

St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council
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MEETING MINUTES
May 19, 2021 6:00 PM
Via ZOOM

Action items in bold italics / Motions underlined

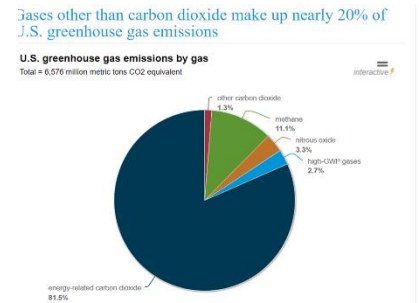
1. **Call to Order:** In the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair Rau called the meeting order at 6:06 pm.
2. Tenbusch gave a land acknowledgement: “As we meet today, let us first give thanks and acknowledge that the land upon which we are gathered is part of traditional indigenous territories, including the Rotinonshionni (Low-dee-no-SHOO-nee), the People of the Longhouse, also known as the Iroquois Confederacy; and the Kanienkehaka (Ga-nyun-geh-HA-gah), the People of the Land of Flint, also known as the Mohawk Nation.
3. **Roll Call, Determination of Quorum: *A quorum was present.***
Members present: Catherine Bennett, Chair; Dustin Bowman; Herb Bullock; Lucas Hanss; Steve Manders; Richard Marshall; Sue Rau, Vice-Chair; Lance Rudiger; Tiernan Smith; Nicole Terminelli, BOL Liaison; Rod Tozzi; Brian Washburn.
Members absent: Joseph Brant; Pat Whalen, Secretary.
Guests: Emily Sheridan, DEC; Dan Skamperle, City of Ogdensburg Councillor.
Staff: Dakota Casserly; John Tenbusch.
4. **Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business**
 - a. Accepted by consensus.
5. **Approval of the Minutes of the March, April 2021 EMC Meetings**
 - a. The minutes were unanimously adopted (Rudiger/Smith).
6. **Hearings, Comments from the Public:** The speaker for this EMC meeting was Brian Washburn, EMC member and [Professor Emeritus at SUNY Canton](#). Brian presented a chronology of the carbon, greenhouse, and ecological footprint changes made over the years at the Washburn residence, which have produced footprints less than 25 % of the US average.

Washburn stated that his environmental science teaching philosophies centered on “practice what you preach” and that almost all human activities related to the environment have a cost. Therefore, he has taken the necessary steps to reduce the environmental impact at his home.

Washburn presented a variety of data filled infographics to assist with understanding environmental conditions in the U.S. One surprising statistic was the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced from lawn and garden equipment; they produce more CO₂, when in use, than a Ford F-150. Washburn now uses a battery powered leaf blower instead of one powered by gas to reduce part of his home

EMC: Everybody Must Care!

emissions. CO2 makes up a majority of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions (~82%), while the next largest is methane (~11%), and nitrous oxide (~3%). The non CO2 greenhouse gas sources all have greater insulating capability and atmospheric longevity than CO2. Sources of CO2 emissions in the U.S. primarily come from the consumption of coal, natural gas, and petroleum from the following end-use sectors: transportation, industrial, residential, and commercial. As the use of coal in energy production continues to decline there is a corresponding decline in CO2 emissions in residential and commercial purchased electricity. Furthermore, Washburn defined carbon- and ecological footprint and provided sources for individual and/or household carbon calculators ([EPA](#) and [Nature](#)).



Washburn transitioned to talking about the specific changes that he implemented to his 1978 home. Some of these changes are: LED lights, low-flow toilets and fixtures (reduce water consumption), windows, insulation, door sweeps, ground-mounted solar panels, and a closed loop geothermal system for heating and cooling. Costs related to these changes are significant and can be out of reach for many. However, there are tax

incentives available to help offset high costs. The solar panels at his home are set to net metering, which permits excess electricity (not consumed onsite), to be sold



back to the utility and ultimately credited to his account.

Additionally, He did note that states like [Alabama are implementing additional fees on solar owners](#) and this could impact future residential solar installations. Outside of his home, Washburn has: a hybrid vehicle, garden (supports a plant based diet), [composting space](#), and a rainwater catchment system which is used for garden irrigation.



Washburn concluded with more examples that helped track his consumption/recycling efforts. These efforts were examined in lab experiments by his environmental science students.

Presentation discussion:

- Smith asked if geothermal can be retrofitted for use in his older house with cast iron radiators ([G.S. Dorman Mansion/Augsbury House](#)).
 - Washburn said that he thought it would work and to fix areas where heat is escaping.

