

❖ CHEMUNG BASIN RIVER TRAIL PARTNERSHIP ❖

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Minutes

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2007

ATTENDANCE: Bill Abraham, River Trail Coordinator; Rocci Aguirre, Finger Lakes Land Trust; Tom Beecher, resident; Linda Couchon, CCE; Tim Elston, Chemung County Elmira Sewer Districts; Jennifer Fais, STCRPDB; John Gardner Hazard, Susquehanna River Keeper; Brock Morey, Three River Outing Club; Skip Mills, Chemung Riverview Improvement Group; Elaine Spacher, Tanglewood Nature Center; Jake Trimmer, Chemung County Sportsmen's Federation; Lynn Van Atta, resident.

1. **Welcome and Introductions**, Jennifer Fais and Linda Couchon, co-chairs, called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM, in the Town of Big Flats Community Center Room A. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.
2. **Minutes of the November 8, 2006 meeting.** Jennifer distributed copies of the meeting minutes. They were approved by consensus.
3. **Plans for the June 2, 2007 Eighth Annual River Float** - The group looked at the River Trail map and decided that the trip should go from Wood Road, Campbell to Kinsella Park in Erwin. Measuring from the map, this is about 10 miles.

Jennifer to contact Steve Catherman to talk about logistics for parking at the site at the Campbell/Savona Junior Senior High School or at the Campbell Town offices. Ask Mr. Hurley to talk with Lisa Hawkins, Principal of Campbell/Savona School, to see if we can park there.

Contact Rita McCarthy for participation and use of Kinsella Pavilion for lunch.

Talk with Mr. Hurley, Science Teacher, on conducting water samples as part of the float. Contact Peace Weavers in Fremont for their participation.

Contact the American Legion in Campbell because they run a river float each year. Perhaps we could coordinate the efforts.

Because safety is a big issue for us, have whistles engraved with Chemung Basin River Trail logo to hand out as part of the Float. See if we can get a life preserver donated as a door prize.

Contact Town of Campbell Fire Department as our emergency backup.

Contact Greg Heffner, Trout Unlimited, for displays and participation.

John Hazard agreed to play at Kinsella Park. He now has speakers that he can use in his canoe so he can project from the water.

Jennifer to send out a Save-The-Date postcard to everyone who has ever participated.

Contact Dave Jamison at Jamison Marina to see how he would like to participate.

Contact Dave Rockwell, CCC for students who are required to take part in a recreation-related project as part of their degree program.

Contact Partnership 4 Progress to see how they would like to become involved.

Ask if anyone would like to do Geo-caching as part of the River Float.

The group was really excited about all the ideas.

4. ***Adopt-A-Site and Members' Reports*** –

Tim Elston said he has repaired the kiosk at Grove Street and would encourage us to find a small fund of money to pay for supplies for ongoing repair. He has installed Fitches Bridge kiosk at Tanglewood and has offered to install the Grove Street kiosk at Wegman's when it is repaired. *(Note: Since the meeting, Tim has installed the kiosk.)*

John Hazard is willing to do whatever he can to support the Partnership. He noted that each year he goes on a River Keeper Tour of nine days and eight nights camping and playing music along the river. He has not yet selected his trip location this year.

Skip Mills, from the River View Improvement Group handed out his materials that described the proposed recreational use of the Lake Street Bridge. He asked for ideas on funding. It was noted that many of his ideas may be included in the new River Council Project and that engineering designs may be obtained through that program. The Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA) funds could be used for construction.

Rocci Aguirre said that the Finger Lakes Land Trust is putting together their 2007 Plan. He stressed that tax benefits are excellent for easement donation value in 2006 and 2007. He strongly encouraged us to suggest to him names of possible landowners who may be interested in donating easements and taking this tax credit in 2007. He needs to know their names in the next six weeks.

Jennifer and Linda encouraged him to provide a press release and brochure about the information for Linda to take to the River Council meeting on January 18th.

Jake Trimmer pointed out that in the past they have met with the State Assembly members and the Senators to talk about natural resource and sportsmen's projects that the legislators could assist.

Bill Abraham suggested that White Wagon funding could be suggested to Tom O'Mara as a line item funding idea. Cost estimate \$20,000.

