

Rondout Creek Watershed Alliance
Rondout Municipal Center Room M15
Start time: 6:00pm
End time: 7:00pm

Notes
4/15/20

Regular Business

1. Emily Vail connected the RCWA using the HRWA zoom account and then exited. Present at the RCWA remote meeting was Laura Finestone, Eric Stewart, Andrew Faust, Rebecca Martin (Riverkeeper) and Anna Palmer (TfT program intern).

Upcoming Events

1. Because of COVID-19, the group decided to do a clean-up on the Coxing Kill rather than the Creekside Clean-up in High Falls w/Marbletown ECC and Rondout School district. RCWA will not promote the event. Members will remove plastic tree tubing with social distancing.
 - a. Date: Saturday, May 9 from 10am - 12pm.
 - b. Rebecca to secure COI and address the RCWA members.
 - c. Andrew or Laura to outreach to property owner.
 - d. No advertising. Volunteers to wear face masks, etc.
2. The Hudson River Watershed Alliance has offered to host the RCWA summit through a webinar format.
 - a. Laura outreach to Emily to learn more.

Old Business

1. Laura gave an overview of the March 5 Roundtable event. Laura, Mary McNamara (Esopus Creek) and Jason West (Wallkill River) met to discuss earlier in the year to discuss. Emily Vail (HRWA) and Amanda Lavalley (UCDOE) put together the event that was held at Cornell Cooperative

Extension in Kingston. The goal is to work with ECC's/CAC's in Ulster County. RCWA member Andrew Faust presented on sustainable farming practices in the watershed.

- a. Laura will get notes from the meeting for follow-up.
2. The group discussed finishing the brochure. Eric will provide the group with images rather than outreaching to municipalities. The map is nearly done. Fiscal sponsorship is still an issue, and the group decided it will first assess the brochure costs once it's been created before pursuing anything else.
3. The RCWA needs a social media policy to help guide how it posts on facebook. Emily Vail said that the Hudson River Watershed Alliance had a communications plan created in 2018. That plan recommended that they develop a plan for social media, but doesn't actually include any resources. This article goes through a number of approaches, though, and could be a helpful starting point:
<https://www.techsoup.org/support/articles-and-how-tos/creating-a-social-media-policy> In the meantime, she said that the Saw Kill Watershed Community has a thoughtful approach in how they use their social media. She suggested that the RCWA reach out to Sheila Buff who she thinks runs their social media: sheilabuff@frontiernet.net.

NEW BUSINESS

1. The RCWA created a survey to connect volunteers with tasks and to collect new ideas. Three people took the survey. The names and contacts have been kept confidential, but the responses are the following:
 - a. **What skills do you have?**
 - i. "I am the Watershed Planning Coordinator for the Rondout Neversink Stream Program. I am responsible for designing and implementing riparian buffer plantings through the Catskill Streams Buffer Initiative program. I also am responsible for creating the educational and outreach content for my program. I have experience with GIS mapping, Trimble GPS input, Adobe Creative Suite and designing and planting riparian buffers."

- ii. “Chemist, journalist, backpacker”
 - iii. “Retired EPA Water Enforcement Officer, specialized in MS4 work.”
- b. **What Issues Interest you on the Rondout Creek?**
- i. All stated water quality
- c. **What other Rondout Creek Watershed initiatives would you be interested in working on?**
- i. “I am interested in becoming more involved in water sampling and analysis. I am also interested in participating in riparian buffer planting projects. Ultimately, I hope to bridge the gap between the Rondout Creek headwaters and tailwaters, through educational community programs and citizen science research.”
- d. **If you'd like, please tell us what the Rondout Creek means to you.**
- i. “Rondout Creek is a path of nature that deserves to be protected, researched, and celebrated. It is an ever-changing pathway that geographically connects my work place and my home. It is where I go to unwind on the weekend. To me, it represents an opportunity to connect with nature.”
 - ii. “Home for local wildlife”
- e. Anna said that she attended the recent omelet that hosted Emily Vail of the Hudson River Watershed Alliance. The presentation pulled good photos of social distancing and would like to collect geo-references of where they were taken. She noted that the Estuary Program was moving forward with their effort to find homes for 2700 bare root plants. She was seeking people who were efficient and effective at potting and willing to follow social distancing protocol. The date to plant is tentatively May 5-8. Please contact Anna Palmer at anna.palmer@dec.ny.gov for more information.
- i. **Anna will send along curriculum information on the Estuary Program’s “What is an Estuary”. Rebecca**

thought they might already have it in the files from Beth's presentation.

2. As for creating a Watershed summit in collaboration with Ulster County, Emily Vail (HRWA) wrote that she is going to be working with the Wallkill River Watershed Alliance to bring their annual summit to a webinar format and that this might be something the Rondout Creek Watershed Alliance may be interested in, too. She is aware that the group has had an annual meeting-type event in the past.