7. Report by the Representative of the Board of Legislators (Nicole Terminelli)

Terminelli talked about:

- The [upcoming fishing tournaments in Waddington and Massena](#) and added conservation efforts at these events;
- The addition of thirteen (13) parcels to the [County's Ag District 1 & 2](#), for a total of ~1000 acres.
- Ongoing lead abatement projects and an annual report that is expected in June;
- The recent closing of a broadband survey and the results are to be presented to the County in the near future;
- The opening of the [County's Multi-Use Trails](#).

8. Report of the Committees

a. Conservation of Resources Committee: [See attached.](#)

i. Casserly gave the report.

ii. Hanss talked his participation with a SUNY Potsdam study that attempted to gauge

Potsdam restaurant interest in composting. Some restaurants were interested. They also contacted the corporate chain restaurants, but did not have any success with interest.

b. Environment and the Economy Committee: See attached.

- i. Casserly gave the report.
- ii. Smith said that the Committee is planning on drafting a recommendation by July on the fish bypasses project. Presently, fish ladders are the easiest and most cost effective option.
- iii. Skamperle talked about his concern with invasive species, if a fish ladder is installed, can invasives ‘ride’ on jumping fish over the dam. Also, he is interested in economic development from fishing in the City.
 1. Hanss provided information that fish ladders are not high risk for invasives.
- iv. Sheridan shared a link for the [St. Lawrence County Trucks’ Great 8 Challenge](#).
- v. There is an Eel ladder(s) at Moses/Saunders Power Dam and the committee was not sure if other fish species use it.
- vi. Marshall asked about Pacific salmon being a problem in our fisheries.
 1. Smith said that they are a non-native species that was introduced to control another non-native species.
 2. Bullock asked if Pacific salmon outcompete Atlantic salmon in shared fisheries.
- vii. Washburn asked who owns the Ogdensburg dam.
 1. Smith replied that the City owns the dam and it is leased to [Ampersand Energy](#).

c. Invasive Species Committee: See attached.

- i. Rau gave the report.
- ii. Sheridan shared upcoming [SLELO-PRISM events](#), with attention to [the 2021 Eastern Lake Ontario Invasive Species Symposium 6/23-24](#), and the Tug Hill Commission’s [Black River Watershed Webinar Wednesdays](#).
- iii. Tenbusch talked about the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) and its threat to hemlock trees. The hemlock tree is a foundation tree species, meaning it creates habitat for a significant amount of associated species.

d. Watershed Management Committee: See attached.

- i. Washburn gave the report.
- ii. Bullock asked about the [eDNA project](#) on the Grasse and Oswegatchie Rivers.
 1. Washburn replied that the project is aimed to study lake whitefish and cisco in tributaries of eastern Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River.

9. Report of the Staff: None.

10. Unfinished Business

- a. Reports from Earth Day activities with the Youth Advisory Board (YAB): Trash Dash events; presentation by Drew Demers on “Reducing Your Carbon Footprint.”
 - i. Four (4) EMC members participated in the Trash Dash: Bowman and Bullock in Canton; Terminelli and Rau in Massena.
 - ii. Bullock and Bowman talked about youth participation and that “route recon” would be helpful in the future.
 - iii. Tenbusch said there will be more partnership opportunities to work with the YAB.
 - iv. Terminelli said that the Massena event worked well because the partnership with the local

- highway department made for convenient operation.
- v. Washburn asked about training.
 1. Rau said there was a group meeting, helmets, vests, safety protocols and safety advisors, and people had to sign a safety training document.
 2. Bowman added that he would like to hear more context about the “why” per this event.

 - b. Report on May 14 meeting with representatives from the Black Lake Association (BLA)
 - i. Wash, Rau, Tenbusch, Casserly attended, with two BLA members.
 - ii. BLA has a short-term goal to find funding to help with this season’s milfoil management. Their long-term goal is a management plan.
 - iii. Bullock asked about a rubric; Tenbusch will share what he has with the Committee.
 - iv. Sheridan shared a [NYS OPRHP grant that focuses on access improvements](#).
 - v. The BLA is planning to ask the SLC BOL for \$30k for milfoil management. Also, they plan to ask for funding from the towns that surround Black Lake.
 - vi. The Committee likes the use of a rubric to help ‘score’ future funding projects.
 1. Terminelli said that the BOL would also embrace this funding process.
 - vii. Bullock asked about BLA rubric approval.
 1. Tenbusch replied, possible for July meeting.

 - c. Report on “Walk in the Woods” event, May 15.
 - i. It was hosted by Bullock and the [New York Forest Owners Association Northern Adirondack Chapter](#).
 - ii. ~60 people in attendance.
 - iii. A variety of forest management practices were presented and discussed.

