The Sudbury, Assabet and Concord
WILD & SCENIC
River Stewardship Council
sudbury-assabet-concord.org

SuAsCo RSC Minutes for August 25, 2026

RSC Representatives present: Marlies Henderson, Chair (Billerica), Andrew Petitdemange (NPS), Ron Chick (Framingham), Dan Cook (Carlisle), Jonathan DeKock (Carlisle-Alt), Christine Dugan (Lincoln-Alt), Bill Fadden (Framingham-Alt), Carlene Hempel (Concord), Laura Mattei (SVT), Ross Tucker (Lincoln), Tom Sciacca (Wayland), Angela Taveira-Dick (Bedford-Alt)
Absent: Stephanie Koch (USFWS), Brian Murphy (Bedford), Eric Simms (Wayland-Alt), Vacant (Commonwealth), Vacant (Sudbury)
Also attending: Elissa Brown (Lead River Ambassador), Ellie Sablak

Welcome and July Minutes
7:00 pm Ms. Henderson opened the meeting. She asked for any corrections to the July Minutes. Mr. Tucker had one. He moved to accept the Minutes as amended. Mr. Sciacca seconded and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

Ambassador Report
7:02 pm Ms. Brown said that recent rain has moved the region to Level 2, mild drought. The state continues to recommend minimizing water use. Mass DEP has proposed amendments to the **Wetlands Regulations** (310 CMR 10.00) and **Water Quality Regulations** (314 CMR 9.00). These are intended to streamline permitting for trail work, invasive species and tree removal, and ecological restoration projects. MACC and others have submitted comments. Specific restrictions on herbicide use and soil disturbance remain. A full summary has been posted to the website.
The **Talbot Mills NOI** has been continued to September 14. Mr. Munro said that the project team is coordinating with the Billerica Conservation Commission on a rock vane riffle at the Fordway Bar to address hydrologic changes. He said OARS could possibly make a presentation on the design at the RSC's September meeting.
A **water chestnut pull in Carlisle** organized by Mr. DeKock removed 164 baskets of water chestnuts. Ms. Brown, Mr. Murphy and Ms. Taveira-Dick will host a table at **Bedford Day** on September 19. The **Supplemental DEIR** for **Hanscom Field jet expansion** has been postponed to September. Ms. Brown shared a graphic of the main runway with a jet flying over the river. This flight path raises noise concerns. She anticipates Section 7 involvement by the RSC.
7:21 pm A public update on the master plan and zoning changes for **MCI-Concord** will be held on September 9 at Concord-Carlisle Regional High School. The project is being coordinated with the Route 2 rotary redesign. The preferred alternative under discussion would improve access near the rail trail, Williams Pond and Spencer Brook, and would rebuild the Assabet River bridge with greater clearance. DCAM, which owns the property, retains authority to impose additional deed or conveyance conditions. The **Warner's Pond Subcommittee** is seeking a new committee member and drafting an RFP for its own consultant. **Lincoln:** Lincoln's Conservation Director confirmed a **spotted lanternfly infestation** in town. Ms. Brown said that the pest affects grapevines and maple trees and can promote mold growth harmful to tree health. Sightings of egg masses or adults should be reported to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources**.** The **Sherman's Bridge** project in Wayland is now fully permitted. Construction will start in November. The **NOI** for the middle section of the **Carol Getchell Trail** in Framingham is scheduled. Ms. Brown noted, for awareness only, that there is a NOI for a porch and deck addition on a house near the Danforth Street Bridge, at the very start of the Wild & Scenic River in Framingham. The **Dragonfly Mercury Project** fieldwork is completed. Ms. Brown tabled at **Farmers Markets** in Carlisle and Acton-Boxborough and will attend Lincoln's in September.

7:28 pm Ms. Hempel expressed concern over a marked increase in purple loosestrife along the rivers this year. She mentioned past success with biological control beetles at Great Meadows. Ms. Mattei noted that this year's drought

conditions favor loosestrife and that beetle populations naturally fluctuate. She suggested checking with Stephanie Koch at the USFWS about the possibility of recent beetle activity assessments. Ms. Henderson said she would check with Ed Reiner and note this topic for a future RSC meeting.

Website Update

7:32 pm Ms. Sablak said that the RSC's June Minutes, July Minutes and the July Ambassador Report have been posted, along with photos and a summary from the Dragonfly Mercury Project fieldwork, as well as information on the Project itself. OARS' annual river cleanup at three sites on September 26 has been publicized. Updated links for Bedford's Bicycle Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission, and Trails Committee have been added. The SuAsCo RSC Instagram account now includes photos from the recent team paddle that included SVT. Ms. Sablak is developing an Instagram post to highlight the website's resources. She is continuing to clear outdated homepage content. In response to a question from Mr. Sciacca about locating older Minutes, Ms. Sablak said that she will look into adding a keyword search function.

Financial Status and the Sunny Subcommittee Carryover Funds Working Group

7:39 pm Ms. Henderson referred to a question Ms. Mattei had asked about money for community grant proposals being added to the Sunny Subcommittee funds. Mr. Petitdemange said that in July the Council decided that the remaining Sunny funds, which include unspent funds carried over from previous fiscal years and current-year funds, should be pooled for priority projects, including the proposed ADA dock. Funds could be released if those projects could not proceed for some reason or were completed under budget. Ms. Brown expressed concern about losing funds for the regular Fall community grant program, noting that community partners such as CISMA anticipate an annual opportunity to apply. Mr. Petitdemange thought we could continue the community grant program but should notify applicants about the compressed timeline for completing projects and requesting reimbursement.

