

Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee  
November 29, 2011 at Boyd Hall  
Plymouth, New Hampshire

**Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Max Stamp (Bristol); Dan Paradis (Bristol); Barry Draper (New Hampton); Carl Lehner (Holderness); Mike O'Donnell (Holderness); Jane Kellogg (Campton)

**Also Present:**

Dave Jeffers (LRPC); Tom O'Brien (President, NH Lakes Association)

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Max Stamp called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Max Stamp pointed out that an incorrect date was shown on the header to the October 25, 2011 minutes. Carl Lehner made a motion seconded by Barry Draper to approve the minutes of October 25, 2011 with a correction of the date. The motion carried unanimously.

**Northern Pass:**

Max asked the members to consider whether PRLAC should take a public position on the Northern Pass power line proposal. Dan Paradis suggested that if it had any impacts in the Pemi corridor, it would be an appropriate topic for PRLAC. Barry Draper pointed out that the proposed power line crosses the Pemi numerous times and the group agreed that this makes it an appropriate topic for our consideration. In response to a question about exactly what the concerns are, Jane Kellogg and others mentioned visual impacts, electromagnetic fields, opposition to Hydro Quebec's practices, no significant benefit to NH, negative impact on existing biomass plants, loss of property values and possible use of eminent domain to benefit a private entity. After some extended discussion about several of these points, Barry Draper volunteered to draft a statement expressing opposition to the Northern Pass project. It was agreed that he should focus on those things which have a direct impact on the river corridor, e.g. visual impacts and loss of property values. Barry will email a draft to members before the next meeting.

**PRLAC Funds Position:**

Dave Jeffers said he is putting together a tally of his hours and a financial statement which he will present at our next meeting in January, 2012. No new income is expected until the new round of appropriations from towns in 2012.

**Management Plan:**

Dave said that he has collected population data for the last ten years and that it shows more rapid growth in the towns north of Plymouth compared with those to the south. He also passed out a DOT data table showing average daily traffic at the exits to I-93 from 2003 through 2010. For the two sets of exits (Lincoln and Campton) where complete data is available, a modest increase appears to have taken place between 2003 and 2010 but the annual variability of the numbers makes it hard to draw any definitive conclusions. Dave also reported that progress continues on the data gathering phase of developing the new Management Plan. He expects the land use map will be completed before our next meeting in January.

**Report to Towns and DES developments:**

Max discussed the annual report to towns that he prepared with some input from PRLAC members. A major theme of the report is that the weakening of the Shoreland Protection Act (CSPA) and the staff cuts at DES amount to backsliding on protection for the state's rivers. Max also said he had heard rumors of further cuts at DES, perhaps as much as 20%, and the possibility of redirecting permitting fees to the General Fund. One change in CSPA which seems to be working is the adoption of the Permit by Notification process. DES is now hearing about projects which might have gone unreported in the past. On the other hand, there is concern about the actions of the 20-member Shoreland Advisory Committee (SAC) set up by the new laws to advise DES. An email from the NH Rivers Council indicates that SAC has voted in favor of separate standards for lakes and rivers, which may not be in the best interest of either. The Rivers Council, which has a representative on SAC, is setting up an information-gathering meeting in Henniker in the next few weeks. Max has made some suggestions to them about a suitable date and time and is waiting to hear what the final arrangements will be. He hopes several PRLAC members will be able to attend.

Tom O'Brien, the new President of NH Lakes, was asked what his major concerns are and he cited the possible loss of dedicated funds to the General Fund and the actions of a faction of SAC which advocated for the changes made to CSPA last year. Max brought up the question of whether PRLAC should adopt a town-by-town strategy as it did after the original management plan was published. Carl Lehner thought Holderness would be very responsive to such a request, but Dan Paradis felt planning boards would be reluctant to layer local standards on top of the state regulations. Mike O'Donnell suggested that we need to focus on the end game in determining what our strategy should be. Tom O'Brien thought we should advocate for positive revisions to the existing law rather than trying to roll back all of last year's changes. Max suggested that it would be useful to create some sort of quality index for lakes and rivers to drive home the negative impacts of the changes in CSPA. Tom O'Brien said he would be meeting with DES officials and would try to sound them out. He also indicated that NH Lakes is interested in working cooperatively with the river protection groups.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

Members were reminded that the annual Water & Watershed conference will be held at PSU on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. A location is still being sought for PRLAC's January meeting. Holderness Town Hall is available but a decision has not yet been made.

**Adjournment:**

Carl Lehner made a motion seconded by Mike O'Donnell to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel A. Paradis  
Secretary