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

Meeting Date: July 15, 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	Y
Eileen Fielding	Director	Sharon Audubon (National Audubon Society)	Y
Kirt Mayland	Attorney/President/Env Law Professor	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	Y
Laura Wildman	Director	Princeton Hydro - NE Office, Ecological Engineering	Y
Virginia de Lima	Retired	USGS (retired) & CT Water Planning Council	N
Shelley Green	Director of Conservation	The Nature Conservancy	Y
Erik Mas	Environmental Engineer	Fuss and O'Neill	Y

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

Members of Public	Affiliation/Organization	
Kelsey Sudol	Northwest Conservation District & Lake Waramaug Task Force	Y
Nelson Malwitz	Brookfield Water Pollution Control Authority & CT Board of WPCA (had to leave early)	Y
Kirsten Martin	Saint Joseph's University (had to leave early)	Y
Patricia Houser	Central CT State University & Milford Environmental Concerns Coalition	Y
Kate Knight	CT DEEP Bureau of Water Planning and Land Reuse – Water Planning & Management Division - Watersheds	Y
M. Nyce	(no affiliation provided)	Y
Jim Hutton	(no affiliation provided))	Y

AGENDA & NOTES

Welcome, Announcements, and Roll Call

Alicea Charamut, Rivers Alliance

Charamut asked Rivers Sub-Working Group (SWG) members to introduce themselves for new members of the public in attendance. Most members of the public also introduced themselves.

(Note - There were some technical issues at the beginning of the meeting which caused delays. Charamut needed to get ZOOM controls passed over to her to display meeting materials. However, Cary Lynch, the CT DEEP staff person who had been assisting with setting up and running the Rivers SWG ZOOM meetings recently left the Agency and these responsibilities had not been reassigned. Issue was finally resolved and Charamut was able to gain ZOOM controls. Peterson, who takes meeting notes, also had technical difficulties and had to sign off/on. Fielding took notes during her brief absence.)

Agenda Item(s)

Facilitated by Alicea Charamut, Rivers Alliance

- **GC3 Updates**

Charamut and at least two other River SWG members attended CT DEEP Commissioner Dyke's GC3 meeting prior to this Rivers SWG meeting. Unfortunately, the last half hour of the GC3 meeting conflicted with the first half hour of the Rivers SWG meeting, although Rivers SWG meeting had been scheduled prior to the GC3 meeting.

Charamut reported on items discussed at GC3 meeting.

Aarrestad provided an update on the timeline for the GC3 process. All Working Groups (WG) are expected to make their reports available to the Equity & Environmental Justice (EEJ) WG by August 15. After that, it is anticipated that the entire GC3 will develop preliminary recommendations to be delivered to the Governor by December 31.

Because COVID-19 barriers impacted communication with the public, the plan is to use 2021 to do more outreach, to help compensate for what GC3 WGs weren't able to do this year, such as in-person meetings around the state.

- **Review of compiled strategies and recommendations**

For the benefit of public, Charamut described the process that the Rivers SWG has been using to examine how rivers are impacted by Climate Change.

To prepare for the discussion of recommendations from the Environmental Services teams, Charamut created a working document entitled "GC3 Rivers SWG - Compiling and Categorizing Strategies and Actions". Charamut sent this working document as an attachment to Rivers SWG committee members prior to the meeting. She also provided a link to the working document in Chat that the public could view. (Key to colored highlighted items: Gray = Recommendations in 2011 Plan; Green = Recommendations that Eric Hammerling (Chair - Forests SWG) put into 2011 analysis spreadsheet.) Charamut noted that the compiled list of strategies and actions in the working document is very long and that she has nested some of the recommendations. Will need to come up with a shorter list that captures bigger ideas.

- **Legislative and policy priorities***
- **Education/outreach/technical assistance***

(* Note – The original plan, as per the meeting agenda, was to discuss the compiled strategies and actions under the above listed topic categories. However, Rivers SWG committee discussion quickly turned to how the recommendations might be organized in a different manner. As a result, the above listed topics were not specifically discussed.)

