

Quassaick Creek Watershed Alliance Monthly Meeting
MSMC, Aquinas Hall, Room 252
Monday, March 25, 2019, 5:00 PM

<http://waterauthority.orangecountygov.com/quassaick.html>

Present: Patrick Baker, Marcel Barrick, Lauren Berg, Matt Brady, Jack Caldwell, Wayne Chernek, Bill Fetter, John Gebhards, Ted Kohlmann, Lynn Maelia, James Moran, Kelly Morris, Chandler Radcliffe, Jason Randall, Erin Roth, Carter Schuh

Meeting Notes

Prelude

John Gebhards announced the passing of long time QCWA member Nick Tolve and led the attendees in a moment of silence for Nick.

1. Micro Plastics Presentation:

Carter Schuh and Jason Randall of Marist College presented their findings of a micro-plastics study performed in the Quassaick Creek Watershed in the Fall of 2018 with analysis completed over the Winter of 2018-19.

Carter described the standard procedures used to collect the samples at six different locations throughout the watershed on two separate occasions in the Fall of 2018 as well as the reasoning for selecting the chosen locations.

Carter went on to explain how the samples were processed and prepared in the laboratory to isolate the plastics in the sample and ultimately enumerate the types of micro plastics contained in each sample by manually counting the particles under a dissecting microscope.

Carter then presented the enumerated results for all sampling locations which ranged from less than 1 micro-particles(mp)/meter³ of stream water in the middle portion of the watershed to approximately 10 mp/m³ at the mouth of the Quassaick at River Road.

Finally, Cater and Jason compared/contrasted their findings to previous studies completed by Jason elsewhere in the Hudson River estuary. In comparison, preliminary indications are that the Quassaick Watershed is relatively low in micro plastics contamination as compared to other areas studied by Marist within the estuary.

During the Q&A following the presentation, it was agreed that over time intermittent studies would be beneficial to track any change in concentrations throughout the Watershed. It was also noted that this entire study will be presented at Marist during an undergraduate scholastic symposium on a date TBD later in this Spring semester. Media exposure to this project, and the micro plastics issue in general, was encouraged.

Following the Marist presentation, each attendee briefly introduced themselves to all.

Reports

2. QCWA Board of Directors Report

Jack explained the new Board's configuration and terms of the newly-elected Board of Directors, Jack and Kelly with 2 yr. terms and Ted and Bill with 1 yr. terms. Subsequently, there will be two positions up for election each year to maintain continuity and allow others to join the Board if they are interested. The Board then elected Jack as President, Bill as Secretary/Treasurer and appointed John Gebhards as Executive Director as a voting member with the Board.

In addition, the Board began drafting guidelines by which QCWA will operate moving forward once drafted and agreed to.

3. City of Newburgh water

Marcel reported:

- a) The litigation continues between the City of Newburgh and the ANG et al.
- b) Material received through a FOIL request from the DEC is currently being reviewed.
- c) NCWP has been invited by the Newburgh City Council to exchange questions and ideas regarding PFOS contamination of the City of Newburgh's water supply. Marcel asked that if anyone had questions they would like to have addressed at the meeting to please email him your concerns ay marcelbarrick@gmail.com.
- d) Still waiting for NYSDOH and affiliates to set legal PFOS exposure values in order to clarify cleanup standards. There was some discussion of continued use of foam still in stock as well as short chain foam in the area.
- e) Marcel inquired if Erin is aware of any minutes published for a meeting held the 2nd week of January by the ANG and the Stewart International Airport, along with officials from the City of Newburgh and the Town of New Windsor, regarding the evaluation of the ACOE Rapid Response Program as a potential stop gap clean up measure. Erin is not aware of any notes from that meeting.
- f) The status of the proposed Restoration Advisory Board was brought up. There were no definitive answers as to its activities.

4. Glass Eel Count

Wayne reported that the net was installed on March 15th. A hole in the net resulted in a new net being installed in the first week or so. To date, daily eel counts have been in the low single digits. The season is just getting underway with more than another month of counting. If anyone has some time to donate for eel counting on a Saturday or Sunday morning, please email Wayne Cherek, chernek9@msn.com.

5. Bushfield Creek

Bill reported that Matt Brady and he completed the first round of water quality testing of the Spring on March 11. In addition to the three parameters recorded last season (Temp, pH, TDS), we will add chloride and other select field test strips to the regiment this season.

6. Trees 4 Tribs

- a) Ted reported that a Spring Trees 4 Tribs planting is being planned at the Town of Newburgh Mill Street site for some time in May. More details should be available at the April QCWA meeting.
- b) Ted also explained that he is developing a program that will provide a monthly schedule for maintaining existing Trees 4 Tribs sites during the growing season. A call for volunteers will go out when the plan is finalized.
- c) Ted also informed the group that the culvert under Lake Drive at the north end of Muchattoes Lake is due to be replaced this year. That construction may require the relocation of trees and shrubs planted in the area during a previous Trees 4 Tribs outing. Updates will be provided as information becomes available from the City of Newburgh.

7. Riversweep & “Spring Into Newburgh,” May 4

- a) John G. explained that Lance Haug will be coordinating the QCWA participation in Riverkeeper’s annual Hudson River RiverSweep event on May 4th with a clean up along the Quassaick Creek along Walsh Avenue at River Road. Volunteers can sign up on line at the Riverkeeper website or by contacting Lance, Lancelinc@outlook.com. We may also extend the clean up to Muchattoes Lake.
- b) John also informed the group that Scenic Hudson will have a fishing demonstration at Muchattoes Lake on the same day as part of the City of Newburgh’s annual “Spring into Newburgh” outdoor event. Anyone wishing to volunteer to help as an educator at this event can touch base with Jack, jdcaldwell1129@gmail.com.

8. QCWA & MSMC Collaboration

With the help of the QCWA, Prof. Lynn Maelia of MSMC is developing a class exercise that will involve students going into the field and taking real time physical and chemical measurements of the water quality in the lower Quassaick Creek Watershed and charting the data. The goal is to perpetuate this exercise over time to build a continuous water quality database.

Additionally, Prof. James Moran of MSMC is developing an Enterococcus sampling plan on the Crystal Lake tributary for one of his microbiology classes this semester. More info as plans develop.

9. Status of removing Stroock’s Felt Dam on Quassaick Creek:

Due to George Jackman’s, absence this item was tabled until the April meeting.

10. Columbia Univ. Architectural Class

Early this year, Professor Robert Marino of the Columbia’s School of Architecture visited to scout for a sight where his students would be able to design a water feature (weir) and an educational/human contact structure. Robert chose the area of the proposed Holden Dam

improvements. A few weeks ago, the 12 students presented their midterm concept plans and Bill was able to attend. Many interesting concepts were presented. It was suggested that the QCWA could invite Prof. Marino and some of his better student projects to a meeting at the end of the semester. Bill will follow up on this.

11. Other business

- Erin noted that the proposed “Trash to Pellets” waste processing facility that was to be located near the airport has been withdrawn.
- Kelly made note a grant of \$1.7M was awarded to OCWA for the protection of available lands in the Washington Lake Watershed. This project is being carried out in partnership with the OC Land Trust.
- Bill noted that a proposal to build a BJ’s across 17K from the Newburgh bus station has been submitted to the Town of Newburgh Planning Board.
- Wayne said that he was booking the Woody Guthrie sail boat for our June meeting, date TBD.

12. Next meeting (Note change to last Monday of month for meetings)

April 25, 2019, 5:00 PM, MSMC, Aquinas Hall, Room 252.