

St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council
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MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday April 20, 2022 at 6:00 PM
2nd-Floor Conference Room, Public Safety Complex
49½ Court Street, Canton, NY

1. Call to Order

In the absence of the Chair, John Tenbusch called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Tenbusch read a Land Acknowledgement, provided by Tony David, SRMT Environment Division:

“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 NOT present.*

Members present: Herb Bullock; Tiernan Smith; Brian Washburn.

Members absent: Catherine Bennett, Chair; Dustin Bowman, Secretary; Joe Brant; Lucas Hanss; Richard Marshall; Sue Rau; Lance Rudiger; Nicole Terminelli; Rod Tozzi.

There are four vacancies.

Guests: Jon Montan; Olivia Sochia.

Staff: Dakota Casserly, Jason Pfothenauer, John Tenbusch.

4. Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business

a. Casserly and Tenbusch each had an item for new business.

b. Due to lack of quorum, the Order of Business was accepted by consensus.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the March 2022 EMC Meeting

Due to lack of quorum, the Minutes of the March EMC meeting could not be approved.

6. Comments from the Public / Speaker: The speaker was John Tenbusch, Planner II with the SLC Planning Office. John spoke about the Raquette River Advisory Council, the West Branch – St. Regis River Advisory Council, the newly-established Oswegatchie River Advisory Council, and the federal regulations regarding relicensing hydro facilities that caused these Advisory Councils to be established.

EMC: Everybody Must Care!

Tenbusch showed a list of FERC-regulated dams in St. Lawrence County; the list showed 19 active licenses (list from FERC eLibrary). He showed how three licenses (Upper, Middle and Lower Raquette River projects) include 14 dams.

Relicensing of hydro facilities is conducted by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

(FERC). Dams that produce electricity are granted licenses to do so by FERC; these licenses are for a set period of time (30-, 40-, 50-years). As the expiration date for a hydro license gets closer, FERC, the company that operates the subject hydro facility, and other stakeholders begin a process of negotiation before the license can be re-issued.

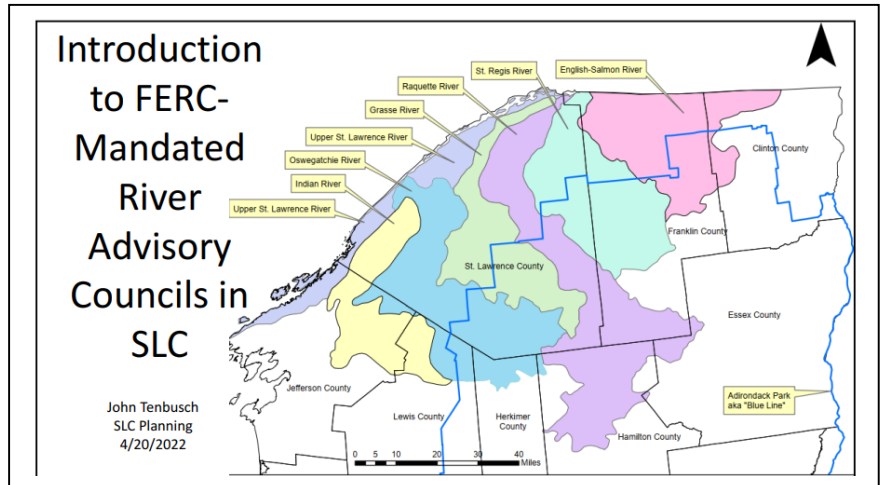
As an example, negotiations on the licenses for facilities on the Raquette River began with negotiations during the 1990s. By 1998 a Settlement Offer had been developed; new licenses were issued for the Upper, Middle, and Lower Raquette projects in 2002. These licenses will expire in 2033, so new negotiations can be expected to start later this decade.

Over time, the hydro facilities at Carry Falls, and Piercefield, have been included with the Raquette River project. Other dams on the Raquette River, including Sissonville and Yalerville as well as the hydro facility in the Village of Potsdam, are not part of the Raquette River FERC Project.

As part of the negotiations for relicensing, an Advisory Council was created. Members of the Advisory Council included those organizations that had participated in the relicensing negotiations. See graphic, at right, for a list of those organizations.

At the time that the Raquette River Advisory Council was established, the license-holder began to contribute \$5,000 per year into a fund that would be managed by DEC, and used for projects approved by the Advisory Council (\$500 per year for the Piercefield Project also goes into the fund). The project area was established as from “a point 10 miles upstream from the river’s mouth upstream (south) to Mile 89”; this was subsequently extended to Mile 93, when the Piercefield Project was included. The project area extends 1 mile on either side of the river.

Funding may be proposed for projects including ecosystem restoration and protection; natural resource stewardship; public education; facility management; applied research or development; new recreation resources; additional public access to recreational resources.



