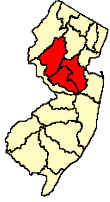


Raritan Basin



Central to New Jersey

Raritan Basin Watershed Alliance

www.raritanbasin.org

Steering Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 25 March 2009
Somerset County Administration Building

Minutes

1. Introductions: See attached attendance list
2. Minutes Approval and Agenda Review
3. Rutgers Water Resources Extension Agents: Nick Polanin discussed the five environmental agent positions for which hiring is underway. This is a 3 year pilot program, and the positions are tenure track. The selected candidates are currently meeting with stakeholders. The intent is the agents will complement existing watershed management efforts, help with implementation of watershed restoration plans and seek additional funding for implementation projects.
4. The Sustainable Raritan Summit: Judy Shaw indicated that the Summit is scheduled for May 15th and is being held with foundation funding. The summit will review the long range perspective of the Raritan's past and future. There will be four panels – environmental issues, economic issues, greenways and strategic planning. A reference document of all activities will be compiled. Save the date cards were mailed.
5. Agricultural Riparian Restoration Plan for the Raritan Basin: Christine Hall, NRCS and Jen House, North Jersey RC&D presented the CCPI project. Partners include NJWSA, NJIT and the Raritan Watershed Agricultural Committee. 30% of the historic riparian areas in the Basin have been converted to agriculture or urban uses. The goals of this project were to identify areas in need of restoration, prioritize those areas and look at the obstacles that exist in current funding programs. The GIS model includes four components: soil erodibility, runoff potential, wildlife habitat and impervious surface. The project will be completed by early fall and the results will be used in several upcoming efforts.
6. Basin-wide River Friendly Resident Program: Kathy Hale discussed efforts to expand the River-Friendly Resident program throughout the Basin. SBMWA implements the program in the Stony Brook-Millstone WMA and NJWSA has led the effort in the North & South Branch Raritan and the Lower Raritan. The program is a self-certification, consisting of 20 questions. Residents who receive a 75% score on the NJWSA questionnaire receive a reusable shopping bag. The program can be implemented by any group within the Basin. Anyone interested should contact Kathy.

7. Updates

- a. Highlands Council: 2 new projects ongoing that involve critical habitat management plans and water conservation management plans.
- b. Raritan TMDL: Draft was submitted to NJDEP by Omni. NJDEP provided comments to Omni. The spring proposal deadline will not be met.
- c. LBWP: Residents reporting issues, still working on C-1 designation, 2 cleanups planned with NJ WaterWatch.
- d. URWA: Celebrating 50th anniversary this year.
- e. Raritan Highlands Compact: meeting tomorrow
- f. RC&D: Walnut Brook stream stabilization and wetland restoration project will be underway this summer. Volunteers needed for buffer planting starting soon. Contact Grace Messinger for more information. Rockaway Creek project to utilize variable source area hydrology in municipal planning is also underway.
- g. SBWA: Annual dinner to celebrate 50th anniversary coming up, also Treasures of the South Branch on 6/13.
- h. Franklin EC: 3rd annual stream cleanup scheduled for 4/25.

8. Next Meeting Date and Agenda: Late summer, early fall.