



KAREN FELDMAN
Acting Chair

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

MINUTES OF THE PARK ECOLOGY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 14, 2019

The Committee meeting convened at approximately 3:35 p.m.

Park Ecology Committee Members Present:

John Ernst, Chair, Dan Wilt, Bradley Austin (ESD), Robert Stegemann (DEC), Art Lussi

Other Members and Designees Present:

Karen Feldman, Acting Chair, Dr. Chad Dawson, Matt Tebo (DOS), William Thomas

Local Government Review Board:

Gerald Delaney, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Terry Martino, Sarah Reynolds, Kathy Regan, Emily Tyner, Kate-Lyn Knight, Shaun LaLonde, Keith McKeever, and Annemarie Peer

Approval of February 2018 Draft Minutes

The March draft minutes were approved on a motion by Art Lussi and seconded by Dan Wilt.

RASS Program Report (Kathy Regan)

Kathy Regan began by reporting that the monthly report has a new format. She also told the Board of some staff changes in the Department which are the retirement of Mark Rooks, the appointment of Mary O'Dell as Biologist 2, and that the search for a new Biologist 1 is underway.

Model For Protection – Lake George Salt Reduction Initiative (Chris Navitsky)

Mr. Navitsky began his presentation by reviewing the data which shows salt concentrations tripling over the past 38 years in the Lake George watershed. Mr. Navitsky also reviewed a private well study that indicates wells in close proximity to State highways have higher concentrations of sodium and chloride than do wells along local roads or wells not located near roads. He also described ecological impacts from the overuse of salt on our roads.

Mr. Navitsky reviewed the model for enduring protection, which includes partnerships, innovation, and investment. This model is based upon the “Science to Solution” approach used to combat invasive species and is now being used for this road salt reduction initiative. Specific examples included providing Best Management Agreements, hosting annual salt summits, engaging both the public and the private snow plow drivers, investing money into science, technology and education, and training efforts.

Mr. Navitsky continued by explaining the six best practices to reach Sustainable Winter Management (SWiM) certification: measure, calibrate, prevent, analyze, improve and optimize. He emphasized that the reduction of road salt would never be at the expense of maintaining safe roads.

Mr. Navitsky concluded his presentation by discussing next steps for the program. These include the development of policy (adjusting application rates based on specific storm events), enabling the towns and counties to self-assess, expanding SWiM certification to additional public and private applicators, expanding their engagement with the private applicators, increasing DOTs commitment, reducing salt reduction rates by 50%, continuing monitoring efforts.

After a brief questions and answer period, Mr. Navitsky was presented a certificate of appreciation from Acting Chair Feldman, Mr. Ernst, Ms. Martino, and Ms. Regan.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

The meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.