

Draft meeting notes for DCC Meeting Monday, December 4th, 2023 @
7pm

Location: Town Hall Meeting

Vange Morse, Bridget Ferrin, Barb Hubrugste, Jake Langmaid , Dawn Foy, Emily Finnegan, District Manager of Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District (NRCD)

1. Approved November minutes
2. Discuss Progress on, and Update Roger Lot To-To Lists
 - Kiosks - we have the posts in!
 - Kieth moved the Roger Lot gate back!!
 - Plowing? - Need to contact the selectboard to ask if we can have the entrance plowed.
3. Welcome to Emily Finnegan, District Manager
4. Danville is in one of 14 conservation districts in VT, and Emily covers Caledonia County, they have 1-4 staff people per district. Mostly what they do is act as project managers to help to secure grant funding, and agriculture outreach (nutrient management and planning), help farmers leverage funding to help with projects of this type, Caledonia has historically done a lot of work with stormwater infrastructure focusing on green measures. They just finished a project in St. J regarding the gravel parking lot near the town forest.

They have also assisted with a culvert replacement in Danville. Their funding is tied to fish passage, so doing culverts for that purpose, and water quality. Riparian plantings, etc. which requires a lot of legwork.

The river corridor plan was done by Emilys predecessor. They have changed the way they do plans now, because the previous plans did not contact the landowners to see how feasible some of the plans were that they came up with. Emily has not done much work on the Water Andric. Its her understanding that the Water Andric is on the

edge of water quality standards being met. Mainly because of the wastewater plant and soil erosion conditions above the plant.

Emily has been looking at the weirs on the sleeper river. 4 out of 16 weirs are still being utilized. And they impact fish movement and flow. So they prioritized the removal of the weirs based on certain criteria. They have to figure out which ones would create the most impact if they were taken out, and what are the implications. There are some safety concerns with having some of them there. One of the weirs they are looking into taking out is near Gosshollow road

Emily thinks it would be fun to link with historical society and others to get people involved and do outreach and education regarding the weir projects. The weirs are owned by the USGS but the landowners feel a lot of ownership over them so there has to be a lot of outreach.

Bridget asked if they do anything with river plantings and erosion control. Emily says they mainly have just done some on the lakes and ponds (Harveys and Joes). We asked about doing erosion control for the Water Andric to preserve the public path (old road), and help the fish by preventing the silt dumps in the river. Bridget was saying that maybe 5 years ago they approved the treatment plant to run their discharge closer to the river which may have caused a reduction in the water quality, as well as a culvert getting washed out which caused the class 4 road to wash out into the river and cause additional silting which affected the fish populations and clarity of the river. That was why Ben Copans originally asked the group if we could do some river water monitoring to see how the treatment plant was affecting the river. Bridget was hoping to find a project that might improve the water quality of the Water Andric and the ecology around the river to reduce erosion. Do they still need help doing water quality management? Maybe next summer we could take a walk with Emily and see what projects could be done, and we could get funding for.

Barb would like to help with education of water projects happening now.

Passumpsic tactical water basin project is doing a survey right now, and would like our help getting folks to get the word out about that survey.

So we are talking about wanting to do restorative work to restoring the ecosystem, monitor the water. Emily will talk to Ben about if there is still a need to do water quality monitoring along the Water Andric.

The best use of the DCC could just be to assist the NRCD in projects that they are working on. With Education, water quality monitoring, and helping to organize.

Emily encourages us to use them as a resource for funding and information.

Discussion followed about rivetments and weirs and how they affect the water quality and ecosystem of the river as far as speed of flow and riverbed natural systems. Jake says the Sleepers river is a very highly studied river in the area. Its important to understand the current state of the river before they pull the weirs out.

So we will coordinate with Emily to have an assessment of the Water Andric this spring/summer and discuss what steps could be actionable. Restoring fish, riparian area, and public access, education and sounds like it could be a project that people could get behind, but the first step will be to get an assessment to see what suggestions she might have to help the stream with erosion and if its worth doing.

5. Jo is going to call the Danville School folks again to see if we can find some kids to make signs or the kiosks as projects.
6. Vange will get in touch with the selectboard about plowing the Rogers Lot.
7. Next meeting January 8th