Missisquoi Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

Wednesday, **August 5, 2026**

11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting

Meeting video posted at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ke2JB0B6als

A VIDEO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE NRPC YOUTUBE CHANNEL (Link above).

THE WRITTEN MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF THE DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING. MOTIONS ARE AS STATED. MINUTES WILL BE SUBJECT TO CORRECTION BY THE COUNCIL. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Council Members: Lindsey Wight (Q), Bridget Butler (q), Lauren Weston (Q), Ted Sedell (Q), Heidi Britch-Valenta (Q), Dan Seeley (Q), Beth Torpey (Q), Allaire Diamond (Q), July Medina-Triana (q)

Q= towards quorum q= towards quorum when representative has recused or is absent

Staff: Dean Pierce, Lorna Peters

Others present: Josh Serpe (FNLC), Mel Auffredou (FCNRCD), Chris Rottler (DEC), Sadie Preece (FCNRCD)

1. **Welcome and introductions**

Lindsey opened the meeting at 11:00 as Chair. A round of introductions was made.

2. **Meeting protocols**

Lindsey reviewed norms for meeting on Zoom.

3. **Conflict of interest declarations, if any**

Lauren declared a conflict of interest and did not vote on the project proposal from FCNRCD.

4. **Review/adjust and approve agenda**

No changes to the agenda were made. Dan motioned to approve. Ted seconded. Agenda was approved.

5. **Approval of minutes**

No changes were made. Heidi motioned to approve. Dan seconded. Minutes were approved.

6. **Public comment not related to items on agenda**

No public comments were made.

7. **Seating of members/alternates**

Dean explained that this is a standing agenda item and shared the timeline for terms. Dean showed a picture of the table of representatives and alternates from the NRPC website. Lauren noted that Dorothy's last name should be updated on the website.

8. **Report on budget adjustments/Budget adjustment request**

No budget adjustments were requested.

9. **Election of Officers**

Dean presided for the vote regarding the BWQC Chair and asked for nominations. Heidi nominated Lindsey Wight as Chair. Dan seconded. There were no other nominations. Dean called for the vote, and Lindsey was elected as Chair.

Lauren noted that the Tactical Basin Plan Workplan timeline does not match up with the BWQC election timelines and asked whether these should be shifted to match each other. Dean clarified that this timeline is referring to funding that voting members can use to get reimbursed for their time on the BWQC, and that the amounts for Chair and Vice Chair differ from the rest of the voting members. He noted that this should be sorted at a later time but would shorten the elected terms. Lindsey asked if all basins are on the same schedule, and Dean shared that the annual meeting is defined as the first meeting of the fiscal year.

Heidi nominated Kent Henderson as Vice Chair, in abstention. Lauren seconded. It was noted that Kent could step down at any point, given that he was not at the meeting. Kent was elected as Vice Chair.

10. **Consideration of amendment for project**

Lauren gave a brief overview of their amendment to the Black Falls Restoration Project. The project was identified by the Montgomery Flood Resiliency Study, and an application was originally put together for the FEMA BRIC program, which was cancelled. The final design phase was funded by the BWQC, but the FEMA BRIC grant has since been reinstated and FCNRCD has submitted an application for the implementation phase. This grant program requires a local match of 25%.

To start, FCNRCD would like to expand the project area to have a better phosphorus credit, so they requested an increase to the final design budget. They also requested that this project be turned into a multi-stage project, and that the local match for FEMA BRIC would be provided by the CWSP, if FCNRCD was awarded the grant. Stacy Pomeroy and Karen Bates both approve of this request, and Dean shared that the request has support from the CWSP.

Lindsey asked about the timeline for FEMA BRIC. Lauren explained that the results should come out in September, at which point she would need to have the local match secured, and the deadline to accept is before the next BWQC meeting. The additional area has been surveyed but models need to be made. Heidi asked where the project site is, and Lindsey explained the location.

Allaire asked if the final design funds could be used as the local match, to which Lauren said no because the funds are for a different project phase. Dean brought up the topic of multiple-phase approvals, which could be a bigger conversation within this BWQC. Heidi asked how projects get a WPD ID, and Lauren explained her process of going to Stacy and Karen. Dean pointed out that the cost effectiveness improves with this outside funding.

