

Rondout Creek Watershed Alliance Meeting

8/20/19

Attendance: Laura Finestone, Manna Jo Greene (left at 7), Jen Epstein, Damian Duda (EPA), Michael Squire (DEC), Ben Ganon (Ulster Dept of Env), Amanda LaValle (Ulster Dept of Env), Andrew (missed his last name, from High Falls), Catherine Betz (from High Falls), Toby Bergman (from High Falls), Barbara Bash (from High Falls), Nancy Clark (from High Falls), John Messerschmidt (for a couple of minutes), Andrew Faust (arrived at 7)

Damian Duda recorded contact info but we haven't received a copy of the sign-in sheet

1. EPA presentation on Ellenville Superfund. Docs and info available at:
epa.gov/superfund/ellenville-scrap

Notice was in Shawangunk Journal as a classified - Damian felt it was unfortunate that it wasn't better noticed

Pre-2005: site was full of debris, tires, vehicles, more.

Remedial investigation: soil, water sampling, analysis, risk assessment

Lead in soil near & on neighbor's property: big deal. Trees cut & removed in that area. Contaminated soil was moved?

Groundwater well tested showed no effect on Beer Kill water. No instream testing. No groundwater modeling at site.

Record of decision: design & build in one year - 2011

Replantings in lead soil area: some died due to wet roots.

Annual groundwater monitoring: one upgradient, two downgradient. Usually happens in spring.

2017: First 5-year review

Landfill cap is per NYS requirements. Basically thick plastic with soil and plants. No trees allowed. Landfill is not lined on bottom.

Landfill cap area is fenced. Site is developable for commercial/industrial. Could do residential on some sections, but no gardens due to metals in soil.

Gas vents on landfill, but gas isn't treated.

When you take a site off the National Priorities List, you can proceed with deletion. Can be done in 2 phases (NOI followed by notice of direct final deletion) or 1 phase (both notices in register at once). This was done in 1 phase.

Q: Napanoch Paper Mill? A: not an EPA project. State project, completed.

Q: How deep were the wells? A: Down to bedrock usually, but don't know.

Q: Solar farms? A: DEC requirements don't automatically support, but area needs to be assessed to be sure. Amanda L added that foreclosure eligibility gives county additional tools to develop for solar. County could take title & offer an RFP, or work with the town.

Q: Prairie restoration or wildflower seeding? A: At this point it's up to NYS DEC for maintenance.

Q: How do you make it beautiful again? How can it contribute to the ecosystem?

2. High Falls Superfund site at Mohonk Rd Industrial Plant

DEC M & O of plant

TCE & PCE - chlorinated organic solvents.

Private wells were contaminated and are now abandoned to prevent use. Using NYC water.

Treating groundwater: pump & treat. Because all other wells in the area have been abandoned the treatment pump draws more efficiently.

Still some pockets of contamination although plume is fairly stable. Nature of contaminant (denser than water, doesn't dissolve) is such that pockets can be hard to find, hard to remove. "Matrix diffusion:" Soil and rocks have absorbed a lot of contaminant.

May put in more pumping wells.

Owner gave land for High Falls/Rosendale Water Treatment Plant. Original plant has been modified. Treatment: air stripper, then goes through carbon. 30 gal/minute

EPA just transferred far field plume to DEC.

Treating vapor intrusion into building to maintain clean indoor air.

ROD probably said 30 years, but it will be longer, until contaminant max is less than limit. Limit might be 5 ppb, wasn't sure.

Q: Vapor intrusion: body of knowledge about safe levels is changing. Have you been back to test residences? A: Problems were at plant, not homes. At this point resampling/retesting would be up to DEC.

Q: How large of an area? A: Few hundred feet?

3. Laura read the mission statement, talked about history & plans:

- Trees for Tribes: will do program in September, hoping to do something in High Falls at new park, farmers, edible forests
- Brochure
- NY Rising, work in VT, trying to raise awareness about connectedness and relationship with water
- Watershed sections, 14 townships, involving municipalities
- Intermunicipal Agreement, Council, will probably start it again

Q: Why trees:

Q: I just moved to the creek. Why didn't I know the water was polluted?

Q: Have we heard about the Mud Ball event. It's on Facebook. In High Falls (?)

Q: What's the RCWA-RVK connection? A: Summit. DEC WAVE.

History/plans, continued:

- Intermunicipal collaboration.
- Harvesting tires, controversy.
- Esopus. Tongore. Ashokan releases.
- Journey Through Lower Esopus brochure.
- Series of articles.
- Napanoch- Superfund site.

Andrew commented that bacteria aren't important, persistent contaminants should be focus of work. NGO's shouldn't do the job of regulatory agencies. The system is broken.

History/plans, continued:

- Want to work with school system. Might partner with Wild Earth.
- ECC's have been involved. Help with funding, municipal sponsorship of work.

4. Coxing Kill planting

The last time Andrew talked to the land owner, the owner said "he can't plan that far out in the future," so Andrew needs to get back in touch with him to confirm 9/21.

5. Brochure: maps

Andrew did not have Adriana's map or any other brochure content, but says he's working on the brochure.

6. RVK presentation

Jen E gave a brief overview of microbial source tracking results from 2017 during the discussion, confirmed that RVK will be doing a presentation on monitoring in October and apologized for the delay