From Raquette River Settlement Offer, 3/13/1998:

1. RAQUETTE RIVER ADVISORY COUNCIL

At a minimum, the following entities shall be initially invited to form, via designating a representative to serve on, the Raquette River Advisory Council (RRAC), with service being conditioned on those entities listed below being signatories to the Settlement:

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation ("NYSDEC")
- Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, its successors and assigns ("NMPC")
- United States Fish & Wildlife Service ("USFWS")
- New York Rivers United ("NYRU")
- New York State Conservation Council ("NYSACC")
- Adirondack Mountain Club ("ADK")
- St. Lawrence County ("SLC")
- New York Council, Trout Unlimited ("NY/TU")
- American Whitewater Affiliation ("AWA")
- National Park Service ("NPS")
- Adirondack Park Agency ("APA")
- The Jordan Club
- North Country Raquette River Advocates ("NCCRA")

In addition, a representative of the local whitewater boating community and a local government representative will serve on the Whitewater Subcommittee and as members of the RRAC, as specified in Section 8.3.1.

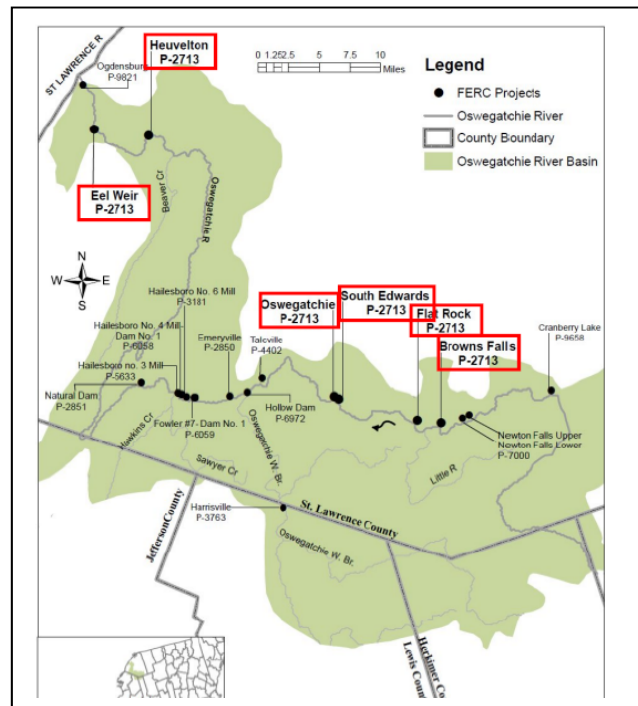
Over time, the license-holder, Brookfield Renewable Energy Group, has contributed approx. \$105,000 to this Raquette River fund. The Advisory Council has approved funds for 64 projects since 2005, for a total disbursement of \$65,000. Almost \$40,000 remains in the fund.

A similar process was involved when two hydro facilities on the West Branch of the St. Regis River were re-licensed. (These hydro facilities included the Parishville and the Allens Falls Projects.) An Offer of Settlement was produced in August 2001; the Advisory Council was set up by 2005. Interestingly, the Town of Parishville was included as a member of the Advisory Council. Ten projects have been funded, at a total cost of \$14,440; fund balance is currently \$5,560. Annual contributions from Brookfield equal \$750.

There is a significant difference between the Raquette River and the West Branch – St. Regis River Projects. Unlike the Raquette River Project, where Project boundaries were tightly defined, the St. Regis River Project area was declared to include “the St. Regis River basin between its confluence with the St. Lawrence River through its headwaters and within one mile of the river’s main stem banks, or the banks of the East and West branches.”

A similar process took place regarding re-licensing of dams on the Oswegatchie River. Negotiations began during the early 2000s, and an Offer of Settlement was put forth in January 2011. Six hydro facilities were included in the settlement negotiations; they are marked with red boxes on the map, right.

Starting in 2013, Brookfield began to contribute toward a fund that would be managed by DEC and spent on projects approved by an Oswegatchie River Advisory Council. The initial contribution was \$2,000. Subsequent contributions have included a 2% per year increase. The current balance of the Oswegatchie River Fund is \$17,120.



According to the Offer of Settlement for the Oswegatchie River (2011), the Project area for the Oswegatchie River Fund extends from the dam at Cranberry Lake downstream to its mouth at the St. Lawrence River, and within one mile of the river bank.

The Oswegatchie River Advisory Council has never been set up; DEC is just now in the process of establishing the Council. Stakeholders to the Settlement Agreement have been asked to approve the creation of the Advisory Council; once a majority of stakeholders have agreed, they will be asked to appoint representatives to the Council. At present, the County Board of Legislators is deciding whether to sign on to the Advisory Council.

After Tenbusch finished his presentation, Jon Montan reported that these Advisory Councils are not mandated by the FERC re-licensing process. Montan reported that Bruce Carpenter (New York Rivers United) had proposed the creation of a fund that would address environmental and recreational needs in Project areas. These have become more commonplace, but they are still not required by FERC.

Montan also spoke about a proposal to establish two put-in and take-out locations to provide recreational boaters access to the Oswegatchie River, in the Oxbow area of Gouverneur and Rossie. This would create a five-mile canoe/kayak route that would only require one car for transport.



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

No report.

8. Report of the Committees

- a. **Executive Committee.** No meeting was held.
- b. **Conservation of Resources Committee.** See attached report.
 - Dakota Casserly gave the report.
- c. **Environment & Economy Committee.** See attached report.
 - Casserly gave the report.
- d. **Invasive Species Committee.** See attached report.
 - Tenbusch gave the report.
- e. **Watershed Management Committee.** See attached report.
 - Brian Washburn gave the report. He had attended a two-day Advisory Committee meeting of the Fish Enhancement, Mitigation and Research Fund.

