

York Wild and Scenic River Study Committee
York Land Trust 1 Long Neck Marsh Road, York, Me
5:30 pm January 5, 2023
Minutes

Present: Karen Arsenault, Jean Demetracopoulos, Thom Kearns, Joan LeBlanc, Mike Masi, Chuck Ott; Judy Spiller. Jenn Hunter, Program Coordinator; Jim MacCartney and Emma Lord, NPS; Paul Dest, Wells reserve; Amelia Nadilo, YRLT; Bob Gray, Kittery Water District.

- I. Welcome
- II. Minutes: Moved by J. Demetracopoulos, seconded by C. Ott. Unanimous
- III. Public Comment – none
- IV. Park Service Recap and Timeline
Designation in Consolidated Appropriations Act 2023, approved 12/23, signed by President Biden 12/29. Law 117-328 adds York River as a designated Partnership W & S river. Now 18 PWS rivers
Park Service W & S timeline – Park Service appropriation for this year part of continuing resolution. Funds for York River. Next Step is to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Park Service so that the group can begin working on projects or making grants. There is an increase in Partnership budget for next fiscal year. Hoping for \$150K for York in FY23. Park Service cooperative agreement could be in place by July 1. Wells Reserve willing to continue as fiscal agent. Park Service could sign off on a five-year agreement, renewed annually.
 - C. Ott moved and K. Arsenault seconded a motion to continue with Wells Reserve as the fiscal agent. Unanimous.Hopeful that in next fiscal year, York River’s designation is \$300,000 in line with other designated rivers.

In current transition phase, Stewardship Plan indicates the Study Committee may recommend new members to each watershed town for their appointment as representatives.

Discussion about finding money to hire someone to help coordinate the next phase, and current study committee members staying on to help.

Need to build process and capacity for transition. Look at how other river groups transitioned. Continuity between current Study Committee membership and that of Stewardship Committee will be important. Hope that communities will recognize and appoint will study Committee members to Stewardship Committee. Should formally announce our designation to our governing bodies.

Jenn is resigning effective Jan 26. Need to start thinking of a replacement. Need job description for interim person and permanent position. Not likely that there will be Park Service funds unlike July 1. NPS has a fellow who will be starting in Mid-March and can assist with some of the coordinator duties. Jenn will continue to maintain website and update meeting notices. Email address is still in place. Jenn will check emails once a week and forward to Judy and Paul, if needed.

Jenn and Judy will meet with Town officials in Eliot, Kittery, and York. Jean will handle South Berwick.

Need a public process for Stewardship Committee appointments. Terms are for three-year terms and roughly half are for four years.

Celebration Event to recognize designation. Rep. Pingree key attendee. Possibly hold at Hancock Wharf in May with Pingree's schedule the determinant. Chuck, Mike, Paul, and Karen will coordinate.

Summary of next steps:

Transition: Jenn/Judy will work on application, position description, and related logistics
Meet with town governments to let them know about designation, next steps to form a stewardship committee, etc.

Mike to meet with Harbor Board

Stefan will join Jenn and Judy at Eliot meeting with Eliot Town Manager

Jeannie will present at South Berwick Council meeting

Judy has addressed with Kittery Town Council and Town Manager

Emma will provide information on the Nashua transition.

V. Adjourn: Moved by ; seconded by Unanimous 7:20 pm.

Next meeting: **Tuesday, Feb. 21 at 5:30 pm at York Land Trust.**