 - d. Report on [Household Hazardous Waste \(HHW\)](#) collection event, May 15.
 - i. Tenbusch reported:
 1. EMC member participants: Bowman, Rau, Tenbusch, and Washburn. County Planning Director, Jason Pfothauer, also participated.
 2. There was 249 cars. The average is 225.

11. New Business: None.

12. Announcements:

- a. Bullock shared:
 - i. [DEC Seeks Public Input to Develop Draft Recreation Management Plan for Western Lassicter Tracts, St. Lawrence County. Public Comments Accepted until June. 30, 2021](#)

13. Message to Board of Legislators:

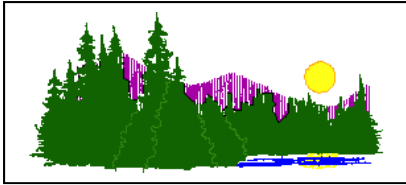
- a. The EMC would like to encourage the implementation of conservation efforts in County buildings and operations.

14. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Patrick Whalen

Patrick Whalen, Secretary
Minutes drafted by Dakota Casserly.



SLC EMC Action Item Agenda for Conservation of Resources Committee

Members: P. Whalen, chair; C. Bennett; R. Marshall; S. Rau; T. Smith.

STAFF: Dakota Casserly **Guest:**

Meeting Date: **Wednesday May 12, 2021 at 4:45 PM via Conference Call**

Time	Item	Outcome	Responsibility	Next Steps
4:45pm	Meeting starts	Committee members to call in: 1-605-475-2090 Access Code: 1197050#	Committee members	
4:50	Review Report of last meeting	Mtg Report 4.14.2021		
4:55	Discuss Priority Projects For 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report on working with Youth Advisory Board on green-energy projects ● Wise use of resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eliminating single-use plastics - Progress with Trashpresso - Growing hemp as an alternative to wood ● Conservation of flora/fauna <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blandings/other turtles - Spruce Grouse ● Climate Crisis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of Biden's climate plan 	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Future YAB partnered projects. ● Trashpresso update. ● Further hemp information. ● How to measure personal consumption. ● More information is needed here. ● Compare with green new deal.
5:20	Discuss speakers for EMC meetings	This Committee will provide at least 3 speakers per year on CR topics for EMC meetings	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cat Bennett - January ● Speakers on large-scale composting and methane digesters.
5:25	Discuss ideas for EMC Public Service Announcements	This Committee will develop 3 PSAs per year on CR topics	All	PSA on Styrofoam
5:30	Set date/time for next mtg.	NO MEETING IN JUNE Next mtg: July14, 2021		
5:30pm	Adjourn			Everybody goes home for dinner

Attendance: Casserly, Marshall, and Rau.

April meeting report, no comment.

Report on working with YAB:

- Recent events: climate calculator, trash dash (possible annual event?), and award, what do future partnerships look like
- Rau asked about working with the YAB and future events.

Wise use of resources:

- Rau said that Cat Bennet has not heard back from contacts at [Trashpresso](#).
 - Volume of plastic, which is needed for this operation, there is not enough.
- Rau talked about hemp use: regenerative crop, [hemp-crete](#), what are the additional uses.
- Rau and Marshall talked about measuring personal consumption and emphasized reusable utensils.

Conservation flora/fauna:

- Rau said that more focus is needed here.
- [Glenn Johnson \(SUNY Potsdam\) can talk about Blanding's turtles](#) and [Spruce Grouse is a NYS endangered species](#).

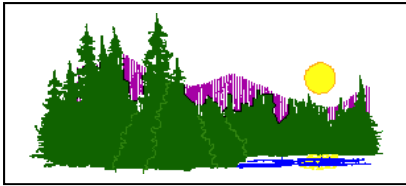
Climate Crisis

- Rau said that they are planning to compare the green new deal with Biden's climate plan.
- Marshall talked about charging stations at the [Nicandri Nature Center](#) and how NYPA was initial hesitant about installing them.
- Rau asked about decommissioning cost plans for the larger solar projects (hundreds of acres).
- Rau asked about how larger renewable energy projects are governed, [Article 10](#) and [Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act \(the "Act"\), Section 94-c](#).
- Marshall asked about industrial wind turbines and issues related to the recyclability of blades. Also, he mentioned new wind turbine designs.
- Marshall talked about his brother building super energy efficient houses at a premium in the Adirondacks. Also, he said is it cost prohibitive for the poor to invest in home energy efficiencies (environmentally expensive to be poor).

