
Stakeholder Council 2013

Membership

The Ashokan Stakeholder Council is comprised of:

The Executive Council:

2 representatives from each of the active AWSMP working groups.

Both representatives of a working group should not come from the same organization or agency.

Representatives should be chosen annually by the working group.

No person can represent more than one working group on the Stakeholder Council.

Staff: (CCE Ulster County, UC SWCD, DEP SMP Contract Manager for Ashokan Watershed)

Regular Members: Membership in the Stakeholder Council is open to any interested and knowledgeable stakeholder.

ASHOKAN WATERSHED STREAM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

AWSMP Program Office, Phoenicia, NY 12464

October 17, 2013 1pm-4:40pm

In Attendance: Candace B., Chet K., Bruce B., Andrew E., Kathy N., Leo L., Mark L., Mary M., Aaron B., Mike R., Eric H., Amanda L., John H.

Staff: Leslie Z., Brent G., Danyelle D.; Beth R.; Adam D.; Bobby T., Allison L., Heather E.

Next scheduled meetings: TBD (January)

Introductions, Meeting Overview

Heather Eckardt is the new Cornell Cooperative Extension Senior Administrative Assistant for AWSMP.

AWSMP Events/Announcements

A Stream Access and Recreation Working Group meeting will be held October 23.

Announcements/Upcoming Events at Stakeholder Organizations:

Leslie Zucker will speak at the upcoming Ashokan-Pepacton Chapter of Trout Unlimited on October 23. The chapter's November 20 meeting will host John Braico of NYS TU speaking about affordable streambank restoration.

Catskill Mountainkeeper will screen *Gasland II* at 7:00pm on October 18 at Onteora High School.

The NY Rising Community Revitalization Shandaken-Hardenburgh Committee is hosting two upcoming public meetings, both will be held at Belleayre Mountain. The first will be held on October 19 and the second will be held on November 9.

The Lower Esopus Watershed Partnership has created a poster showing all of the fish that inhabit the creek. It illustrates species transitioning from tidal to coldwater habitats. Contact Mary McNamara for copies.

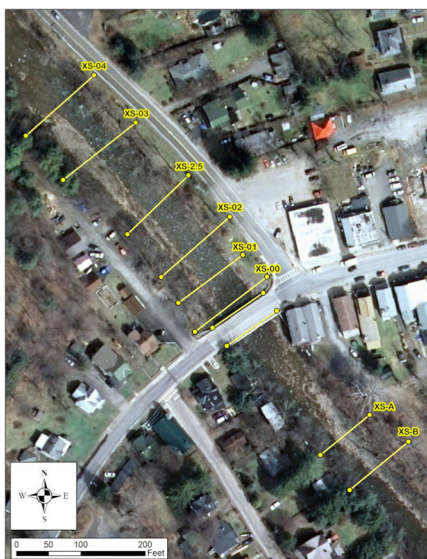
UCSWCD Project Updates

Warner Creek Site 5: Construction was completed in fall 2013. This project is located between the upper Silver Hollow Road and Route 214 bridges over Stony Clove Creek (immediately downstream of Chichester 1 completed in 2012). Construction contract was Fastracs, Inc. Site design contractor was Milone & McBroom, Inc. Total project cost is yet to be determined but will likely approach \$1.5 million with local match of approximately \$600,000 from AWSMP and \$900,000 from EWP funding through NRCS.

Chichester Sites 2,3,4: Construction was completed in fall 2013. This project is located between the Silver Hollow Road and Route 214 bridges over Stony Clove Creek (immediately downstream of Chichester 1 completed in 2012). Construction contract was Fastracs, Inc. Site design contractor was Milone & McBroom, Inc. Total project cost is yet to be determined but will likely approach \$1.5 million with local match of approximately \$600,000 from AWSMP and \$900,000 from EWP funding through NRCS.

