

Northern Lake Champlain Basin Water Quality Council
Regular Meeting, January 18, 2023 10 a.m. (Hybrid) Approved Minutes

See meeting materials at:

<https://www.ccrpcvt.org/northern-lake-champlain-basin-water-quality-council/>

1) Introductions, Changes to the Agenda and Public comment on items not on the agenda

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Vice-Chair Molly Varner. A quorum of 9 seats out of 9 were represented as noted in Bold. All attendees attended virtually except where noted.

(# seats)	Members Present	Alternates Present
Watershed Protection Organizations (2)	Kent Henderson, Friends of Northern Lake Champlain	<i>Don McFeeters, Friends of Northern Lake Champlain</i>
	Andreas Morgante, Lewis Creek Association	<i>Roger Crouse, Lake Iroquois Association</i>
NRCDs (2)	Remy Crettol, Winooski NRCD	
	Molly Varner, Grand Isle NRCD, VICE-CHAIR	
Municipalities (2)	Ken Mirvis, Grand Isle	<i>Tom Briselden, North Hero</i>
	Dave Wheeler, South Burlington	
RPCs (2)	Dean Pierce, Northwest RPC (left at 11 pm)	
		<<Miles Pierce, Chittenden County RPC
Land Conservation Organizations (1)	Emily Alger, South Hero Land Trust	
Primary Clean Water Service Provider Staff		Secondary CWSP Staff
<i>Dan Albrecht, Manager (at CCRPC offices)</i>		
Guests		
	<i>Kate Kelly, Lewis Creek Association</i>	<i>Ken Minck, Georgia Conservation Commission</i>
	<i>Christine Dougherty, Town of Williston</i>	<i>Karen Bates, VT DEC, Basin 5 Watershed Planner</i>
	<i>Kerrie Garvey, Watershed Consulting Associates</i>	<i>Tyler Knapp, Knapp Environmental</i>
	<i>Joe Bartlett, Fitzgerald Environmental</i>	<i>Monika Ingalls, City of South Burlington</i>
	<i>Meghan Arpino, Stone Environmental</i>	

The draft agenda was adopted by unanimous consent. No public comments were made on non-agenda items.

2) Review and approval of Minutes for Meeting of December 14, 2022 After a brief recap by Albrecht, *on a motion by Wheeler, with a second by Pierce, the 12/14/2022 draft minutes were approved unanimously with a minor correction to read “Andrea Morgante” instead of “Andreas.”*

3) Walk-through of current Call for Applications & Subgrant Application form Albrecht described the elements of the subgrant pre-application form and the subgrant application form itself. If your project was not discussed at the prior BWQC meeting, please send in your preapplication form first. It is very critical to fill out the section related to the average annual p-reduction and the cost effectiveness over the lifetime of the project before you invest too much time in writing a grant. Morgante expressed concern about the timeline being too short, especially in light of the need to do a screening form and/or consult with ag department staff. Albrecht noted that several projects are interested in applying so that is one reason he wants to get the grant call out the door and he noted as well that he can readily issue another call soon. He clarified that the CWSP is given authority to run a program. Off the top of his head, he does not know if regulations give BWQCs the authority to determine the time period a Call is open. He did add details to the Call that the screening forms can come in later. Morgante stated that going forward it would be good for BWQC and implementors to provide feedback to the CWSP on future timelines and requirements for upcoming grant rounds. Albrecht agreed but noted that he has been upfront for weeks that the formal grant application period was coming. In response to Briselden, he noted that he would not issue Task Order to subgrantees until confirmation is received from DEC that the project passes the screening form. Bates said she can provide input during BWQC meetings as well as before to

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potential subgrantees. Dougherty noted there are private landowners in her town that may wish to do non-regulatory projects and she hopes that the State can provide clarity regarding any complications vis-à-vis wetlands. Bates notes that DEC assumes that when a project is reviewed by a CWSP and then by its BWQC that the applicant knows how to move a project along and manage a project. She and Albrecht noted that people should work with organizations who are knowledgeable about this, and Albrecht stressed that applicants need to eventually be prequalified. Albrecht finished walking through the rest of the subgrant application form.