9. Report of the Staff

- Tenbusch reported that the Planning Office has undergone project monitoring from the NYS Office of Community Renewal to review its administration of two CDBG awards: Direct Homeownership Assistance Program (DHAP 23) and Countywide Housing Rehabilitation Program (CHRP 3). We are pleased to report that we received clean bills of health for both projects.
- Tenbusch also reported that he had made a presentation about Emerald Ash Borers to the Environment Club at SUNY Potsdam. This was part of that group's "Earth Week" series of events.
- Casserly reported that St. Lawrence University will hold its Sustainability Day event April 22-23. The keynote speaker on Friday will be Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of the book "*Braiding Sweetgrass*".
- Casserly also reported that the Youth Advisory Board will hold its annual "Trash Dash". Volunteers are needed.

10. **Unfinished Business.** None.

11. **New Business.**

- Tenbusch reported that the Board of Legislators has requested that the EMC develop “an opinion” concerning nuclear energy as part of the energy mix as the region and state proceed into a fossil-fuel-free future.
- Tenbusch also reported that the BOL has requested information about the environmental costs and life expectancy of solar panels.
- Lance Rudiger reported that DEC had collaborated with SRMT, NYS Museum and others to help restore freshwater mussels in the Grasse River. He noted that this restoration work was groundbreaking.
- Casserly reported that the SLC Multi-Use Trails Coordinator has asked the EMC to write a letter supporting the inclusion of Multi-Use Trails as part of the Rocky Ridge UMP. There was discussion about how the EMC might draft such a letter on short notice. Those EMC members in attendance all agreed that such a letter would be would be appropriate.



12. **Announcements**

- Tenbusch announced that the next Household Hazardous Waste collection event will be held in Canton (80 SH 310) on Saturday May 21st, from 9 am – 1 pm. Volunteers from the EMC will be needed to help direct traffic.
 - Tenbusch noted that the EMC started the HHW collection effort in the North Country; the first event in the County was held in October 2006.

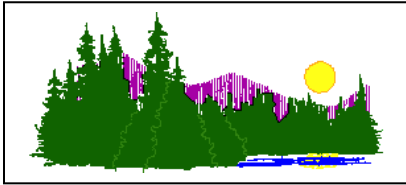
13. **Message to Board of Legislators.** None

14. **Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm by consensus.

Respectfully submitted,

Dustin Bowman, Secretary

Minutes prepared by John Tenbusch



SLC EMC Action Item Agenda for Conservation of Resources Committee

Members: C. Bennett; D Bowman; L Hanss; R. Marshall; S. Rau

STAFF: Dakota Casserly **Guest:**

Meeting Date: **Wednesday April 13, 2022 at 5:00 PM via Zoom**

Time	Item	Outcome	Responsibility	Next Steps / Notes
5:00pm	Meeting starts	Join Zoom Meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81820123194?pwd=NINJSjRFdThaSU1OTFBnSthJcUpsZz09 Meeting ID: 818 2012 3194 Passcode: 868437 One tap mobile: +19292056099, Meeting ID: 818 2012 3194 Passcode: 868437		
5:05	Review Report of last committee meeting (March 2022)		All	
5:10	Discuss Priority Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Crisis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ NYS Climate Act Scoping Plan comments - Update • Working with Youth Advisory Board - Update • Organic Pollinator Garden Project - Update • Wise use of resources - table • Conservation of flora/fauna - table 	All	
5:40	Discuss speakers for EMC meetings (1-3 speakers per year)		All	
5:45	Discuss ideas for EMC Public Service Announcements	This Committee will develop 1-3 PSAs per year on CR topics	All	
5:50	Set date/time for next mtg.	Next Mtg: May 11, 2022		
5:55pm	Adjourn			

Attendance: Dakota Casserly (DC), Dustin Bowman (DB)

NYS Climate Scoping Plan

- DB is working on draft comments with CRC members. DC will remind them to complete.
- Deadline to submit: 6/10/22 (this was extended).

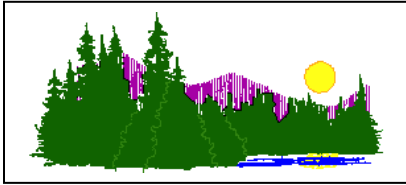
Pollinator Garden

- DB, we will continue planning the project and coordinate with stakeholders/neighbor property owners.
 - Coordination with John Elmer (neighbor) and the Town of Canton is ongoing.
- DB, Nicki Hamilton-Honey at Cornell Coop would like to coordinate volunteers for this project.
- DC, will provide cones and vests for volunteers for site safety.

- Promotional material, site plan and other material will be created by the committee to share.

DB suggested a lending library for EMC literature.

