



Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

CVRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) Meeting Minutes – 11 January 2024

CWAC Members:

Commissioner Representatives	
✓	John Brabant
✓	Royal DeLegge
✓	Ron Krauth
✓	Rich Turner
✓	Alice Peal

Municipal Representatives	
✓	John Hoogenboom
✓	Joyce Manchester
	Emily Ruff
	Jeff Schulz
✓	Joseph Whelan

CVRPC Staff: Brian Voigt, Lincoln Frasca, Keith Cubbon

Other Attendees: Alan Quackenbush (Duxbury Commissioner), Doug Greason (Waterbury Commissioner), Russ Barrett (Northfield Conservation Commission), David Mears (Northfield Conservation Commission), Karina Dailey (Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Council), Evelyn Boardman (Department of Environmental Conservation), Christian Pelletier (Watersheds United Vermont), Adelaide Dumm (Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District), Keith Fritschie (Department of Environmental Conservation), and Julie (Public).

Call to Order & Roll Call

R. Krauth called the meeting to order at 4:08 PM.

Approval of November minutes (action)

J. Manchester moved to approve the minutes of the 9 November 2023 meeting. J. Brabant seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Updates to agenda:

L. Frasca added an "Announcement" item to the agenda.

Public Comment: None

Prioritizing Culvert Replacement & Dam Removal Panel (discussion)

Karina Dailey, Vermont Natural Resources Council (see presentation): K. Dailey, Restoration Ecologist, gave an overview of the Vermont Dam Task Force and their mission of removing dams to reconnect river systems. The criteria for project selection was discussed with example projects highlighted. In the Winooski Basin the Cross Brothers Dam of Northfield and Rouleau Pond Dam of Williamstown were mentioned. For more info on dam removal visit <https://freevermontrivers.org/>.

Evelyn Boardman, Department of Environmental Conservation (see presentation): E. Boardman, Permit Coordinator, gave a history of the Municipal Roads Stormwater General Permit (MRGP). She provided examples of culvert erosion and sizing standards. She also reviewed the prioritization method for different road segments and the benefits of improved road drainage. Local and statewide data can be found at vtculverts.org and on the [Vermont Natural Resources Atlas](#).

Christian Pelletier, Watersheds United Vermont (see presentation): C. Pelletier, Grant Administrator, outlined three funding sources available for dam removal and culvert replacement activities.

- 1) Enhancement Project Development Grant: Up to \$150,000 available, applications due 19 January 2024 ([see WUV grant website](#));
- 2) Dam Removal Design and Implementation Block Grant: Anticipating a Spring 2024 grant round, funding amount to be determined; and
- 3) Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant: Covers multiple project types including culvert replacements. WUV is not currently accepting applications but may be later in 2024. For culvert design and implementation fund at this time reach out to Mount Ascutney Regional Commission and the Natural Resource Conservation Council.

K. Fritschie shared the Department of Environmental Conservation [Eligible Project Types Table](#) for Clean Water project funding. Along with the [Clean Water Initiative Program Funding Policy](#).

Panelist Q & A (discussion)

J. Brabant asked why dam removals are so expensive. K. Dailey responded that the trucking of sediment is typically the most expensive part. In Vermont, impounded sediment is not allowed to wash downstream during the removal process. In some cases, sediment can be released downstream in phases. Downstream areas are usually sediment starved from years of altered flow. Sediment is also tested prior to removal to see where and how it might be used post removal. Ideally, it could be used locally for trails or other building projects to minimize transportation costs.

D. Mears (Northfield Conservation Commission) asked if there are examples of Conservation Commissions successfully applying for funding such as the ones provided through Watersheds United Vermont. C. Pelletier is not aware of Conservation Commissions applying for block grant funding. B. Voigt added that it would likely be the Selectboard that has the authority to sign contracts on behalf of the municipality. CVRPC is also available to assist with grant applications and program administration.

B. Voigt asked C. Pelletier about target areas for funding. Watersheds United Vermont provides funding across Vermont and they prioritize funding in Basin's where there is not already Formula Grant funding available through a Clean Water Service Provider.

J. Manchester asked how dams / culverts get identified to be a project. K. Dailey responded that there is not an organized approach. A willing landowner is a critical first step. The Vermont Natural Resources Council's Dam Task Force works with Friends of the Winooski and the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District to conduct site visits and prioritize projects based on their findings. The [VT Dam Inventory](#) is a map of all known dams in the state, but there are still numerous unidentified dams that need to be included in this inventory. C. Pelletier mentioned that culvert projects are similar. There is funding for scoping work to identify priorities. These assessments then make their way into larger planning documents (e.g. River Corridor Plans and Stormwater Master Plans). C. Pelletier also works for the White River Partnership and noted that they receive funding for project scoping. Regional Planning Commissions also do field work and pass information up to the state for analysis.

A. Peal asked how Waitsfield can identify their dams for hazard mitigation planning purposes. K. Dailey offered her services and recommended the VT Dam Inventory and the Vermont Natural Resources Atlas. LIDAR and aerial imagery can also be used to identify dams.

J. Hoogenboom commented on the recent Moretown school flooding, and asked how to approach culvert replacement for private landowners and what funding opportunities are available to support this work. E. Boardman works only on municipal roads but there are a lot of assessments and projects with funding available for private road projects. She advised contacting Basin Planner, K. Fritschie, who offered to discuss the project further.

D. Mears asked whether municipalities can regulate culvert sizing. E. Boardman pointed to municipal driveway regulations which may only apply to new development. R. Krauth explained a case of a large culvert on Bolduc Road that performed well in

the past but was jammed during another flood and the sides washed out. Depending on the storm and unforeseen circumstances a culvert may operate well in one storm but not in the next.

J. Brabant mentioned the Curtis Pond dam in Calais that nearly breached in the July 2023 flooding and asked if there is money for rebuilding or improving the safety of dams. C. Pelletier and K. Dailey have funding focused on dam removal. There is dam safety legislation that has been introduced this year with repair funds, but many details remain unresolved at this time.

Tactical Basin Plan FY25 workplan (discussion)

Future topics for CWAC meetings were discussed in relationship to CVRPC's FY25 Tactical Basin Workplan (see presentation). K. Fritschie emphasized that topics should be prioritized based on what is most relevant to committee members and their communities. J. Brabant mentioned climate mitigation funding that was discussed at the last Regional Plan Committee meeting. This funding maybe could be used for the protection of forest / wetland resources. A. Peal highlighted her interest in FEMA mapping and wetlands. Hazards associated with potential landslides needs to be considered. B. Voigt mentioned the FEMA updates and draft maps may be available this summer / fall. R. Krauth commented on the ecological impact(s) of removing a dam related to the loss of wetlands that formed above a dam. K. Fritschie noted that the Department of Environmental Conservation has a wetland program that surveys the impact of dam removals on significant wetland areas prior to removal.

Committee members are encouraged to discuss with their municipal Boards and Commissions regarding their water quality restoration priorities and send comments to CVRPC staff for inclusion in CVRPC's FY25 Workplan.

Announcements (information)

K. Fritschie announced the release of the [2024 Winooski Tactical Basin Plan](#) and Responsiveness Summary. Committee members (and meeting guests) should feel free to reach out to K. Fritschie to discuss the plan in greater detail.

J. Hoogenboom commended B. Voigt for his work on the Moretown project and ability to secure extra funding twice to cover unforeseen costs.

Adjourn: *J. Hoogenboom moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 PM. A. Peal seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

The next meeting is scheduled for 14 March 2024.