4) How to use the Interim Phosphorus Reduction Calculator tool

Link to download the interim phosphorus reduction calculator tool: <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/cwi/grants/resources>

Link to a recorded demonstration of how to use the tool: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj4HcprbQjI>

Claire Madden of DEC demonstrated how to access and use the Tool. Questions/comments and answers were as follows: (1) Floodplain connectivity can be hard to assess, what do you recommend?: The Functioning Floodplain Initiative (FFI) will be the best tool to do that. It is not quite ready yet work with DEC staff and think about how the project will slow the rate of incision; (2) there is no Tab in the calculator for Wetland Restoration?: yes, that is correct. DEC FFI staff are working on this and hope to have staff level trainings completed on this in June (3) the benefits of floodplain reconnection are realized in the first few years of a project but then taper off significantly, how will that be accounted for?: Yes, that's true. The FFI model will capture these different components. It will look at storage time life as it is the element that is affected by time. The other components are the annual capture and life span. She encourages folks considering these types of projects to look at the Natural Resources Restoration Project Standard Operating Procedures, especially its Appendix. There will be public trainings available before June on how to use the FFI tool. She can be reached at claire.madden@vermont.gov if you have questions.

In response to Morgante noting that the floodplain connectivity estimating tool is not done and how that would affect an application, Albrecht stated to include what information you can and the review will be more conversational with DEC. If a project is seeking design funds for a type of project that is known to not be too expensive in the construction realm, then it still might be worth funding even if the exact p-reduction credit is not known during the application stage. Additionally, regarding easements, yes, they are fundable, but they will still need to provide a calculation of p-reduction.

5) Election of new Chair of BWQC Albrecht reported that Mirvis has communicated to him that he wishes to step down to an Alternate role therefore he can no longer be Chair. Varner informed everyone that she does not wish to step up into the Chair role but can remain as Vice-Chair for the time being. Varner asked for volunteers to serve as Chair. No one responded. Wheeler suggested that Pierce (who had left the meeting) would make a good chair. Albrecht indicated he would check in with Pierce as well as poll the members by email. The chair tabled this item to the next meeting.

6) Notice of changes to appointments of Member/Alternates for Municipal and NRCD seats Crettol informed the Committee that Adelaide Dumm of the WNRCD staff will replace him in an NRCD seat with Pierson remaining as Alternate. Albrecht informed the Committee that Mirvis wishes to convert to Alternate status and Briselden has agreed to move to Member status in the Municipal Member category. Nicholas Prussock of the Town of Milton will move into the other Municipal Alternate seat to replace Dave Allerton.

7) Additional updates as needed from CWSP staff, DEC, BWQC Members and Guests Albrecht noted he will likely issue a 2nd call for proposals in February. Albrecht walked through the DEC project screening form. The BWQC can still vote on projects sans a form but he will hold off on issuing the grant until the form is complete. Bates provided further guidance on the form. In response to a question from Briselden, Albrecht stated that he will be doing the grant review and scoring the grant and making recommendations as to which projects should be funded. 70 points will be assigned for phosphorus reduction, 20 points for co-benefits and 10 points for other considerations. The BWQC role will be to act upon his recommendations and can tweak the co-benefit score if

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they disagree with his score. Bates encouraged applicants to work with established groups if they don't have experience with grant writing or grant management. Albrecht noted that one of the benefits of procuring engineers early on is that they have an incentive to help you write the grant application as they then could get hired by you. The deliverables for any planned subgrant application are located in the 2023 CWIP funding policy. In response to Morgante, yes, projects related to private roads are an eligible category and he encouraged potential applicants to talk to DEC to obtain clarity on eligibility.

- 8) **Agenda Items for February 15th** Review and action on Subgrant proposals received.
- 9) **Adjournment:** *_The meeting was adjourned by the Vice-Chair at 11:32 a.m.*