Heidi also asked about NRCS funding and where that funding can go. Lauren explained the different programs that NRCS has, and that those likely wouldn't work for this project, also noting that NRCS works on private land. Ted asked for clarification on the estimate for archaeology review. Mel shared that the original estimate for archaeology was a guess, and VHB found that the site would need stratigraphic analysis, requiring more funds.

Heidi motioned to approve the request for additional funding and contingent funds based on the FEMA BRIC outcome. Ted seconded. Lauren abstained. Motion passed.

11. BWQC approval of legal expenses

Dean shared some slides explaining the legal fees that projects incur when a site access easement is required. He shared that, in the future, when requests for implementation projects over $200,000 come to the BWQC, they will have an additional ~$2,500 per parcel added to the budget for legal fees incurred by the CWSP. Lauren asked if anyone else would incur fees in this easement process. Allaire shared that a recent project of hers did incur legal fees on VLT's end and will be budgeted for bigger projects in the future.

12. Updates/In brief

Dean shared that Nora will be leaving NRPC at the end of the month to attend graduate school in Berlin and thanks her for her work.

Dean shared that there was a DEC request for moving some of the Missisquoi Basin Year 5 funding to the Memphremagog and Lamoille Basins (~$300,000-$400,000 each). Each years contract for the Missisquoi Basin amounts to about $1.5 to 2 million, and that the Memphremagog and Lamoille Basins are running low on funds, where the Missisquoi has a lot of money.

Lauren asked for clarification on this request since the cost rate methodology is supposed to allocate money according to phosphorus reduction needs for each basin. Dean explained that the overall P-reduction will decrease with the budget decrease, and that over the years, the targets have changed. The target will decrease for Year 5 only.

Allaire asked if the cost effectiveness is the same in the Memphremagog and is being met. Dean answered that the Memphremagog has an unanticipated amount of projects and they are hopefully cost effective. Lauren asked for clarification on why funds would be transferred from the Lake Champlain to Memphremagog given that the Memphremagog has a separate TMDL. Chris clarified that the cost rate methodology is not changing since it is a formula used to convert dollars allocated to P-reduction targets. He also explained that the funding allocation does not follow a formula and that some minor adjustments are made.

Chris also mentioned that the legislature will be looking into unused funds and could pull uncommitted funds back, and the Missisquoi Basin receives the largest funding. The Missisquoi likely won’t reach this money within the next year, where the Memphremagog would and money would get spent faster. Chris shared that this will hopefully be a one-time change. Chris offered clarification that the cost effectiveness follows the same formula in the Memphremagog, and that there are factors beyond Missisquoi Basin organizations’ control that contribute to excess funding being had and that it is not a reflection of the work being done in the Missisquoi Basin.

Dean also outlined the reappointment process for NRPC to be designated as the CWSP. The CWSP has to show adequate annual progress, the pipeline of projects, fiscal management for two projects, and open meeting law compliance. A public opinion survey will be released in mid-September, and the CWSP will submit a self-assessment. DEC should release the results in January of 2027.

Lauren asked if a public participation policy overview could be discussed at the next meeting, and if the BWQC could revisit the expedited funding process for project development. Dean explained that the expedited amount has been set until June 2027 but could be revisited once the CWSP has been reappointed. Lauren asked if all of the task awards with the CWSP end in June 2027, and Dean answered that that is not the case.

Lauren asked about potential for billing hours before a task award has been signed. Dean brought up that there had been a conversation around having the start date of a task award be the date that the BWQC had taken action, and that this conversation has been started up again after being shut down the first time. Lauren asked if the fiscal year contractor invoice discussion could be brought up at a future meeting.

13. Future Meeting topics /Conclusion

Future meeting topics could be progress towards P targets, public outreach, CWIP policy, or others mentioned in this meeting.

14. SITE TOURS

Allaire motioned to recess the meeting to the site visits, and Bridget seconded. Dan, Heidi, Allaire, Lindsey, Bridget, and Lauren visited the first site near Longley Bridge in Montgomery. Lindsey gave an overview of the project and anticipated future work. Bridget left after this site. The meeting was recessed to the next site, Trout Brook Dam in Berkshire. Lauren gave a project overview and the meeting was adjourned at Trout Brook at 1:53.