Adjourn @ 5:58



SLC EMC: Agenda for Environment + Economy Committee

Members: Herb Bullock; Rick Marshall; Tiernan Smith (Chair); Rod Tozzi

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

Meeting Date: Wednesday, April 13, 2022 at 6:00 PM via Zoom

Time	Item	Outcome	Responsibility	Next Steps
6:00 PM	Meeting starts	Join Zoom Meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81820123194?pwd=NINJSjRFdThaSU1OTFBnSThJcUpsZz09 Meeting ID: 818 2012 3194 Passcode: 868437 One tap mobile: +19292056099, Meeting ID: 818 2012 3194 Passcode: 868437		
6:05	Review Report of Last Committee Meeting (March 2022)		All	
6:10	Priority Projects for 2022			
	Fish Ladders/Passage Project on the Grasse and Oswegatchie Rivers.	PSA - Follow up		
	DEC Deer Management Program	Preparation/Update (All)		
	Ogdensburg dam FERC relicensing	5/31/22 - Plan to track/participate in the project.		
	Road salt	Speaker for May		
	Recreation	SLC Snowmobile economic impact		
6:45	Discuss speakers for EMC meetings	DEC Deer Management Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Lydon (DEC), postponed until in person • Chris Navitsky (Lake George Association), May 18 	All	
6:50	Develop Pub. Service Announcements	This Committee will develop 1-3 PSAs per year on E+E topics	All	
6:55	Set date/time for next meeting	Next Mtg: May 11, 2022		
7:00	Adjourn			

Attendance: Dakota Casserly (DC), Herb Bullock (HB), Tiernan Smith (TS), Rod Tozzi (RT)

HB, Tony David's (SRMT) talk about the Hogansburg dam removal and Grasse River Remediation Project at SLU. Hosted by St. Lawrence Land Trust.

TS, SLR tributaries (Grasse, Raquette, St. Regis, and Salmon Rivers) are all within in a 5 mi stretch. DC checked, it's about 14 miles.

Fish Ladder:

- DC shared Brad Baldwin's (SLU Biology Prof) response to the fish ladder PSA.
- TS, lampreys' could get about a dam as a hitchhiker on a fish or from a bird.
- HB asked to have PSA responses shared with this committee and the EMC when they are received.
- RT, Pacific salmon have been seen at the dam in Madrid, TS thinks maybe King salmon. It is possible that salmon from Lake Ontario travel down the SLR and pass through Long Sault Dam or Eisenhower Lock, and then up the Grasse River to the Madrid dam.

Deer Management

- HB would like to ask Tenbusch about a possible Meals on Wheels partnership with processing venison from with regards to NYS Deer Management Program.
- DC will continue to reach out to stakeholders (DEC and other organizations) to find a speaker.

Speakers: Scott Schlueter, USFWS, June; Chris Navitsky, Lake George Association, May; Deb Christie, St. Lawrence Trails, November.

- HB talked about the EMC supporting BOL's resolution for expanded ATV/UTV access in the Cranberry Lake area. **DC will assemble supporting info and BOL resolution.**

Open Meetings suggestion for the 4/20 meeting, HB would like to attend via Zoom.

TS, Oswegatchie Blueway update, what is the status, **DC will check.**

- <https://ogdensburg.org/DocumentCenter/View/1767/Final-Oswegatchie-Blueway-Trail-Plan?bidId=>
- <https://www.ogdensburg.org/DocumentCenter/View/1770/OswegatchieBluewayTrail-Guidebook?bidId=>
- https://www.nny360.com/news/blueway-trail-ideas-solicited/article_57e64a66-32f3-5d5e-b063-91fc931b24b1.html#tncms-source=login

Oswegatchie River Advisory Board

- Tenbusch will address at the April EMC meeting.
- Committee members would like a better understanding of the process and how it works.
- [Raquette River Ad Council \(RRAC\)](#)

Adjourn @ 6:54 pm



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council Invasive Species Committee Meeting Tuesday, April 12, 2022

Meeting started at 5:01 PM.

Present: Brian Washburn. John Tenbusch attended as staff.

Review Previous Committee Meeting Reports. No comments on the previous meeting report.

Review Activities re Milfoil at Black Lake

- John Tenbusch reported that he has not heard from the consultant hired by the Town of Oswegatchie to conduct a lake management study of Black Lake
- Tenbusch reported that he has had difficulties getting representatives from each of the Towns surrounding Black Lake to volunteer on a working group concerning the Lake.
 - To date, one town (Macomb) has provided a name and contact information.

Comprehensive Management Plan for Invasive Species in SLC.

- Tenbusch reported that he had compiled the lists of invasive species compiled by the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP; covers that portion of the County inside the Adk Park), and the St. Lawrence-Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO-PRISM; covers the rest of the County). **See attached.**
 - A total of 78 invasive species are listed, with some species listed by both groups.
 - 27 invasive species are listed by both groups.
 - o Of these, 11 invasive species have been assigned to the same Tier by both groups.
 - o 16 invasive species are listed by both groups, but have been assigned to different Tiers.
 - Tiers include:
 - o Tier 1: Prevention / Early Detection Species
 - o Tier 2: Eradication Species
 - o Tier 3: Suppression Species
 - o Tier 4: Local Control Species
 - o Tier 5: Monitor
 - Eurasian Watermilfoil and Emerald Ash Borer are listed by both groups as Tier 4, “considered too widespread to eradicate. High priority resources, like rare plant or recreation assets, are protected through localized management strategies.”
 - Water chestnut is only listed as an invasive species by SLELO PRISM.
 - o It is listed as Tier 3, “considered too widespread for eradication although some areas remain unaffected. Infestations found within Priority Conservation Areas are targeted.”
 - o ***It should be noted that SLELO PRISM will be leading an effort on June 25, 2022 to remove water chestnut from the Oswegatchie River between Eel Weir State Park and the Village of Heuvelton.***

