will put the item on the next meeting's agenda and, in the meantime, welcomes comments/questions from the BWQC.

NEXT MEETINGS

The staff is hoping to have meetings in July and August to review a new round of projects and will send out a poll to schedule the next set of meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Adam Lougee, seconded by Shayne Jaquith.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Noyes Pulling & Hilary Solomon



CWSP PROJECT REVIEW MEMO

Early-stage Project Development Fund

Project Applicant: South Lake CWSP

Other Partners: All partners and interested parties looking to evaluate water quality projects

Applicant Contact: Project Managers – Hilary Solomon (PMNRCD) and Barbara Noyes-Pulling (RRPC), South Lake CWSP. Hilary- (802) 558-3515 and hilary@pmnrcd.org. Barbara- (802) 775-0871 x 207 and barbara@rutlandrpc.org.

Funds Requested: \$35,294

WPD ID: 11506

Location: Basins 2 and 4

Project Synopsis (from application)

The resources from the FY24 Early-Stage Project Development Fund will be available for the CWSP and for project partners to hire several hours (up to \$1500 per project) of consulting services when projects are initially identified. The consultants will be paid for a quick site visit and several hours of desktop work to provide a rough estimate of the treatment area, the potential project types, and the potential amplitude for phosphorus mitigation. The SLC CWSP will hold the funds and will pay contractors directly, utilizing our procurement policy and following rules and guidance. The Basin Water Quality Council will approve this funding, but like a stormwater master plan, will not approve the individual projects developed by the funds. Projects identified through this funding that move forward for additional development (partial or final design) will need to be approved by the BWQC and/or other funding sources following applicable, related requirements such as a grant application.

DEC Staff Review

Angie Allen: I am excited for this project and to see if it works and helps build a project pipeline. Please follow the CWIP Funding Policy Milestones and Deliverables for Project Development, as opposed to SWMP Project Identification. They include initiating the project, maintaining a prioritized list of projects identified, completing site visits, consulting DEC staff, identifying site design or permit considerations, and identifying the O&M responsible party. Project reporting would need to include information requested by DEC.

Chris Rottler: This can go forward as long as you keep the CWIP Funding Policy Project Types Table language from project development.

CWSP Recommendation

The South Lake Champlain Clean Water Service Provider staff (Barbara Noyes Pulling and Hilary Solomon) have reviewed this project for the Basin Water Quality Council's August 17, 2023, meeting and determined the application is complete.

We had initially needed a project ID number, which we now have. We also wanted to review this project with DEC, which we have now done.

- Project number is 11506
- Per several email exchanges and a meeting with Chris Rotler and Angie Allen on 8/11/23, it sounds as though DEC staff understands the project and approves our moving forward.

Project Scoring includes the relevant categories, cost benefit and local support and/or listed in a formal report. The project score is 60 points out of 60 for this project. It is 50 out of 50 for cost benefit because the cost for this work is very low per project (below the average costs for full project development) and 10 out of 10 for local importance (listed in a TBP or other local report). Since all of our efforts hinge on efficient project identification and development, this project supports many strategies in the plan.

Co-benefits score - to be discussed at the 8/17/23 BWQC meeting. The co-benefits score is likely not applicable in this case.

South Lake CWSP staff support this project and look forward to making funds available to support our partners with project development.



Merck Forest & Farmland Center – Mettawee Community School Wetland Restoration

Project Applicant: Merck Forest & Farmland Center

Other partners: Mettawee Community School

Applicant Contact: Rob Terry, Merck Forest & Farmland Center

Funds Requested: \$6,000

WPD ID: 11483

Address: 5788 Vt. Rte. 153, West Pawlet

Project Description

This proposal is for Preliminary Design (30%) in the Streams sector. Merck Forest owns a 150-acre property consisting of fields, forests, and extensive wetlands that is adjacent to the Mettawee Community School (MCS) in Pawlet, VT. Merck Forest and MCS partner to provide an outdoor classroom setting and programs that are an important part of the school's science curriculum, along with providing outdoor recreational opportunities.

The primary goals of this project are to provide water quality improvements by retaining water and associated sediment on the landscape, where phosphorus can be taken up by wetland plants rather than flowing downstream into the Mettawee River. The reshaping of a man-made pond surrounded by wetland, creation of depressions (macrotopography) and microtopography is proposed. This earthwork will maximize wetland hydrology and hold water on the landscape longer before flows reach a channelized ditch which flows through agricultural lands off the subject property before entering the Mettawee River. Native shrubs, tree, and herbaceous plantings are proposed involving students in planting efforts. The property is home to a variety of wildlife that will benefit from the increased biodiversity of plant life and improved vertical structure resulting from the native plantings. A boardwalk-style viewing platform for students and the public will be applied for in a separate educational grant.

