

Minutes
Herring River Restoration Committee (HRRC)
Cape Cod National Seashore Headquarters
Wellfleet, MA
January 7, 2016
9:30 am-5:00 pm

Members Present: Tim Smith, Eric Derleth, Steve Spear, Peter Herridge, Steve Block, Hunt Durey, Hillary Greenberg

Others Present: Margo Fenn, Martha Rheinhardt, Chris Rein, Helen Miranda Wilson, John Portnoy, Karen LaRocque

Administration/Coordination

HRRC members welcomed the new Truro representative, Peter Herridge.

Communications with Friends of Herring River (FHR): Chris Rein updated the Committee on FHR activities. Karen LaRocque, Martha Rheinhardt and Chris Rein are now all employees of Friends of Herring River. They are developing a SmartSheet system to track Restoration Project activities and contracts. Chris Rein and Don Palladino are also working on a long-range projection of fiscal needs for the Project and FHR.

Minutes: The Committee voted to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2015 and December 3, 2015 HRRC meetings.

Meeting Schedule: The Committee approved the following schedule for upcoming meetings:

February 3, 2016	Blue Carbon kick-off meeting/HRRC budget projections
February 4, 2016	Regular HRRC meeting
February 25, 2016	Regular HRRC meeting
March 24, 2016	Regular HRRC meeting

The Committee agreed that the February 3rd meeting would be devoted to meeting with the Blue Carbon team assembled by the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, with time reserved in the afternoon to begin planning for upcoming state and federal funding applications. (9:00 am-3:00 pm Blue Carbon/3:00-5:00 pm Budget Planning). The Committee also agreed to begin the February 4th meeting at 8:30 am.

Discussion and Updates:

Work Plan Updates:

Consensus Building Institute (CBI) Facilitation: The group discussed a conceptual framework for permitting, funding, and implementation of the Preferred Alternative D, including mitigation work on the Chequessett Yacht and Country Club (CYCC) property.

The group discussed the substance of a potential agreement with CYCC as well as the process for reaching agreement. The Consensus Building Institute is continuing to facilitate this process.

Adaptive Management Monitoring: Work is continuing on contracts with the Woods Hole Group (WHG), the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) and the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies (PCCS) for various adaptive management modeling/monitoring tasks.

Hydrodynamic Modeling: WHG is continuing work on several different tasks, including the Graphic Users Interface (GUI) and evaluation of groundwater effects in Mill Creek.

Secondary Management: The Committee discussed again the need for developing a forest inventory to aid in planning for secondary management activities such as vegetation clearing. Since much of the area to be managed is within Cape Cod National Seashore, the NPS fire management program would likely handle vegetation clearing within the park. Work on private land would have to be negotiated with landowners.

Permitting: FHR has signed a contract with ESS to begin preparation of the Project's Development of Regional Impact (DRI) application to the Cape Cod Commission. The Committee discussed another contract with ESS (to prepare an outline of needed permit compliance documents).

High Toss Road: The Committee discussed how to address handicapped accessibility in the design of the proposed bridge over the Herring River channel at High Toss Road. FHR staff and ESS are consulting the Wellfleet Building Inspector and NPS on this. Since the roadway east of the proposed bridge would be unimproved, it might not be practical or feasible to design a bridge structure that is fully accessible. A variance might be needed from state and/or federal standards, recognizing that while some areas like High Toss Road may not be fully accessible, new opportunities are being planned in other locations and overall there will be huge improvements for all recreational users.

Chequessett Neck Road (CNR) bridge: Fuss & O'Neill is continuing work on the boat access facilities for the CNR bridge.

Mill Creek Dike: NPS is seeking construction funding for the Mill Creek dike. Fuss & O'Neill's survey team has completed its work, and archaeological investigations of the proposed access route to the dike will be undertaken as soon as permits are approved for this work. Martha Rheinhardt noted that Outermost Survey and Slade Associates are double-checking their survey benchmarks to ensure that they are consistent and accurate. Tim Smith noted that NPS has installed a number of new benchmarks within the Herring River system, which may be of use.

Rare Species Monitoring: The final reports are complete for this year's rare species monitoring. FHR and HRRC representatives will meet next week to plan next steps.

Low-lying Road Design: The Louis Berger Group (LBG) is evaluating alternatives for raising low road segments. Additional survey work is needed. In some locations, road widening might be needed that could encroach on private properties or NPS land. HRRC representatives will meet with the Wellfleet and Truro Conservation Commissions to get a better understanding of local regulatory requirements. FHR staff is also consulting affected property owners. If it is necessary to encroach on NPS land, either a highway easement deed or a land exchange would be required. Either of these options would entail a lengthy approval process.

Low-lying Properties: Martha Rheinhardt reported on recent meetings with affected property owners. FHR has approved a new contract with LBG to survey the remaining structurally affected properties and to do mitigation design for others. Survey work for these properties will be coordinated with the needed roadway survey work.

Legal Issues: The Committee discussed the need for legal advice in developing agreements with LLP owners. FHR will seek to hire a qualified law firm to help with this.

Budget Status: The Committee briefly discussed the status of current grant-funded contracts. Hunt Durey asked that FHR estimate whether budget reallocations might be needed for FY16.

The Committee also needs to develop a list of potential tasks and budget estimates for the upcoming NOAA FFO grant, and the FY17 State Capital Budget. This will be discussed at the February HRRC meeting.

The Committee discussed again how best to approach federal agency heads to brief them on the Restoration Project. An overall strategy is needed for future fundraising and outreach. Chris Rein offered to rework the briefing statement that the Nature Conservancy (TNC) helped to develop last year, providing space for each agency to fine-tune the message to its needs and interests.

FEIS/EIR: Work is continuing to complete the final Environmental Impact Statement/Report (FEIS/EIR). Louis Berger Group (LBG) has drafted the Section 61 Findings for MEPA and Tim Smith is finishing the Adaptive Management Appendix. The goal is to release the document for public review later this winter and seek completion of the NEPA and MEPA review processes in the spring.

Documents Referred to in the Meeting:

- Minutes of the November 4, 2015 HRRC Meeting
- Minutes of the December 3, 2015 HRRC Meeting

Respectfully Submitted: Margo L. Fenn, Herring River Project Coordinator

