

**Mayo Mill Dam Feasibility Study Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2023**

Attending (12): Tom Lizotte, Chris Maas, Jack Clukey, Maranda Nemeth, Eileen Bader-Hall, Mike Burke, Lucy Van Hook, Alsina Brenenstuhl

Zoom attendees: Denise Buzzelli, Cindy Freeman-Cyr, Anne Ball and Sylvie Piquet

Call to Order: 5:32 pm

Partnership Funding Option Notes:

Maine Downtown Center (MDF) – Anne Ball- Senior Program Director, Sylvie Piquet – Program Director

- MDF does not fund grants on its own. They are a leveraging partner when applying for grants.
- Annual Membership (D-F is already an affiliate)
 - Membership includes: educational opportunities, free or discounted opportunities
 - Connect members from different regions, sectors and public and private entities to address common challenges and opportunities.
 - Leadership Development programs provide training and learning opportunities and technical assistance.
- Presented examples included – Westbrook, they focused on the river as an economic development driver. Effort was led by the Friends of the Presumpscot. They made the fish ladder a destination for viewing, and promoted other river outdoor recreation. Other examples include Eastport and Skowhegan. Positive connection to downtown revitalization – interconnection between outdoor recreation, health and wellness and downtown vitality.
- Previous experience with D-F: Columns under Center Theatre 2020, registered as a historic district (makes D-F eligible for historic tax credits)

Bureau of Parks and Lands – Speaker Doug Beck – Outdoor Recreation Supervisor

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund – \$2.5M/year - \$500,000 Grant cap**
 - Established in 1964 to assist federal, state, and local governments in the acquisition and/or development of public outdoor recreation facilities.
 - Funding for recreational activities as long as it's on public lands. It must be accessible to the public. Does not fund indoor recreation.
 - Reimbursement grant, with 50:50 match.
 - Grant timeline 18-24 months from application to project kickoff. Site inspection of previously funded projects would need to be done before application.
- **Recreation Trails Program - \$1.4M/year**
 - Funded through Federal Highway
 - Can use an easement or use permit, do not have to own the land
 - 80:20 match, and can be paired with LWCF funds

*Both are reimbursement grants. Atlantic Salmon Federation and The Nature Conservancy can assist with upfront funds if they are project partners.

NOAA Habitat Restoration Center – Matt Bernier – Professional Engineer and Habitat Resource Specialist

- Grant officer for the D-F Dam Feasibility Study
- Maine is one of the last Atlantic Salmon Refuges in the Nation
- Multiple fish passage funding opportunities
 - 3 more rounds of funding expected
 - \$400M funding opportunities for fish passage
- Funding Priorities: large technically challenging projects, protection of endangered species, improving climate resilience by reducing flooding and improving public safety
- Encouraged a resiliency approach – improve fish passage and reduce flood risk.

Comments:

Overall: Enthusiasm about the idea of a river trail with multiple put-in and take-out spots along river or generally exploring a way of connecting town owned land along river? Could be towards upstream to Foxcroft Academy land.

Chris Maas: If it's decided to remove the dam and generator, is NOAA still at the table?

Response: Yes, best case scenario, it would lower flood risks and help with the fish passage.

Cindy Freeman-Cyr: Importance of visioning, not worrying about cost at the moment. Funding opportunities are out there. Not wanting us to be confined about cost at the moment. Possibility for the riverwalk to connect with FA property and provide the area with another entry point to the water for residents and students to take advantage of.

Jack Clukey: I would like to see this tied into monument square redevelopment, creating a cohesive villages project.

Tom Lizotte: At this stage, we are brainstorming and can narrow down projects as we progress and open to what the science and engineering points with water levels.

Mike Burke: As we progress through the study, we can provide project examples with similar costs for reference.

Communications and Outreach Action Items:

- Alsina – Piscataquis River Canoe Race April 22nd Mayo Dam Study info at registration and results table.
- Jack- Kiwanis meeting announcement at the April meeting
- Chris- Shared 1-pager in Historical Society March Newsletter – 300 on the listserve
- Maranda – Presentation for Climate Action Committee in April, as suggested by Chris to learn more about fish ecology, resiliency, and fish passage issues.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for Tuesday, April 25th, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Adjournment: 7:09 pm

Submitted by: Alsina Brenenstuhl

Date: 3/29/2023