Dept of Environmental Conservation Review

DEC Watershed Planner, Angie Allen, has reviewed this project for the Basin Water Quality Council for its July 27 and August 17, 2023 meetings and is supportive of the project going forward. A meeting on August 3, 2023 with Angie Allen, Zapata Courage, Shannon Pytlik, Andy Sample, Hilary Solomon, and Barbara Noyes Pulling reinforced DEC support for this wetland restoration project.

CWSP Review

South Lake Champlain Clean Water Service Provider staff (Barbara Noyes Pulling) has determined the application is complete. Staff is requesting that the following stipulations be met for BWQC approval:

Staff Recommendations:

1. Merck Forest & Farmland submit their qualifications with the CWSP;
2. Merck uses its procurement process to secure subcontracting services;
3. Project Scoring was done with the relevant categories - cost benefit and local support. Based on Cost Efficiency and P Reduction, the scoring proposed by the CWSP rates relatively high: **45 out of 80**. 40 out of 50 for cost benefit sector average and 10 out of 10 for Local Importance (listed in the Municipal Report). The way the scoring protocol is set up, it would be very difficult for any project except a low-cost implementation project to score the full points for the cost-benefit ratio. In other words, this is a good score. Co-benefits scoring - to be discussed at the 8/17/23 BWQC meeting.



Arnold Bay Boat Launch and Public Access – Stormwater Retention Design

Project Applicant: Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Other partners:

Applicant Contact: Katie Raycroft-Meyer, ACRPC Community Planner

Funds Requested: \$19,287.61 (initially \$18,224)

WPD ID: 11505

Address: 1122-1356 Adams Ferry Road, Panton

Project Description

This proposal is for Preliminary (30%) and Final (100%) Design for Stormwater Mitigation in the Developed Lands sector. As an agent of the Town of Panton, the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) is submitting this application for funding under the Clean Water Initiative Program (CWSP). ACRPC is pursuing funding for 30% preliminary design and 100% final design for the Arnold Bay Boat Launch Stormwater Mitigation Project. ACRPC staff will administer the bid process and develop landscape plans for the subsequent design phases.

The Town of Panton owns the Arnold Bay Boat Launch site, 1.7 acres with 600 feet of shoreline, located at the end of Adams Ferry Road. The Panton Town Plan shared a 2016 town survey showing that 58% of respondents support making improvements at the Arnold Bay site indicating a desire to improve the shoreline area at Arnold Bay, emphasizing the need to improve water quality and public access to the shoreline — while protecting the shoreline from “incompatible development.” Conflicting uses at the site have impacted the ecological health of the riparian zone and the lake water quality. Addressing these water quality issues will help in restoring the site and a cleaner Lake Champlain. Estimated P reduction for this project is 3.04 kg/year.

Dept of Environmental Conservation Review

DEC Watershed Planner, Angie Allen, has reviewed this project for the Basin Water Quality Council for its July 27 and August 17, 2023, meetings and is supportive of the project going forward.

CWSP Review

South Lake Champlain Clean Water Service Provider staff (Barbara Noyes Pulling) has reviewed this project for the Basin Water Quality Council for its August 17, 2023, meeting and determined the application is complete. The applicant created separate budgets for the Preliminary and for the Final Designs as requested at the July 17, 2023 BWQC meeting that includes a check-in with the BWQC at 30%.

Staff Recommendations:

1. Reporting back the phosphorus and cost numbers so the BWQC can be sure the project is a good fit for the formula grant;
2. Once the designs are done, consult with the BWQC on whether funds from other sources (transportation-related for example) could be used to cover some of the costs of implementation.
3. Project Scoring was done with the relevant categories - cost benefit and local support. Based on Cost Efficiency and P Reduction, the scoring proposed by the CWSP rates relatively high: **50 out of 80**. 40 out of 50 for cost benefit sector average and 10 out of 10 for Local Importance (listed in the

Municipal Report). The way the scoring protocol is set up, it would be very difficult for any project except a low-cost implementation project to score the full points for the cost-benefit ratio. In other words, this is a good score. Co-benefits scoring - to be discussed at the 8/17/23 BWQC meeting.