

Natural Resources Committee

DRAFT Minutes

Nov, 8 2017

Committee Members: Barrie Bailey, Colin Davis, Peter Grant, Stan Grzyb, Wendy Sue Harper (Chair), Arabella Holzpfel, Ed Payne, Ron Payne, Paul Wagner, Kent Wright

Present: Barrie Bailey, Peter Grant, Wendy Sue Harper, Arabella Holzpfel, Ed Payne, Ron Payne, Kent Wright, Jim Pulver, Stan Grzyb, Paul Wagner

Staff: Kevin Behm

Guests:

Wendy Sue opened the meeting at 6:00. The Nov 8th minutes were moved for approval. (Arabella motion, Paul 2nd). Stan and Jim abstained. Minutes accepted.

Wendy Sue introduced Jim Pulver, an ACRPC delegate from Goshen as a new member of the Natural Resources Committee. Welcome Jim.

DRAFT South Lake Champlain Tactical Basin Plan –

The only agenda topic was an introductory review of the South Lake Champlain Tactical Basin Plan (TBP). A preview copy had been provided to ACRPC and it was distributed to the NRC members. Kevin took the opportunity to walk the Committee through the structure of the Plan since it was somewhat intimidating at 175 pages [note: the final Draft is now 185 pages]. Geographically, the South Lake Basin Plan addresses the Lowe Champlain Direct drainage in the western portion of the town of....

There are 5 basic chapters and an appendix of related reports and assessments. Chapter 1 is an overview of the Tactical Basin Plans (TBP) and the Vermont Clean Water Act (2015). TBP's addresses current and future actions to maintain and restore water quality in the South Lake Champlain area. Chapter 2 identifies current water quality concerns and identifies the major stressors and recommends actions for improvement. The Vermont Surface Water Management Strategy addresses the following stressors in all basin plans; acidity, channel erosion, flow alteration, encroachment, invasive species, land erosion, nutrient loading, pathogens, toxics and thermal stress. Chapter 3 addresses the 2002 Lake Champlain Phosphorus TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) which was recently withdrawn and re-issued with an Phase 1 Implementation Plan to better meet the stated phosphorus reduction goals. Chapter 4 identifies the existing water uses in the South Lake Champlain Basin and identifies Surface Water Management Goals to maintain or improve water quality for specific uses. This chapter also discusses the option to re-classify high-quality streams to a level that limits degradation. Finally, Chapter 5 contains the Implementation Table of specific actions and projects to protect and improve water quality in the basin.

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Most of the meeting discussed the TMDL Phase 1 Implementation Plan and the approach the TBP uses to meet phosphorus reductions. Phosphorus loading into the lake was identified by land use and broken-out by basins using a state-modified version of an EPA phosphorus loading computer model. Land uses were rather general and included agricultural lands, developed lands, forest lands, unpaved roads, river channels and also sewage treatment plants. Each of these land uses has a required phosphorus reduction that needs to be achieved under the Phase 1 Implementation Plan.

For the individual Tactical Basin Plans, the State interpolated the phosphorus loading from these land uses from the basin scale down to small catchment areas that may comprise 4 or 5 areas in any particular town. In this way improvement projects can be located in a particular catchment area that is responsible for high loading rates.

New permits and regulatory actions were also designed to address the phosphorus reductions needed from the individual land uses. Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) were established for agricultural lands, the Municipal General Permit (MRGP) was established for stormwater from municipal roads, a 3-Acre Permit was established for stormwater from impervious surfaces which exceed 3 acres, as well as an MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems) stormwater permit for 12 municipalities and a TS4 permit for stormwater from state highways. Kevin mentioned that Addison County does not contain a municipality regulated under A MS4 permit, but ACRPC is working with most of the communities to address the MRGP requirements. For the most part the agricultural RAPs are being addressed by the Agency Ag, NRCs and UVM Extension.

Once the Draft South Lake Champlain TBP is available for public review there will be at least 2 public hearings and Ethan Swift, ANR, has been invited to the Commission to present the full plan.

The Committee adjourned at 7:00