There was a general discussion about the “GC3 Rivers SWG – Compiling and Categorizing Strategies and Actions” working document. Charamut had hoped the exercise would result in a much shorter list but, due to time constraints, the committee was not able to boil it down further. However, there was a very productive conversation amongst members, with helpful input from the public, about how to restructure it.

Public Comment:

(Comment) Houser - Felt the work that has been done is great and foundational. Have set sights, figured out “ingredients” and other pieces needed. She noted that other groups have done this and then come up with their own “recipes”. This group needs to do the same. She suggested looking at other community’s “recipes” and make sure that we get what we want. Now it time to work towards “packaging”.

(Response) Charamut - Agreed on the need to make sure the “meal” is “appetizing” and has all “ingredients” that communities need.

5 MINUTE BREAK

- **Review of compiled strategies and recommendations (cont.)**
 - **Economic, Environmental and Racial Equity***
 - **Research Opportunities***

(* Note – As previously noted ... The original plan, as per the meeting agenda, was to discuss the compiled strategies and actions under the above listed topic categories. However, the committee discussion quickly turned to how the recommendations might be organized in a different manner. As a result, the above listed topics were not specifically discussed.)

Discussion from before the break continued.

It was agreed that a smaller work group would be formed which would meet to review and revise the working document. The plan is to provide something to the Rivers SWG a week before the next meeting. The Rivers SWG will also review the Forests SWG draft recommendations as a potential example to follow, when it becomes available.

Charamut asked for volunteers for the smaller work group to assist with this task. Werner, Fielding, Dornbos, Green, Wildman and Charamut volunteered.

Public Comment:

(Comment) Houser – Although she is getting prepared to teach on-line classes, she offered to look around and see what she might be able to find, in terms of “recipes”.

She said that it would be worthwhile to her to look around for this type of information.

(Response) Charamut - Thanked Houser for her willingness to help out and indicated that any assistance she might be able to provide would be appreciated.

Public comments

Sudol – Asked a clarification question ... She noted that earlier, the Rivers SWG said it intended to cover inland waters ... She asked if this includes lakes? If so, the need for in-lake restoration is important to recognize, especially with regard to cyanobacteria blooms. Land use needs go hand-in-hand with in-lake restoration. She noted that in-lake management may be needed, even if the condition of the surrounding landscape is fine. So, with regard to the discussion about various funding options, it's important to consider the need for in-lake restoration funding, as part of a vulnerabilities assessment. She added that this may also work with the education piece. Many people don't understand the potential health effects associated with blue-green algae.

Charamut agreed with Sudol about the need to emphasize the unique challenges facing lakes and ponds with regard to water quality, and cyanobacteria in particular. She thanked Sudol for her feedback.

Charamut asked if there were any further public comments. Peterson noted that two members of the public noted that they had to leave the meeting early.

Next Steps and Adjourn

The smaller work group (agreed to earlier) will meet and devise a revised "Strategies and Actions" document that will be distributed to the Rivers SWG a week or at least several days prior to the next meeting.

The next meeting will be on July 30, 2020; 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm.

Adjourn: ~ 11:45 am

Post Meeting Note and Public Comment

The Rivers SWG meeting officially ended about 15 minutes ahead of schedule. Charamut, Aarrestad and Peterson decided to use the remaining ZOOM time allotted to hold a leadership/support staff business meeting. Mary Rickel Pelletier joined ZOOM during this post-meeting business discussion and asked to make a comment. Charamut allowed her to provide comment, although the Rivers SWG meeting had officially adjourned.

(Additional) Public Comment

Rickel Pelletier – She said she would like to provide a presentation on the New England Landscapes project taking place in the Park River watershed. It includes components on urban landscapes and is funded by a grant through Harvard Forests. The project includes forests along urban corridors that are just as important as the rivers. She asked if the Rivers SWG would be open to a presentation. She noted that she has done a presentation for Sustainable CT.

Charamut agreed to consider a presentation.