Speakers:

- Rau suggested [Alex French](#) and [Ray Bowdish](#) to talk about large-scale composting.
 - Marshall asked about the percentage of organic farmers in the County and their composting status.
- Rau suggested a speaker on methane and digesters. She thinks that Greenwood's Farm has one.

Adjourn: 5:41 pm.



SLC EMC: Action Item Agenda for Environment + Economy Committee

Members: T. Smith, Rod Tozzi.

Staff: D. Casserly **Guest(s):**

Meeting Date: Monday, May 12, 2021 at 5:00 PM via Conference Call

Time	Item	Outcome	Responsibility	Next Steps
5:00 PM	Meeting starts	<p>Call 1-605-475-2090 Access: 1197050#</p>	<p>Committee members MUST CALL IN</p>	
5:05	Review Report of Last Committee mtg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Meeting Report from March 	All	
5:30	Priority Projects for 2021	<p>Fish Ladders/Passage Project on the Grasse and Oswegatchie Rivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TLAS Conference Call (Casserly & Smith) • Jana Lantry (DEC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fish studies on both rivers ○ Casserly discussion with Lantry • Massena Grasse River dam context (Tozzi) • Mike Seymour discussion (Tozzi) • Key stakeholders (City of Oberg, Town of Madrid, the list is growing) 	All	<p>TLAS conference call. Lantry fish studies. eDNA project. Massena LWRP and Don Lucas. Oswegatchie dam relicensing (Pyrites example), exact date/process. Estimated costs for ladder and passage. Fish Passage researchers: - Clarkson and Carleton profs River Institute</p>
5:45	Discuss speakers for EMC meetings		All	Invasive fish species expert.
5:50	Develop Pub. Service Announcements	This Committee will develop 3 PSAs per year on E+E topics (at least 1)	All	PSA thoughts for fish project.
5:55	Set date/time for next meeting	June 7, 2021 @ 5pm		
6:00	Adjourn			

Attendance: Bullock, Casserly, Smith, and Tozzi.
SRMT (Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe)

Bullock is unsure of his committee assignment(s), Casserly will check with Tenbusch.

TLAS ([Tunison Laboratory of Aquatic Science](#)) conference call, postponed, Smith and SRMT staff need to first talk with TLAS, and then we will reschedule at a later date.

Casserly talked about his phone call with Jana Lantry (DEC Region 6 Fisheries Manager).

- Lantry will soon share Oswegatchie- and Grasse River fish studies
- Lantry shared the contact information for her Canadian counterpart from Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, [Lake Ontario Management Unit](#), Steven McNevin. Casserly has contacted him with questions and McNevin is planning a detailed response.
- Lantry talked about Pacific salmon food source (alewife) depletion in Lake Ontario.
- Lantry said a risk assessment is needed with regards to potential Ogdensburg dam fish passage.
- Lantry talked about existing fish ladders in [Dexter and Glen Park on the Black River](#).

Smith said that the SRMT post dam removal fish studies are underway.

Bullock asked about confirmation that Pacific salmon are seen at the Madrid Dam, unofficially confirmed, yes. And, he repeated that the DEC is not interested in introducing Pacific salmon to the Grasse River.

Bullock talked about [St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management \(SLELO PRISM\) environmental DNA \(eDNA\) project](#) on tributaries of eastern Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. This project uses water samples to detect invasive species. Upcoming webinars can be found in the link.

Tozzi shared his conversation with Mike Seymour, a long-time local fishing guide and writer.

- The only salmon caught at the Madrid dam to date to the best of his knowledge are Pacific salmon.
- Others who would have a direct interest in the reintroduction of Atlantic salmon include TLAS (Tunison Labs) and the Mohawks on the St. Regis River.
- For Atlantic salmon [alone] a fish ladder would probably be a better seller to Madrid (he believes any encroachment on the dam would be resisted and the ladder presents the least encroachment).
- The DEC would probably support a move to reintroduce Atlantic salmon to the headwaters of the Grasse. According to Mike, the DEC has been trying to (or talking about) reintroduce Atlantic salmon into other rivers for years.

Casserly will share a Watertown Daily Times article about a recent meeting on [Massena's Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan \(LWRP\) for the Grasse River](#). Don Lucas, from [Muskie Magic Charters](#), is featured in the article

- The committee felt Lucas' plan for a series of small control dams is counterproductive to fish passage
- Casserly will contact Massena officials for more LWRP information and Lucas for his thoughts on fish passage.

Smith is still planning to contact Ogdensburg officials about their dam on the Oswegatchie.

