

**AWSMP Stream Access and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**10/23/2013**  
**10:00am to 12:00pm**  
**AWSMP Office, Phoenicia, NY**

*In attendance:*

Brent Gotsch, CCE Ulster County

Aaron Bennett, Ulster County Department of the Environment

Andy Bader, DEP

Danyelle Davis, DEP

Russell Yess, Trout Unlimited

Kathy Nolan, Catskill Mountainkeeper, TU, UC Trails Advisory Commission

Marc Hollander, KCCNY, via phone

Mike Flaherty, DEC

Mark Loete, Trout Unlimited

Heather Eckardt, CCE Ulster County

**Special Guest Presentation on Schoharie Reservoir Turbidity**

Special guest Andy Bader (NYC DEP's Deputy Chief of Water Quality Operations) gave an informative presentation about the Schoharie Reservoir turbidity fluctuations. Factors such as mining blasts, clay zones, fish activity, precipitation, wind, waves, and internal seiche were all considered in the analysis. It was concluded that temperature and internal seiche are the most probable factors in the turbidity. Daily turbidity fluctuations were noted in the summer, with turbidity rises observed with decreases in temperature. However, temperature and turbidity seemed to rise together earlier in the year. A similar pattern has been observed since 2005. The presentation showed that turbidity fluctuations are happening in the reservoir, not the creek, with sediment accumulating in the thermocline. Reservoir management, both for recreation and drinking water, likely weakens the seiche, but the effects have not been quantified.

**Action Plan Review**

The draft 2014 -2015 Action Plan Review was discussed. The timeline for completion of the plan is before the end of 2013. There was much discussion about coordinating recreational opportunities (such as parks, wetlands, bird observatories) with the flood mitigation program buyout. Ideas such as "photo safaris" were mentioned to attract people to the natural areas around the streams. Finding ways to include recreation and education around the streams was an important focus. Educational outreach particularly for the angling community is needed.

**Shandaken Tunnel Memo Review**

Representatives from Trout Unlimited were concerned that since the Esopus Creek watershed has been so drastically altered because of recent hurricanes and floods, that any change to the policy could further stress the fisheries and threaten habitat. Other members believed that we should continue with discussing the memo and its contents and that it could in fact provide a better framework for release that would benefit both whitewater recreation and fisheries. Ideas for proceeding include investigating other areas with similar issues, such as Deerfield, MA. Also, gathering people for festivals for longer periods of time, rather than just a weekend, may increase awareness. It was noted that politics, particularly in the lower Esopus, may complicate these efforts, whatever course of action is decided. Marc Hollander was open to attending a Trout Unlimited meeting at some point in the future to further inform those in the angling community about these possibilities and to hear their concerns. It was agreed by all that we should proceed slowly, cautiously, and deliberately being as transparent and inclusive as possible so that no one stakeholder group would feel shut-out of the process.

### **Co-Chair Position Vacancy**

The Leadership Co-Chair position is currently open. Kathy Nolan is interested in the position, but it will need to be determined if she is eligible because she currently serves on the grant review committee as well. If others are interested in the position please contact either Aaron Bennett or Brent Gotsch.

### **Future Actions**

Brent Gotsch will send out a doodle poll to determine when the next meeting will be scheduled. Likely it will be held sometime in February.

Mike Flaherty would like to inform everyone that if they are on DEC land (such as fishing access spots) and you notice that they need work (e.g. re-grading parking lot, rehabilitated signage, etc.) to please contact him and he will put in a work order. DEC has funds to pay for upkeep of their access areas.

Please get comments regarding the Action Plan into Brent Gotsch ASAP. Please limit comments to section F. Enhancing Stream-based Recreation and Public Access.

Please contact either Brent Gotsch or Aaron Bennett if you are interested in the Co-Chair position of this working group. Also, if you know of anyone who is interested in participating in the working group please encourage them to come.

Brent Gotsch will get the documents cited in Andy Bader's presentation and make them available for working group members.

