



**Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council (CEEJAC)
Water Subcommittee**

**Thurs, March 6, 2025
3:00-4:30 PM**

Link to Recording:

https://ctdeep.zoom.us/rec/share/7mHaXzrd1lbKQbjleVN9Gqiw2Z_jxcUEHoJ1juxcrvntOZDCSU2k87YaSTFugm.ZXerUTBPDsqyl1vu

1. Introduction

Cierra Patrick, Water Subcommittee chair, welcomed everyone and started the meeting.

2. Watersheds 101 Presentation w/Denise Savageau

Purpose of this session was to make sure that everyone is able to understand what is a watershed and water resources so that we can continue our engagement about watershed planning.

Watershed is a major planning tool; think of it as a 'bathtub' with one drain. Watersheds are named for the body of water that they drain into.

Watershed Management – looks at drainage areas, which is where all the water bodies drain into. This doesn't always fall along political boundaries. Need to coordinate with conservation and development needs of the community, such as with land use planning or zoning. Want to make sure that local community members are involved in the planning and implementation of watershed plans, particularly with development.

Watershed – Land use Impacts: want to make sure that we stop conversation of natural lands. Why do we still have water in our streams when it doesn't rain? Because of groundwater. Need to ensure that septic system failures are not impacting our drinking water or affect our recreational use of water.

Watershed Management uses land use practices to protect natural lands and ecosystem services.

Watershed Planning involves all communities. Communities need to be reconnected back to the water resources that they have been told not to go near because it was too polluted. Want to engage with community leaders and groups to facilitate engagement efforts. Need to understand what the community wants done and DEEP & Soil and Conservation Districts can also talk about the technical components.

Resources and Tools:

- [Local Watershed Assessment Tool](#), - provided by UConn CLEAR as a working toolkit to build different scenarios of the potential impact of future land cover decisions on water quality
- [Conservation Districts](#) partner with municipalities and provide technical assistance to local communities to do this work. Districts are set up under statute to do this work.
- [Connections to Long Island Sound](#) – Story Map created by UConn CLEAR in partnership with the Long Island Sound Study
- [Think at the Sink | Greater Groton](#) – Example of good housekeeping measures to take to protect watershed resources
- [Watershed Management](#) – CT DEEP’s Watershed Management webpage with links to management principles, plans, guidance documents, and example projects
- Learn more about **the North Branch Park River Project** by watching this meeting recording:
https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/jeqezZnkEqAkHx0wCNqFmu_H_LyrNHKU40yDZ3caZX4wDQDIVIOPd8Zlfj3WYnMZ.3eqns8CoMxNQz40J
 Passcode: aQ4&eTrV

Grant Opportunities:

- [EPA 319 program \(through CT DEEP\)](#) can fund planning projects where the grantee would create a watershed management plan. Implementation funds are also available for projects that are going in the ground, like rain gardens. DEEP has opportunities for designs or construction.
- [EPA Long Island Sound Partnership](#) – they have a grant writing assistance program and a community fund, futures fund which includes planning, restoration, and implementation actions. They also have research grants to the local universities to help with management decisions.
- Additional funding opportunities available through CT DEEP: [Grants and Financial Assistance](#)
- [Grants - Long Island Sound Study](#) – Grants available from Long Island Sound Study

3. Q&A

Caitlin Daddona – interested in the North Park River and how it’s piped under the city. Are there opportunities to daylight certain areas particularly with flooding concerns. **North Branch Park River – Watershed Management Plan & Team:**

https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/559590ece9904173b75535c2e7f00cda/page/ABOUT?block_id=layout_0_block_36

- Denise Savageau – they started filling in waterways to handle stormwater and getting rid of flooding, but that created challenges in our urban areas. There is a watershed study to see where restoration work can happen.
- Graham Stevens – North Branch of Park River has combined sewage overflows which are a product of old sewer systems. Interested in figuring out how we manage this watercourse with all interested entities.

Anthony Afriyie – 319 program deadline is coming up; what should we start doing for 2026?
Stratford, Trumbull, Shelton area

- Erik Bedan: Need to start planning, going to town commission meetings. We've been trying to stay consistent about opening in Sept and closing in January and February. Check the website to see example projects and resources for how to get started: [RFP for Nonpoint Source Management Grant Program](#) and [Examples of previously funded projects](#)
- Denise Savageau: we'll be talking more about this – sometimes we work with neighborhood groups or municipalities. But you're going to need technical partners to be involved in this work.
- From Rodrigo Pinto: Harbor Watch is one of the watershed-management organizations near your base in Stratford that has been a stakeholder in past 319 grants from the CT DEEP and the US EPA. More specifically, Nikki Spiller has been collaborating on a Pootatuck River Watershed Management Plan partly funded by a 319 grant: <https://earthplace.org/harbor-watch/>
- From Erik Bedan: DEEP funded the Town of Stratford to develop a Bruce Brook Watershed Based Plan, it's currently under development.

Rahiem Eleazer: are any of the funds talked about today affected by federal administration funding freezes?

- Erik Bedan: We have last year's 319 funding from last year. We've been told that this year's funding is available to us and that we can continue to move forward with federal funding.
- Graham Stevens: Green infrastructure, resilience – all topics that the state infrastructure is interested in.
- Denise Savageau: There are some bills from the governor for nature-based solution and funding through the Green Bank. There are opportunities and we would be remiss if we didn't think that federal funding wouldn't affect us, but there might be opportunities for state to step up and public/private funding opportunities.

Next Meeting:

Water Subcommittee Meeting (Virtual) - Community Watershed Planning

Monday, March 31, 2025 | 3:00-4:30 PM

[Register for Zoom Meeting Link](#)

[Download Meeting Agenda](#)

Registration List:

Diane Lauricella	MEGHAN LALLY	Kayla D.
Sheila Barney	Cierra Patrick	Brittany Antuna
Patrick Kearney	Ashley Stewart	Paul Aresta
Alissa Bullard	Doris Johnson	Katherine Bennett
Bumstead	Rodrigo Pinto	Megan Trujillo
Becca Dahl	Graham Stevens	Kathy Czepiel

Anstress Farwell
Jelani Fletcher
Floencia Bugatti
Denise Savageau
Tayarisha Batchelor
Erik Bedan

Anthony Afriyie
Rahiem Eleazer
Desen Ozkan
Danielle Russell
Caitlin Daddona
Maritza Bond

Aaron Goode
Joanna Shapiro
Paul O Robertson
Omar Green