Warner Creek-Stony Clove Confluence: This project to stabilize portions of the Stony Clove Creek and Warner Creek at their confluence is expected to begin mid-November and end in February 2014. Construction will be completed by Baker Brothers Excavating. The project will halt a large headcut threatening streambanks along Route 214, Silver Hollow Rd., and private property and restore a stable bed elevation and habitat connectivity.

Stony Clove at Phoenicia monitoring results: Monitoring of the 2011 Phoenicia Flood Hazard Mitigation Project on the Stony Clove Creek is ongoing. Monitoring is to measure the effectiveness of the project to reduce flood stage and convey sediment and floodwater through the Main Street Bridge. UCSWCD routinely surveys cross-sections of the stream channel upstream and downstream of the bridge (see figure below). Minor changes in the stream bed have occurred. The project has experienced several discharges above 3000 cfs (bankfull), but has not had enough large flows to really be tested. Monitoring will continue until enough substantial flows provide an accurate indication of channel response.



Location of monitoring cross-sections on Stony Clove Creek in Phoenicia.

Stream Assessments: This summer field crews completed a stream assessment of the Bushnellsville Creek (about 5 miles) and a reassessment of the mainstem Stony Clove Creek (about 8.5 miles). The field assessments document stable and unstable conditions, erosion sites, flood hazards, and threats to water quality. The Stony Clove Creek was first assessed in 2003. Staff will be able to compare conditions between 2003 and 2013 and identify potential restoration sites. Reports for both assessments will be developed this winter. Interns from the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and the Ulster County Community College (UCCC) were a big help with this summer's stream assessments.

CSBI: Currently assessing survival rate of plants at 32 planting sites. Revegetation of the Warner Creek stream restoration site is underway. About 1,500 trees and shrubs will be planted. A landowner assistance project is underway in McKenley Hollow. Several bioengineering projects are planned for spring 2014. Staff began collecting data for hydraulic analysis of a Bush Kill site.

Stakeholder Council members noted two erosion sites: one on the Stony Clove across from the Chichester leach field with mud flow and rock failure at the bank toe, and another site on Warner Creek where a clay bank on state land is eroding.

CCEUC Project Updates

Stream Management Implementation Program: About \$243,000 remains to be allocated to projects by December 31, 2015. A request for applications will be released in early November with a late November deadline. The Stakeholder Council grant committee will be activated to review and rank grant applications. The Grant Committee will present its recommendations to the Executive Council for a vote at the January 2014 Stakeholder Council meeting.

Priorities for this round are expected to be projects related to post-Irene infrastructure improvements, educational training, local flood analysis, stream access and recreation, and monitoring of ecosystem impacts post-Irene.

Planning for the 2014 Ashokan Watershed Conference:

- The conference planning committee will meet on November 12 from 1:00-3:00 at the AWSMP office. Stakeholders interested in participating should contact Brent Gotsch at bwg37@cornell.edu or (845) 688-3047. Anyone willing to help plan is encouraged to participate.

DEP Project Updates

Release of mid-term FAD and new Ashokan watershed projects:

- The draft Revised 2007 Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD) covers the period 2012-2017 and requires the City to implement existing and new milestones for the Ashokan Reservoir watershed.
- DEP is working on 5-year renewal of contracts with partners in the West of Hudson NYC Water Supply Watershed. The revised contracts will extend from mid-2014 to mid-2019, but most FAD deliverables will be due during 2017. The Ashokan program will have until the end of 2018 to complete its stream restoration projects required by the FAD.
- The Revised FAD continues three Stream Management Program initiatives: stream projects, the Catskill Stream Buffer Initiative (CSBI), and the the Stream Management Implementation Grant Program (SMIP), and formalizes the education/outreach/training program component, and establishes a new Local Flood Hazard Mitigation Program.
- An additional \$500,000 will be committed to ensure that sufficient funding is available in the Ashokan watershed to build stream projects that are eligible for the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program and for which the NRCS is holding funding in place through 2014.
- Flood mitigation will have a higher priority in stream management planning and the FAD requires the City's Stream Management Program invest \$10.1M in flood hazard mitigation planning and implementation. Funding for flood hazard mitigation will be shared between each basin (Ashokan, Schoharie, Delaware, Rondout-Neversink). At least \$2,000,000 will be available through the AWSMP. An additional \$17M will be available through the Catskill Watershed Corporation for project implementation, focusing on relocation of anchor businesses and construction of projects that provide an offsite flood hazard mitigation and water quality benefit.
- The Revised FAD requires construction of 7 water quality projects in the Ashokan watershed by 11/30/18 with a goal of protecting water quality, in particular reducing turbidity. Projects completed in 2013 will qualify.
- The Lower Esopus Consent Order requires \$750,000 be made available for an additional 2 stream projects in the Upper Esopus.
- DEP is required to conduct two water quality monitoring studies in the Ashokan watershed. One study is the ongoing USGS effort to characterize tributary scale suspended sediment/turbidity sources within the Ashokan watershed, and the other is a new study that will evaluate the efficacy of stream management practices to reduce turbidity. A proposal with implementation schedule for the project effectiveness study is due 6 months after issuance of the revised 2007 FAD.

