



Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission



Special Meeting Minutes
Wednesday Nov 6, 2019
Waterford Town Hall, 7:30 pm

Members present: Chair Peter Harris, Eric Kanter, Paul Spakowski, J. Patrick Kelly, Larry Tytla, Marcia Benvenuti, Tom Bowlen
Members absent : Elizabeth Gelinias

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm and a quorum established.
- 2) Public Comment : Barbara Daversa, 168 Niantic River Rd, Waterford, expressed her support for the Public-Private Seeding Initiative being considered by WELSCO.
- 3) The final document for the Niantic River Public-Private Seeding Initiative drafted by Ms. Winkler and the WELSCO sub-committee was discussed. A motion to approve the document titled, "The Niantic River Project, A public-private seeding initiative, subcommittee recommendation" and its subsequent actions were approved unanimously on a motion by Ms. Benvenuti, seconded by Mr. Kelly. Document is attached to these minutes.
- 4) The WELSCO sub-committee meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm on a motion by Mr. Spakowski, seconded by Mr. Kanter

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Harris
WELSCO Chair

FILED

November 8, 2019 AT 8:49 AM/PM

Bradley Stearns ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

**The Niantic River Project
A Public-Private Seeding Initiative
October 2019**

Project Scope

Oyster Seed: 100,000-200,000
Seed Size: 25mm-30mm
Location: The Area North of the Flats/West of WELSCO 3 and East of Sandy Point
Placement: Mid November
Funding: Joint Funding from the community and WELSCO
Partners: Community Partners, WELSCO, Jim Markow, UCONN/URI Researchers

Goal: Create a Self-Sustaining Oyster Project

Broad, community-based support exists for efforts to restore/enhance shellfish in the Niantic River. A community-based, public-private partnership provides a unique opportunity to work together to create a self-sustaining, shellfish program in the region.

As part of this initiative, working with WELSCO and municipal leaders from both East Lyme and Waterford, a public-private partnership will be created to spearhead a seeding initiative in the river. The goal is to enhance the oyster population, help improve water quality, and create a self-sustaining program that spawns and spreads to other areas of the river creating additional revenue for WELSCO through the sale of recreational shellfish licenses. WELSCO may use the additional revenue to further enhance and sustain shellfishing in the River.

No surface area will be removed from recreational activity and no Type II equipment will be utilized. The juvenile shellfish placed in the Niantic River as part of this project are considered an unrestricted donation and will be subject to the authority of the Waterford East Lyme Shellfish Commission.

Plan

Based on subcommittee discussions and community feedback, 100,000 oyster seed will be placed in the Niantic River for 18-24 months. The seed will be divided between the area north of the flats (west OF WELSCO 3) and the area East of Sandy Point

Because of concerns for clammers and not restricting access, WELSCO 2, WELSCO 3 and the areas North of the flats and East of Sandy Point were identified as appropriate areas for seed placement. DEEP expressed concerns with the placement of seed in WELSCO 2 so we will explore the possibility of moving shellfish there to accommodate shellfishing at a later date.

In November, seed will be placed in the area north of the Flats and West of WELSCO 3 and in the area East of Sandy Point. Public information will be developed and shared to educate residents about the seeding project. No identifying buoys will be placed in the water. The seed

will be left in place and monitored by Mr. Markow and his team with the goal of improving water quality, making the shellfish available to the public for recreational shellfishing and to create a self-sustaining population in the river.

Testing

Regular testing will occur, beginning in the Spring, utilizing Mr. Markow’s testing lab in Norwalk, CT, coordinated by grad students involved at the Hatchery in Noank. Regular measurements will be taken to monitor growth and development.

Water quality testing, including Nitrogen and nutrients, will be provided through researchers at UCONN/URI. Baseline testing will be done at the two sites prior to seed placement and again in the Spring, twice in the Summer and once in the fall. Testing already occurs in two other locations in the river as part of the Milestone project. By working with the UCONN/URI researchers, we’ll be able to add our data to the existing resources and analysis already being done in the river.

Funding

Funding will be provided through a Community Based fundraising initiative with the goal of generating \$10,000 for the project. We have the opportunity to expand the project based on the funding response and if matching funds are made available through WELSCO.

Project Cost Breakdown

Purchase, Prep and Placement of Seed (100,000):	\$5000
Ongoing Measurement and Monitoring:	\$1000
Water Quality Sampling, Testing and Analysis:	\$4000
Total Project Cost:	\$10,000