Recommended \$50,000 for the portage construction as part of the Environmental Protection Fund. We would encourage the legislators to support funding for the Land Management Plan previously submitted to the Gateways Program. Jennifer to forward the application to Jake Trimmer and Bill Abraham in preparation for the meeting with legislators.

Also suggested would be Jim Bacalles to provide \$6,000 for the Conhocton Street site in case the Community Foundation Grant did not come through.

Another recommendation would be to fund porta-johns at each of the River Trail sites. Jake and Bill Abraham to come up with a ballpark figure that would be needed.

5. ***Update on funding applications -***

Community Foundation Grant (06-07) \$575 – What to do with this? - Bill Abraham noted that this funding has been used to create an artist's view of a potential handicap access site upstream of the Conhocton Street site in Corning at a 20 foot deep section of the Chemung River. The design would be to engineer an access point into the dike.

Community Foundation Grant (07-08) Letter due March 1, ap. deadline April 1 -

The group discussed potential ideas. One includes a request for up to \$1,000 for kiosk repair funds to help with ongoing kiosk repairs. Tim Elston would get in touch with Scott Burg to come up with a cost. Scott's number is 776-2165 ext. 13.

It was suggested to put flyers about the June 2nd River Float on the kiosks that are up in public display. Also request some funding to print the flyers.

The request for funds under \$1,000 may be made at any time. Applications for construction funds is now a new category. The group recommended applying to the Community Foundation for \$6,000 to finish the Conhocton Street launch site matched by \$4,000 from Corning Inc. Foundation.

Gateways Grant program currently stalled in Congress. Jennifer noted that it is currently on hold in Congress until a new budget is put in place. (*Note: Since the meeting it was learned that no grants will be available until further notice.*)

6. ***Report on new River Council Project***, Linda Couchon distributed a hand out which described the time frame for the project and the elements. The first meeting is January 18th at 7:00 PM at Park Church. Linda and Jennifer will work together to put a packet of materials about the Partnership together for this group of municipal officials and their designees as they meet to become the River Council.
7. ***Report on Community Foundation Vignettes Publication Project***, Rebecca Smith was not available at the meeting for a report.
8. ***Report on Route 427 Launch Site***, Bill Abraham said that \$6,500 from Casella has been placed in the Chemung Valley Conservancy bank account. Bill is meeting with the State Historic Preservation officer and has met with Steve Polzella to develop maps and the application packet. He hopes to have the design developed this winter with construction in July, August, or September 2007 and dedication in October. Casella has pledged up to \$13,000 to construct the project.
9. ***Report on American Heritage Rivers Designation*** - This will be further discussed at the Upper Susquehanna Coalition Strategic Planning meeting February 7th and 8th.
10. ***Follow up on Recreation Safety Issues on Our Rivers***. What progress have we made? This will be a focus of the June 9th River Fest and June 2nd River Float.
11. ***River Clean Up - status***, no new information except that the planning meetings are being held.

12. **Update on the Headwaters Water Trail**, no new information. Linda Couchon noted, however, that David Buck has provided information on the Susquehanna Greenway and she provided copies to the Partnership.
13. **June 9th River Fest** - Linda Couchon said that plans were coming along. A plan to include again their river paddle from Bottcher's Landing to Grove Street. They are encouraging each vendor to be a green no waste event. They are contacting a number of agencies to provide a display materials and entertainment. Kris Pashley will be there with a kayak, possibility she has contacted the River Rats, a subgroup of the Awagha Canoe Club to help with safety issues. More will be discussed at upcoming River Fest meetings.

Linda Couchon distributed the keepers update January 10th which was a list of the latest information on each launch site and kiosk. She also distributed a spreadsheet on launch sites dated January 2007.

14. **Other** . No other business.
14. **Next Meeting Date**: The group agreed to meet on whatever day is acceptable to the newly formed River Council. The sense is that the Partnership and River Council are all working on the River and that portions of the agenda could address each of the issues so that there would be a coordination of this effort. At the end of the River Council project, the groups could decide if they needed to take separate directions.
15. **Adjourn** - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Fais