Bullock asked about which fish species are using the current fishway at Eel Weir and Heuvelton on the Oswegatchie.

- Casserly will investigate.

Bullock asked if the DEC be open to fish passage at the Ogdensburg dam. The consensus is yes, however more information and data is needed for this site.

Casserly talked about another DEC contact, Jessica Hart (Permits and Environmental Analyst), with regards to permits for the existing fishways on the Oswegatchie. He will contact her.

Casserly said that it would be helpful to have an invasive (fish) species expert talk with the committee. The committee agrees.

- Options: SLELO PRISM, Tom Langen (Clarkson), Glenn Johnson (SUNY Potsdam), DEC.

Tozzi would like to see a resolution to this project and not continue to kick this can down the road. The committee agrees.

- Smith and Bullock talked about the upcoming Ogdensburg dam FERC relicensing process. It is a lengthy process and one result could be fish passage paid for by the dam lessee.
 - Casserly will provide relicensing timeline information.
- Smith talked about how it takes time for a volunteer group to gather the needed information to share with local stakeholders in Ogdensburg and Madrid.

6pm adjourn



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council Invasive Species Committee Meeting Tuesday May 11, 2021

Overview of the Invasive Species Committee.

- The Committee decided that the variety of “invasive species” topics is so large, that it might be best for this committee to work on specific areas.
 - Emerald Ash Borer
 - Eurasian Watermilfoil
 - Wild Parsnip
 - Others
-

Meeting started at 1:05 PM.

Present: Sue Rau, Chair. John Tenbusch attended as staff.

Report Re Black Lake.

Tenbusch reported that he had been contacted by Michelle Gallagher (officer with the Black Lake Association). She will be able to travel to SLC before the end of May; plans are being made to set up a meeting with her (and other BLA members?), and EMC members and Planning staff.

Rau volunteered to attend this meeting, if possible.

To-Do Project Items for 2021.

- Emerald Ash Borer. Rau and Tenbusch discussed the last EAB Task Force meeting, held April 15th.
- Spotted Lanternfly. No recent news.
- Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. No recent news.

Possible Speaker:

- Speaker on Tree of Heaven (Spotted Lanternfly).
- Rau again suggested Alex French and Ray Bowditch to discuss the community-wide composting project.
- Speaker on Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.

Public Service Announcement: Spotted Lanternfly and Tree of Heaven.

The meeting ended at 1:30 PM.



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council Watershed Management Committee Meeting Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Overview of *Watershed Management Committee*.

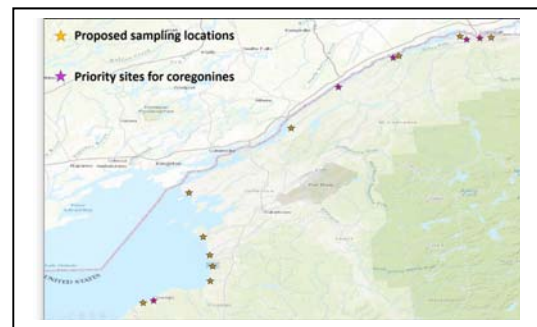
- This Committee has worked on a number of watershed questions/issues, including:
 - Development / promotion of riparian buffers
 - “No Mow Zones” / “Trees for Tribs”
 - Work with U.S.A. Corps of Engineers to bring Sediment Transport Analysis and Regional Trainning to local colleges, high schools, etc.
 - Stenciling storm drains to read: “Don’t Dump – Drains to River”
-

Meeting started at 4:03 PM.

Present: Brian Washburn, Chair; Herb Bullock. J. Tenbusch attended as staff.

Priority Projects for 2021.

- Discussion re: Black Lake. Tenbusch reported that he is working to set up a meeting in Canton on Friday May 14th with Michelle Gallagher and Mike Kotash of the Black River Association. Washburn volunteered to attend.
- Discussion re: SLELO PRISM project to investigate e-DNA of various species of fish in tributaries of the St. Lawrence River. There was an introductory Webinar in May; two additional Webinars will be held, in June and in August. The project will involve obtaining water samples during a period from August through November.



The Committee decided to attend the upcoming Webinars and then decide whether this project is appropriate for the EMC to participate in.

The Committee will invite someone from the Clarkson Great Rivers Institute to come to the July Committee meeting to discuss the project.

- Discussion re: Draft Rubric to analyze Financial Assistance for Invasive Species Control for Waterbodies.
 - The Committee will use the Draft Rubric at Friday’s mtg; present results to BOL OpsComm in June?

Potential Speakers.

- Daniel Kelting, Adk Watershed Institute
- Rep from the Black Lake Association

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.