- Volunteers are needed sign up here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1VXc6xeT1dhjRv4wrXd_U4dJecXG8YIUEFw1YqkuZY14/viewform?edit_requested=true&fbclid=IwAR3wxonsXK1ynQFgJ0rh6r-HsPq2f2aRg2xFySIDxboSaLxAL9493oiUrC8
 - More details regarding logistics will be emailed to the address you provide as the event approaches.
 - Please contact Megan.Pistolese@tnc.org with any questions.
- The New York State Invasive Species Tiers table lists 497 entries (<https://www.nynhp.org/invasives/species-tiers-table/>). These can be sorted by geographic region; by taxa type (terrestrial or aquatic; plant, animal; microorganism); and by Tier.
 - Tenbusch will contact the NY Natural Heritage Program to get the list in spreadsheet format.
 - The Committee will continue to look for lists of invasive species of concern to agriculture.
 - Ag & Markets
 - Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - SLC Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board
 - It was suggested that the County will need to coordinate with local groups and “citizen scientists” to address invasives in their communities.
 - It was suggested that this would be a good Public Service Announcement (PSA) from the Committee.

The meeting ended at 5:25 PM.

Meeting report prepared by John Tenbusch

Invasive Species:
Listed by Tiers by APIPP and/or SLELO

PRISM	Species	Tier
Tier 1: Prevention		
APIPP	Eurasian Boar	1
APIPP	Porcelain Berry	1
APIPP	Quagga Mussel	1
APIPP	Rusty Crayfish	1
APIPP	Wineberry	
SLELO	Asian Carp - several species	1
SLELO	Kudzu	1
SLELO	Mile-A-Minute Vine	1
SLELO	Spiny Waterflea	1
SLELO	Water Hyacinth	1
SLELO	Water Lettuce	1
SLELO	Water Soldier	1
SLELO	APIPP Asian Longhorned Beetle	1
SLELO	APIPP Slender False Brome	1
SLELO	APIPP Spotted Lanternfly	1
SLELO	APIPP Hydrilla	1
Tier 2: Eradication		
APIPP	Japanese Angelica Tree	2
APIPP	Japanese Stiltgrass	2
APIPP	Mile-A-Minute Vine	2
APIPP	Scotch Broom	2
APIPP	Tree of Heaven	2
APIPP	Water Chestnut	2
SLELO	Asian Clam	2
SLELO	Bloody Red Shrimp (Hemimysis)	
SLELO	Fanwort	
SLELO	Porcelain Berry	
SLELO	Tench	
SLELO	APIPP Giant Hogweed	2
Tier 3: Containment / Supression		
APIPP	Asian Clam	3
APIPP	Cup Plant	3
APIPP	European Frog-bit	3
APIPP	Fanwort	3
APIPP	Fishhook Waterflea	3
APIPP	Jumping Worm	3
APIPP	Lesser Celandine	3
APIPP	Spiny Waterflea	3
APIPP	Zebra Mussel	3

Invasive Species:
Listed by Tiers by APIPP and/or SLELO

SLELO		Buckthorn (Common and Glossy)	3
SLELO		Japanese Knotweed	3
SLELO		Japanese Stiltgrass	3
SLELO		Oriental Bittersweet	3
SLELO		Phragmites	3
SLELO		Rusty Crayfish	3
SLELO		Starry Stonewort	3
SLELO		Tree of Heaven	3
SLELO		Water Chestnut	3
SLELO		Wild Chervil	3
SLELO		Yellow Iris	3
SLELO	APIPP	Hemlock Woolly Adelgid	3
SLELO	APIPP	Swallow-wort (several species)	3

Tier 4: Supression / Localized Control

	APIPP	Autumn Olive	4
	APIPP	Bittersweet	4
	APIPP	Bush Honeysuckles	4
	APIPP	Buckthorn (Common and Glossy)	4
	APIPP	Common Reed Grass	4
SLELO	APIPP	Curly-leaf Pondweed	4
SLELO	APIPP	Emerald Ash Borer	4
SLELO	APIPP	Eurasian Watermilfoil	4
	APIPP	Garlic Mustard	4
	APIPP	Japanese Barberry	4
	APIPP	Japanese Tree Lilac	4
	APIPP	Knotweed (several varieties)	4
	APIPP	Multi-flora Rose	4
	APIPP	Norway Maple	4
SLELO	APIPP	Purple Loosestrife	4
	APIPP	Reed Canarygrass	4
	APIPP	Variable-leaf Milfoil	4
	APIPP	Winged Burning Bush	4
	APIPP	Yellow Iris	4
SLELO		Asian Clam	4
SLELO		European Frog-bit	4
SLELO		Feral Swine	4
SLELO		Leafy Spurge	4
SLELO		Round Goby	4
SLELO		Spotted Knapweed	4
SLELO		Wild Parsnip	4
SLELO		Zebra Quagga Mussels	4

