



Niantic River Watershed Committee

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Niantic River Watershed Coordinator's Report

November 7, 2019

Good evening,

Following is a summary of my activities since the October meeting.

Outreach/Education: I attended the Niantic River Nitrogen Work Group meeting on Oct. 7th. Also on Oct. 7th I accompanied Waterford High School teacher Diane Herr and her class to Jordan Brook to conduct water quality sampling. I've updated the website and our new Facebook page regarding the workshop and other NRWC activities. I was contacted by Waterford High School teacher Mike O'Connor, who has a student who is interested in doing a water quality project on the Niantic River. I was also contacted by Claudia Bochard at the Dual Language Arts Magnet School, who was looking for Niantic watershed-related teaching materials. I've been invited to speak at the East Lyme Public Trust Foundation's annual meeting on Nov. 18th. I will be participating in the 2019-2020 University of CT Conservation Ambassador Program, serving as a community mentor for a watershed high school student who is enrolled in the program. Planning continues for the Community Based Social Marketing workshop, which is a follow-up to the LISS CBSM Niantic River behavior change campaign. The tentative 2-day workshop date is Apr. 28-29, 2020 at the Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport.

Monitoring: On Nov. 1st, Maureen Fitzgerald and I collected RBV samples at two sites on Oil Mill Brook in Waterford; one just south of the RT 395 overpass at Oil Mill Road, and the second downstream of the confluence with Willys Meadow Brook. We collected a good sample from both sites, with 7 most-wanted at the RT 395 site and 6 most-wanted at the 2nd site. Maureen and I hope to get out to collect a sample from Willys Meadow Brook in the next few weeks (RBV season ends on Nov. 30th). Diane Herr from Waterford High School submitted the RBV sample she and her students collected from Jordan Brook to me. They believe they identified four most-wanted. I've also discussed the potential to partner with STR to conduct bacteria sampling in the tributaries or at stormwater outfalls to identify bacteria discharges to the Niantic River. I'll be participating in a conference call on Nov. 13th to review the draft Niantic River Data Synthesis report in preparation for finalizing the report and closing out the data synthesis project.

NRWPP Update: I have been coordinating with Fuss & O'Neill to plan and facilitate the watershed stakeholder workshop, which was very successfully held on Oct. 29th. I will provide more detail on the Agenda item for this project. I was contacted by a faculty member at the US Coast Guard Academy, who is interested in partnering with us to conduct resiliency planning projects with junior and senior cadets. As part of their program requirements, the students must work with community partners to develop climate resiliency projects. I've shared this information with Fuss & O'Neill, in the event that the student outcomes can be incorporated into the NRWPP update.

Grants: I am very pleased to announce that we have been awarded funding through the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Long Island Sound Futures Fund (NFWF LISFF) grant program to continue and expand upon the lawn fertilizer reduction behavior change pilot project. The contract should be executed in early 2020, just in time for fertilizer season.

The Community Foundation of Eastern CT has announced their 2019 environmental grant round. Proposals are due on January 13, 2020. The Environmental Professionals of CT (EPOC) have announced their annual grant round, which is due on March 15, 2020. Either of these grants could be used to fund water quality sampling/bacterial analysis projects.

Water Quality Improvement Projects: There are no active water quality improvement projects at present.

Staff hours: In October, I worked approximately 75.5 hours on Niantic River Watershed Committee business and projects. Of that, about 29 hours were for core NRWC activities (administration, outreach and monitoring activities) and about 46.5 hours were applied to the Watershed Plan Update.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Judy Rondeau", is written over a light yellow rectangular highlight.

Judy Rondeau
Watershed Coordinator