7:41 pm Ms. Hempel asked whether the Sunny funds were intended to be leftover funds separate from the regular community grant allocation. Mr. Petitdemange said he understood the upcoming community grant allocation to remain separate, as in previous budgets. He agreed to review the financial spreadsheet to confirm which funds were included in the Sunny pool and verify that the community grant allocation remains intact. Mr. DeKock thought the Council's budgeting and fund-tracking process was difficult to follow. Mr. Petitdemange said he is developing a standardized budget-tracking template showing obligated and remaining funds and will consult with SVT on the structure, noting that tracking committed and obligated funds is the Council's primary need. SVT will track the actual account balance. Ms. Brown recommended moving promptly to develop and issue this year's community grant RFP, citing the program's past effectiveness, including support for water chestnut removal. It was agreed that no formal vote was needed and that the existing RFP could be updated with minor revisions. Mr. Petitdemange will confirm fund availability, finalize the draft RFP written by Mr. DeKock, and coordinate with Ms. Sablak to post it and notify potential applicants.

Draft RFP for ADA Dock

7:50 pm Mr. DeKock said that he had drafted an RFP for the ADA Dock. Mr. Petitdemange made some edits and will send the RFP out on SuAsCo RSC letterhead. Mr. Petitdemange asked if anyone who had read the Draft RFP had any suggestions. Ms. Brown was concerned that the draft did not include permitting. She said that the project will require a NOI and possibly Chapter 91 licensing and engineered stamped plans. She suggested adding a task list and a cost estimate for each step of the project. Mr. Petitdemange was in favor of adding Ms. Brown's task list and an itemized budget that would create a menu for the RSC to choose from. He said that the permitting will take time. The RSC will probably get a design completed and that will be ready for future use. Other specific tasks could be selected based on how quickly companies estimate that they can be completed.

8:01 pm Mr. Tucker noted that the RFP specifies ADA requirements to be met "to the greatest extent practicable." He asked if there was a certification process for calling the proposed dock ADA-accessible. Mr. DeKock did not know of a certifying board but said that the RFP references accessboard.gov for the applicable specifications. Mr. Tucker asked whether someone has to sign off on the dock being built to the specifications in order to advertise it as ADA-accessible. Mr. DeKock said he was not aware of that requirement, although there is a state website that includes many examples of ADA-accessible water access, but, interestingly, the Oxbow Reservation is not listed. Mr. Tucker thought that, if part of the value of this project is to advertise the dock as ADA-accessible, we could contact organizations concerned with ADA issues or the state agency that is concerned with ADA-accessible water access. He said he wanted to make sure that, if

the dock is advertised as ADA-accessible, the design meets the appropriate requirements and avoids any deficiency or liability. Mr. Chick thought that Bedford's ADA Coordinator would be a good person to contact. Ms. Taveira-Dick said that she and Mr. Murphy anticipate speaking with someone from the Bedford committee that is heading up some of those initiatives.

Other Business/Project Updates

8:05 pm Mr. Petitdemange is waiting to hear back from the state agency seeking to find representation for the Wild & Scenic councils. He has been in touch with the Army Corps Transportation Division about the Route 225 bridge in Carlisle and Bedford. He would be interested in hearing if the Bedford representatives have seen any progress on that project. He and Ms. Henderson discussed talking to Sarah Bursky about which company the RSC used when it last ordered river signage. Mr. DeKock said that there has been extensive surveying at the Route 225 Bridge site. The wetland has been flagged. Ms. Brown said that the wetlands delineation was done by Epsilon. Hancock Associates did the survey, though they could have been a sub to another firm.

8:09 pm Ms. Henderson said the team-building paddle on the previous Sunday was a great success. She proposed another paddle on October 4 that would launch from Talbot Mills Park in Billerica, pass the water intake and Fordway Bar with a return paddle or shuttle depending on flow conditions.

Community Updates

8:11 pm Mr. Chick met with **Framingham**'s CFO who said that construction for the middle section of the Carol Getchell Trail would almost certainly not start until Spring 2027. In addition, Channel 25 recently broadcast live from Framingham for 2 hours for Channel 25 Zip. There was an interview with the Friends of Framingham Trails in which Mr. Chick discussed the Carol Getchell Trail.

8:13 pm Mr. Sciacca said large trailered boats launched from River Road and Sherman's Bridge in Wayland often cause significant damage. A Wayland resident recently told him the ramp area at Sherman's Bridge had been torn up. He contacted Ms. Koch and she quickly sent a USFWS team to repair it. He said the core problem is that the Bedford boat ramp and the Route 20 ramp in Wayland are the only access points on the SuAsCo suitable for large trailered boats, and since some residents also rely on the launches for smaller boats, blocking access isn't a solution. High-powered fishing boats operating at high speed cause bank erosion and wake damage, particularly to nesting birds. No one had a solution for these issues.

8:18 pm Mr. Cook noted a Dam Busters event at Regis College on September 18, including a walk-through of the recently removed Natick Dam. There will be a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Stream Smart training on October 15.

8:19 pm Mr. Tucker said that the unpermitted boardwalk near the Lincoln boat launch and Farrar Pond, built along South Great Road and connecting to the Mount Misery path, appears not to have been removed or permitted by its stated deadline. He will report back if an NOI is filed.

8:20 pm Council members discussed ongoing concerns about high speed motorboats, regulations limiting speed to 10 mph, and wake regulations, which cannot be enforced due to limited staff at municipalities and at USFWS. Mr. Chick noted that some boat ramps on the Cape have signage prohibiting the use of motors to load boats onto trailers and thought that this might be worth investigating.

8:29 pm **Adjournment**

Ms. Henderson said that the date of the next meeting is September 29. Upon a motion by Mr. Chick, seconded by Mr. Sciacca, the meeting was adjourned.