Natural Resources Committee present: John Whitman, interim Chair, Bob Anderson, Munson Hicks, Liisa Kissel, Lynette Hamilton, Bill Dunkel, Kevin Stine, Marie Caduto, David Deen
Staff present: Marion Major, Susan McMahon

The meeting was called to order at 2:00pm with a quorum present and led by John Whitman.

1. Minutes
   - The minutes of April 13, 2016 Natural Resources Committee were approved (motion by Lynette Hamilton, seconded by Liisa Kissell)

2. Committee Chair Vacancy
   - Munson Hicks volunteered to chair with John Whitman as vice chair.

3. Water Quality Contract Scope
   - Discussion reviewing Act 64 and the previous water quality contract with the RPCs. This new scope draft covers outreach and education along with implementation of basin plan projects. The committee discussed how those projects would be prioritized. It was decided the committee take on the task of prioritization and will re-evaluate if a subcommittee should be created if the work load is too much. The committee will invite experts in the field and members of interested organizations to participate in the process.
   - The WRC will be working with Marie C. to create the water quality subcontract for the region.
   - Marie C. spoke about the reclassification of waterways and invited attendance to the hearing in Londonderry on August 31st 1-3pm.

4. Beaver Initiative Event
   - An educational event exploring the relation of beavers to the natural and human ecosystems is scheduled for August 25th in Grafton with two event times: one geared for a more technical crowd in the afternoon and the second for the general public in the early evening.

5. Update on recent projects/programs
   - Ecosystem Restoration Projects:
     1. The Gorman Property along the Green River in Guilford (projects 9&10 within the Green River Corridor Plan): Following Irene, material from the riverbed was windrowed and a berm 4 ft tall and 400 ft long was created which cuts off access to the hay field adjacent to the river and functions as a floodplain. The project includes berm removal, buffer planting along the eroding bank, and a conservation easement on the field in the floodplain. WRC has
signed the contract and will have a site visit and scoping discussion tentatively scheduled for August 19th.

2. Adams Brook: Following Irene the streambed was excessively armored to protect the Adams Hill Road which was significantly damaged during the storm. The armoring resulted in at least 5 feet of excess material leaving the stream submerged under the large boulders. WRC led a site visit to discuss the final design to restore the stream. Another scoping discussion will be held shortly to finalize the project design (to be completed by September 15th).
Funds for implementing this design will be applied for in the winter round of ERPs.

- Harris Property: Marie reported: After Irene the property which pre-Irene had the Green River running between their parcel and Hinesburg Rd (Guilford). During the storm the river tore through the side of the property which was the road access leaving the house and shed destroyed and the parcel of land an island. The project is moving forward with cleaning being led by Fish and Wildlife. Marie is leading a site visit to discuss various restoration projects to take place on the property on the 19th.

- Saxtons River Watershed Collaborative: The grant program is wrapping up with most of the tasks completed. VRC is pursuing 4 conservation easements and hoping to get 2 in addition. The education center has found a home at the Brattleboro Retreat Farm in the Farmhouse where the stream table is set up along with educational material. The Collaborative will be gathering in September to discuss making the Collaborative a permanent group.

6. Other Business

- TransCanada dam ownership and relicensing discussion. It was noted that relicensing should be the focus rather than ownership as regardless of the owner, the terms of the license will be enforced for 40 years. A meeting focused on the erosion resulting from pumped storage will be held on August 17th.

- WRC has contracted Fitzgerald Environmental to perform a Stream Geomorphic Assessment and Corridor Plan of the East branch of the North River.

- Community Wildlife Program at VT Fish and Wildlife has reached out to WRC to pull together the conservation commissions for an event which will discuss the challenges and success stories within the region. The date for the event is September 20.

7. Next meeting: Wednesday, September 14, 2016 (second Wed. of the month) or as determined.

Meeting adjourned at 3:46pm

Respectfully submitted, Marion Major