Tier 5: Monitor

SLELO		Jumping Worm	5
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Invasive Species:
Listed by both APIPP and SLELO

	PRISM	Species	Tier
SLELO	APIPP	Asian Longhorned Beetle	1
SLELO	APIPP	Slender False Brome	1
SLELO	APIPP	Spotted Lanternfly	1
SLELO	APIPP	Hydrilla	1
SLELO	APIPP	Giant Hogweed	2
SLELO	APIPP	Hemlock Woolly Adelgid	3
SLELO	APIPP	Swallow-wort (several species)	3
SLELO	APIPP	Curly-leaf Pondweed	4
SLELO	APIPP	Emerald Ash Borer	4
SLELO	APIPP	Eurasian Watermilfoil	4
SLELO	APIPP	Purple Loosestrife	4
	APIPP	Asian Clam	3
SLELO		Asian Clam	4
SLELO		Buckthorn (Common and Glossy)	3
	APIPP	Buckthorn (Common and Glossy)	4
	APIPP	European Frog-bit	3
SLELO		European Frog-bit	4
	APIPP	Fanwort	3
SLELO		Fanwort	
	APIPP	Eurasian Boar	1
SLELO		Feral Swine	4
SLELO		Japanese Knotweed	3
	APIPP	Knotweed (several varieties)	4
	APIPP	Japanese Stiltgrass	2
SLELO		Japanese Stiltgrass	3
	APIPP	Jumping Worm	3
SLELO		Jumping Worm	5
SLELO		Mile-A-Minute Vine	1
	APIPP	Mile-A-Minute Vine	2

Invasive Species:
Listed by both APIPP and SLELO

	APIPP	Porcelain Berry	1
SLELO		Porcelain Berry	
	APIPP	Rusty Crayfish	1
SLELO		Rusty Crayfish	3
SLELO		Spiny Waterflea	1
	APIPP	Spiny Waterflea	3
	APIPP	Tree of Heaven	2
SLELO		Tree of Heaven	3
	APIPP	Water Chestnut	2
SLELO		Water Chestnut	3
SLELO		Yellow Iris	3
	APIPP	Yellow Iris	4
	APIPP	Zebra Mussel	3
SLELO		Zebra Quagga Mussels	4



Tier 1

Prevention/Early Detection Spp.

Not in PRISM, but within 100 mile buffer or introduction pathway exists. Highest level of early detection survey efforts.

Tier 2

Eradication

Present in PRISM, but at low abundance making eradication feasible within Priority Conservation Areas (PCA's).

Tier 3

Suppression

Too widespread for eradication from PRISM. Targeted management to suppress the population within Priority Conservation Areas (PCA's).



Tier 4

Local Control

Present / widespread throughout PRISM with no chance of eradication. Localized, landowner mgnt applied to protect high priority resources like rare plant or recreation

Tier 5

Monitor - Species that may or may not be in PRISM but are difficult to respond to or that require more knowledge of.





St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council Watershed Management Committee Meeting Tuesday, April 12, 2022

The meeting started at 4:01 PM.

Present: Brian Washburn, Chair, WMC. John Tenbusch attended as staff.

Review Previous Committee Meeting Report. No comments.

Discussion of Black Lake Milfoil Project.

- John Tenbusch reported that he has not heard from the consultant hired by the Town of Oswegatchie to conduct a lake management study of Black Lake. Tenbusch noted that the original MOU for that study had stated that a draft report would be issued sometime in March, 2022, and public meetings on the study would happen after that.
 - Tenbusch also reported that, when he had last spoken to the consultant, the consultant said that he would be presenting his findings re Black Lake at the NYS Federation of Lake Associations (NYSFOLA) annual conference, to be held in Lake George on April 29-30. (<https://nysfola.org/annual-conference/>)
 - The consultant is on the conference schedule to present on Saturday, 4/30.
 - Tenbusch has received permission from the County to attend that conference.
- Tenbusch reported that he has had difficulties getting representatives from each of the Towns surrounding Black Lake to volunteer on a working group concerning the Lake.
 - Tenbusch and Dakota Casserly had made presentations at each Town's Board meeting during November/December, and asked each town to designate at least one person who could report back to the Town Board what the working group was doing.
 - When no towns had responded since November/December, Tenbusch contacted each Town during early April, and repeated his request.
 - o To date, one town (Macomb) has provided a name and contact information.

Discussion of FEMRF Fish Advisory Committee Meeting

- Brian Washburn reported that he had attended (via ZOOM) a two-day meeting of the Fish Enhancement, Mitigation and Research Fund (FEMRF) Fish Advisory Committee, held March 22-23. **See attached report by B Washburn.**
 - FEMRF was established in 2005 as part of the Settlement Agreement reached in the re-licensing of the St. Lawrence – FDR Power Project. **See FEMRF Fact Sheet, attached.**
 - Partner organizations on the FEMRF Fish Advisory Committee include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs; U.S. Geological Survey; NYS DEC; Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; NYPA; St. Regis Mohawk Tribe; St. Lawrence Discovery Center; St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council.
 - o Originally funded at \$24 million, the Fund currently has an unexpended balance of approx. \$13 million.
 - Washburn reported on current and proposed projects as discussed at the meeting in March.