Working Group Report Out

Flood Hazard Mitigation:

- AWSMP is participating on the NY Rising Community Revitalization Committee for Shandaken and Hardenburgh working to develop a flood mitigation plan and access \$6 million in state funds for projects.

Stream Access and Recreation:

- Next meeting will be October 23, 2013. The working group will discuss a Shandaken Tunnel memo and listen to a presentation on turbidity in the Schoharie Reservoir.
- This committee co-lead position is currently vacant. The committee is working on filling that position.

Highway Managers:

- Next meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2013.

Education and Outreach:

- Due to funding delays and new priorities, this committee will convene again later next year.

Aquatic Integrity:

- AWSMP plans to reconvene an aquatic ecosystem working group to update the 2007 Aquatic Ecosystem Research & Assessment Strategy for the Upper Esopus Creek watershed. If time allows, we will hold a meeting this winter.

Two-Year Action Plan Development

- A final draft of the 2014-2015 AWSMP Action Plan will be circulated before the January Stakeholder Council meeting.
- The council reviewed Action Plan ‘Section C: Highway and Infrastructure Management in Conjunction with Streams.’ The following recommendations were suggested:
 - Consider making a hydro-seeder for ditch projects available to local highway departments. Look at Sullivan County as a model. Address use of native seed mixes.
 - DEP has a FAD deliverable to report linear feet seeded. Is there a way to report this?
 - The highway managers committee will review recommendations for reducing sediment loadings from road abrasives. A sweeper vac truck was explored and is an expensive solution (~\$250K).
- The council reviewed Action Plan ‘Section D: Assisting Streamside Landowners (public and private).’ The following recommendations were suggested:
 - Develop a mechanism for providing stream assessment information to towns, agencies, and landowners to help them prioritize streambank stability projects.
 - Explore opportunities for riparian and wetland restoration or enhancement on buyout properties (now empty lots along streams).
 - Investigate opportunities for wetland construction or protection for stormwater management.
 - AWSMP’s Catskill Stream Buffer Initiative (CSBI) program has been developing knowledge of wetland plants suitable for riparian plantings.
- The council reviewed Action Plan ‘Section F: Enhancing Stream-based Recreation and Public Access.’ The following recommendations were suggested:
 - Identify access and recreational opportunities linked to flood mitigation efforts. Examples include floodplain parks located in hamlets, where the floodplain has been restored or enhanced.
 - Identify access and recreational opportunities related to buyout of flood damaged properties.
 - Address FEMA restrictions on buy-out properties when looking to develop access. FEMA may allow unobtrusive development for recreation.
 - When the County acquires properties through buyouts it can transfer ownership to a non-profit, DEC, or DEP. Ownership defaults to the County if another entity is not interested in acquisition.
 - Look for stream access and recreation opportunities in Mt. Tremper along Route 212.
 - Add recommendation for independent review of Shandaken Tunnel products.
- Working groups are advised to prepare comments for updates to the Action Plan.

Next Meeting

TBA—sometime in January 2014