
**Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)
WORKING AND NATURAL LANDS WORKING GROUP
RIVERS SUB-WORKING GROUP
MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date: August 20, 2020
Meeting Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Meeting Location: via ZOOM

ATTENDANCE

Working Group Member	Title	Organization	Present
Alicea Charamut	Executive Director	Rivers Alliance of Connecticut	Y
Lynn Werner	Executive Director	Housatonic Valley Association	N
Eileen Fielding	Director	Sharon Audubon (National Audubon Society)	Y
Kirt Mayland	Attorney/President	Reservoir Road Holdings & Mayland Energy	Y
Bill Dornbos	Executive Director	Farmington River Watershed Association	Y
Andy Fisk (primary)	Executive Director	Connecticut River Conservancy	N
Kelsey Wentling (alternate)	River Steward - Connecticut		N
Jason Vokoun	Professor and Dept. Head	UConn Natural Resources and the Environment	N
Mike Dietz (primary)	Extension Educator	UConn/Institute of Water Resources	Y
Mike O'Neill (alternate)	Associate Dean	UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources	N
Laura Wildman	Director	Princeton Hydro - NE Office, Ecological Engineering	Y
Virginia de Lima	Retired	USGS (retired) & CT Water Planning Council	Y
Shelley Green	Director of Conservation	The Nature Conservancy	N
Erik Mas	Environmental Engineer	Fuss and O'Neill	N

Associated Staff	Title	Organization	Present
Rick Jacobson	Bureau Chief	CT DEEP, Bureau of Natural Resources	Y
Peter Aarrestad	Director	CT DEEP, Bureau of Natural Resources - Fisheries Division	N
Susan Peterson	Environmental Analyst 3	CT DEEP, Bureau of Water Planning and Land Reuse - Water Planning & Management Division	Y

Members of Public	Affiliation/Organization	Present
Kelsey Sudol	Northwest Conservation District and Lake Waramaug Task Force	Y

AGENDA & NOTES

Welcome, Announcements, and Roll Call

Alicea Charamut, Rivers Alliance

Charamut welcomed everyone. She indicated this would probably be a short meeting since there were few members attending and everyone had just received the recommendations drafted by the Rivers SWG sub-group volunteers the day before.

Towards the end of meeting, Charamut asked Jacobson to share news of new CT DEEP Deputy Commissioner for Environmental Conservation. Jacobson said that Mason Trumble, formerly with REI and CORA, had been selected to fill this position. Jacobson described some of Trumble's background and said he brings energy, creativity and also experience working with underserved populations. Since starting, Trumble has been getting out, doing tours and meeting with field staff. He is also interested in meeting with groups outside of the Agency. Charamut commented that she had worked with Trumble when she was with the Connecticut River Conservancy.

Agenda Item(s)

Facilitated by Alicea Charamut, Rivers Alliance

- **GC3 Updates**

Charamut will be presenting the Rivers SWG draft recommendations, along with the Wetlands and Agriculture/Soils SWGs later today at the 5:30 p.m. meeting of the Equity & Environmental Justice (EEJ) WG. Other Rivers SWG members are welcome but not required to attend.

- **Draft recommendations – Solicitation of Input**

Charamut proposed that the EcoSystem Services teams meet to review draft recommendations and make sure the major points identified by each team have been captured. Need to work on collecting additional studies and references. Once get input from teams, then can work on producing draft recommendations document that can share with the public.

Fielding asked for clarification on timing. Jacobson said he would check and later in the meeting, returned to the topic of comment deadlines. He noted that there is no specific date indicated for when EEJ would be providing comments back to WGs on draft recommendations. He did note that Sept. 1 was indicated as a deadline for the Science & Technology WG. Charamut asked if the Rivers SWG was also supposed to submit its draft recommendations to this WG. Jacobson said, no, EEJ will pass the draft recommendations to Science & Technology. He also noted that everyone is struggling with deadlines.

Fielding and other members praised the work done by the volunteer sub-group that pulled the draft recommendations together. Charamut commented that things will get refined over time. She thanked everyone in the volunteer sub-group who helped pull the draft recommendations together.

Charamut asked if anyone had input on the draft recommendations, thus far. Discussion of draft recommendation included the following comments:

- deLima asked about the reasoning for having one of the major recommendations devoted to equity issues versus addressing equity issues under each of the other major recommendations. Charamut explained that those on the Cultural Services team were discussing equity concepts right when hot weather and national protests (regarding

systemic racism) coincided. Here in Connecticut, there has been high demand for access to water resources during hot weather. Many of the more pristine, public water resources are located in affluent areas that may try to shut down access to others when demand is very high. As temperatures get warmer, people will continue to seek places to cool off. Hence, it is an important aspect of Climate Change to consider.

- Fielding noted that parallel discussions are going on within Audubon. It may not be an “either/or” with regard to having equity issues as a stand alone item or incorporated under other recommendations. Can do both and also use it as a filter to run everything through. Charamut agreed. Peterson noted that the EEJ will weigh in on this and provide guidance.
- Dornbos pointed out that the GC3 recommendations template asks about impact on marginalized communities. However, the issue is bigger than access to parks and recreational opportunities. Echoed what Charamut said. As Climate Change and heat impacts worsen, people of all backgrounds need access to rivers and other places to cool off. Strongly recommends keeping access to resources as a priority item.
- Fielding emphasized the need to make freshwater resources available in neighborhoods where people live. Jacobson asked if suggesting that people should just enjoy the rivers in their back yards and not travel to other areas? Charamut said, no, that is not the intention. There should be clean rivers everywhere and there should be access in urban areas. Jacobson offered clarification that the problem has more to do with not having enough quality places to go. In other words, need to elevate opportunities and access with regard to all rivers. Peterson added that this was one of the points of Mary Rickel Pelletier’s presentation at the last meeting about riparian corridors in urban areas. Charamut agreed and referenced Rickel Pelletier’s pilot project proposal recommendations. These are specific to the North Branch Park River and include some very good ideas. However, need to broaden and figure out how to incorporate.
- Charamut indicated that also seeking input on the titles for the general recommendation sections. Dietz questioned the “fish to faucet” title language because it seems rather restrictive. However, he acknowledged this language may have popular appeal.
- Charamut noted that certain components still need to be added to the draft recommendations, such as information about: lakes and ponds; education and outreach; and cold water fisheries. Also need to identify entities that would implement recommendations and add references. EEJ and Science & Technology will probably provide additional references.

5 MINUTE BREAK

(Note - Meeting only 1 hour long and did not take Break)

• Working Draft – Next steps and Assignments

- Charamut will be seeking input on draft recommendations over the next two weeks. Full Rivers SWG will meet again in early September. Need to write some narrative and will be soliciting volunteers to help with this task.

- Charamut said Environmental Services teams should meet to review draft recommendations but meetings could be quick. Want to make sure have captured key recommendations from each team. She is going to make a living document, using Google Docs, so people can add comments. Hopefully, will have feedback from EEJ and Science & Technology by early September. Charamut said members should feel free to contact her with any questions. deLima offered to make basic editorial changes to draft document before Charamut posts it.
- Charamut asked Jacobson if after complete revisions, per EEJ and Science & Technology review, it that would be the right time for the four sub-groups within WNLWG to compare recommendations. Jacobson said that the template helps to create a seamless way to collect thoughts. It will probably help to compare these and talk collectively.

Public comments

Sudol – No comments.

Next Steps and Adjourn

Charamut will send out instructions regarding next steps and a Doodle Poll to identify dates for the next Rivers SWG meeting.

Meeting adjourned ~ 11:00 a.m.