The meeting concluded at 4:55 PM. Meeting report drafted by John Tenbusch

Report

USFWS Fisheries Enhancement, Mitigation, and Research Fund (FEMRF)

Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) Meeting

March 22 and 23, 2022

Brian Washburn

SLC-EMC

General Comments

- Participants were extremely knowledgeable in fisheries science with representation from NYSDEC, USFWS, USGS, NYPA, Environment Canada, SUNY-ESF Thousand Island Biological Station (TIBS), SRMT, IJC and the Thousand Island Land Trust (TILT)
- The meeting was comprised of research updates and evaluation and recommendations by FAC of research proposals for 2022
- The research updates clearly indicated a significant amount of research is being conducted on the St. Lawrence River and its tributaries. A presentation to the EMC with respect to the amount, the complexity, and the areas of research interest would be beneficial. Scott Schleuter of USFWS, who led the meeting, has graciously volunteered to present to the EMC the research that has taken place, is currently undertaken, and is planned for the St. Lawrence and its tributaries.
- The general foci of the research are restoration of native fish populations focusing on muskellunge, northern pike, walleye pike, and American eel as well as invasives. The restoration deals primarily with spawning habitat restoration.

Research Updates

- SUNY-ESF-FHCS and Muskellunge Propagation: John Farrell, director of TIBS, presented a number of research projects being conducted at TIBS. TIBS is a significant research site for fisheries doctoral candidates from SUNY ESF. The majority of the presentation dealt with the decline and recovery of muskellunge primarily in the upper St. Lawrence River (Thousand Islands) where viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHSV) decimated the population. The TI region is the major spawning area in the St. Lawrence watershed. When asked about muskellunge in the lower St. Lawrence it was stated although spawning habitats exist in the lower St. Lawrence they are less plentiful than the TI region and the fish in the lower St. Lawrence have been impacted less by VHSV. It was postulated a significant vector for VHSV are Round Gobies. Propagation of muskellunge stocking cohorts and PIT tagging were presented. The breeding stock used was supplied by USFWS and was captured in Lake St. Lawrence downstream from the Iroquois Water Control Dam (IWCD). Northern pike habitat restorations were also addressed.
- USGS Lake Sturgeon Spawning Habitat Evaluation: USGS evaluated four lake sturgeon spawning sites at IWCD and downstream from the Massena hydro facilities (two each). For IWCD the sites were above and below the structure. The downstream sites from the Massena hydro facilities were in bad condition with water velocity a significant factor. The IWCD sites especially the upstream site, are considered to be in “good” condition. Additionally, numerous sites

downstream from IWCD have been evaluated for appropriate substrate for lake sturgeon spawning

- USFWS Project Updates
 - Tributary Culvert Assessment along NYS Rout 37. In two locations NYSDOT has reinstalled drainage culverts which fail to meet standards for migration of northern pike to available spawning grounds specifically the downstream drop (culvert lip to downstream water level). Mitigation alternatives for the sites were presented.
 - Sturgeon Stocking Project in conjunction with NYPA
 - American Eel Project: It was stated that 40% of the eel population are being killed by the turbines at Massena and Hydro Quebec's facility downstream. A project to estimate the population of American eel traversing the IWCD is underway. The study site is slightly upstream from the IWCD.
- SUNY Potsdam Mooneye Project: The research conducted in 2021 of potential spawning sites for mooneye in the Oswegatchie River upstream from the Heuvelton dam, upstream from the Eel Wier dam and the Indian River at Rossie was presented. Since mooneye spawn in riffle areas the study concentrated on the flat rock area along River Road upstream from the Heuvelton impoundment, a riffle area near Rensselaer Falls, and Coopers Falls. Capture methods were evaluated and recommendations made. When asked about access to the Rensselaer Falls site and the Coopers Falls site it was stated no access was allowed through private property. Note the sampling is best conducted near sunset. For the Rensselaer Falls site the boat had to be launched along River Road and travelled approximately 3 miles to the site. For the Coopers Falls site the boat had to be put in at Kendrew Corners. Many questions were asked by "fisheries people".

Funding Proposals

- SUNY Potsdam 2022 Mooneye Proposal (\$8,229 requested with \$12,822 matching): Considerable discussion arose over techniques and equipment with emphasis on the electrofishing boat. Proposal was approved with several stipulations.
- Clarkson University Mooneye Population Ecology/Conservation Plan (\$116,797 requested with \$65,892 matching): Clarkson University has requested funding of a mooneye population and conservation plan to be developed by a Masters program student. A similar proposal was made in 2021 and approved, however no graduate student was successfully recruited. That proposal as well as the 2022 proposal stipulate if the recruitment was unsuccessful FEMRF funding would be withheld. Considerable discussion occurred about the skillset the student needed prior to the beginning of the project as well as the fisheries experience of faculty in area institutions. The skillset for success of the project is extensive. Furthermore, the proposal stated recruitment would be restricted to Clarkson baccalaureate students and Clarkson does not have a fisheries degree program which would provide a major portion of the needed skillset. The budget for the proposal was stated as being appropriate and was approved with the stipulations that the admissions would be open and not restricted to Clarkson students, and Scott Schleuter of USFWS was to be involved in the evaluation of candidate applications.
- SUNY-ESF-FHCS Citizen Science and Musky Management Project (\$27,631 request): Proposal was for equipment and materials to create/maintain a muskellunge hatchery at TIBS and a

citizen scientist muskellunge surveillance program in conjunction with Canada. The proposal stated that TIBS has encountered difficulties in procuring muskellunge for stocking and wished to do the rearing. The muskellunge released will be PIT tagged. In conjunction with several muskellunge conservation organizations a group of vetted musky fishers (10 from each country) will be recruited and supplied with a test kit to include a PIT tag detection instrument, measuring equipment, genetic material collection supplies, and PIT tag insertion equipment for untagged muskellunge collected. Considerable discussion arose concerning what would be the vetting criteria. The proposal was approved with several modifications to the budget. FEMRF would retain ownership of the testing kits as well as supply materials for the hatchery at costs below the proposal's budget.

- TILT-FREMF Water Control Infrastructure Maintenance Program (\$34,485 requested): TILT owns two marsh spawning areas which have water control structures and fish migration structures both of which were at least partially funded by FEMRF. A maintenance plan was developed by TIBS, however TILT did not plan for the maintenance nor has the funding to institute the plan. A significant problem with the structures is beaver and muskrat damage. The proposal was for three years of expanded maintenance. The proposal was approved with TILT to secure funding for year number 4. The only issue raised was funding for maintenance beyond the proposal.
- TILT- Mullet Creek Conservation Implementation Plan (\$398,000 requested with \$140,604 matching): The proposal was for the development of conservation easements and the purchase of 225 acres of land adjacent to Mullet Creek. The driving force for the funding proposal is the apparent development pressure and the rapidly increasing land value in the Alexandria Bay area. A lengthy discussion of the development pressure as well as any restrictions TILT would place on the land, i.e. solar and wind projects, occurred. Most of the land purchases are upstream and are currently in agricultural use. Loss of high-quality agricultural land was brought into the discussion. The proposal had a significant shortcoming in there was no evidence presented those agricultural activities are negatively impacting the water quality of Mullet Creek and must be addressed in the formal proposal. The proposal was approved. A significant discussion transpired with the recommendation TILT make another proposal to acquire two environmentally sensitive lands. At the mouth of Mullet Creek as it drains into Blind Bay TILT owns the southern shore area. Blind Bay is a significant spawning habitat. Border Protection Services is planning to built a major facility on the northern shoreline to include dredging of Blind Bay to accommodate dockage for its enforcement flotilla. It was asked if an EIA or EIS had been prepared and it was stated it had been prepared and approved. The second property is known as the Garlock parcel. The shoreline area of this parcel has had significant funding for habitat restoration by a number of agencies as well as Ducks Unlimited.

New York Field Office

Fish Enhancement, Mitigation, and Research Fund

USFWS



St Lawrence wetlands

Establishment of the FEMRF

The 24 million dollar Fish Enhancement, Mitigation, and Research Fund (FEMRF) was established as part of the Settlement Agreement reached in the licensing of the St. Lawrence-Franklin D. Roosevelt Power Project (Project), operated by the New York Power Authority, near Massena, NY. The FEMRF is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) serving as the Trustee for the fund. The purpose of the FEMRF is to benefit fisheries resources in the Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River Basin and to continue research on the American eel and other species that may be affected by the Project.

Fisheries Advisory Committee

The FEMRF Agreement also established a Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC). The Service will consult with members of the FAC prior to authorizing any proposals to be funded. Members of the FAC may also serve as a conduit for proposals to the Service. Members of the FAC are:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
- U.S. Geological Survey
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- New York Power Authority
- St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

USFWS



Osprey

- St. Lawrence Discovery Center
- St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council

Proposals for funding

In pursuit of the purpose of the FEMRF, the Service is seeking proposals that address five criteria:

1. Projects in the Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River Basin with benefits to multiple species;
2. Projects in the Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River Basin to benefit declining species, species of special concern, species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), or candidate species for listing under the ESA;
3. Research determined by the Service to be necessary to support upstream or downstream passage of fish at the (New York Power Authority's) Project;
4. Projects in Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River Basin waters to benefit species of ecological or economic importance;
5. Projects in Canadian waters with benefits to species of international importance or concern.

Enhancement, restoration or preservation proposals should incorporate benefits to aquatic habitats and/or wetlands, such as, restoration of buffers to lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands and enhancement of spawning, nursery and migratory habitats to benefit fisheries resources.

Research proposals should support upstream or downstream passage of fish at the New York Power Authority's Project.

Proposals that may be solicited for target areas of interest will be announced on the New York Field Office website at <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/nyfo>.

Restoration ecologists, conservation organizations, researchers, and academic institutions in the Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River Basin and members of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe are especially encouraged to apply.

Submission of Proposals

Go to <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/nyfo/FEMRF/femrfproposals.htm> to access an electronic form for submitting proposals with instructions on using it and for news about proposals that have been funded.

**For more information contact
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