



**St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council**

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*Draft*

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 21, 2009 7:00 PM**

**Room 226, County Courthouse**

**Canton, New York**

*Action items in bold italics*

- 1. Call to Order:** Chairman D. Katz called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.
- 2. Roll Call, Determination of Quorum:** A quorum was present.  
Members present included: T. Cutter; B. Flavin; A. Heidenreich; R. Horst; D. Howard; G. Johnson; D. Katz; L. Perry; C. Rediehs L. Rudiger.  
Members absent included: D. Church; D. O'Shea; J. Rosales; P. Skomsky, A. Soutar, B. Zimmerman.  
Staff: J. Montan; J. Tenbusch.  
Guests: None.  
Press: None.
- 3. Hearings, Comments from the Public:** D. Katz introduced Roy Horst, EMC member and Program Director for the North American Society for Bat Research.  
  
Horst provided an overview about bats, which include over 1,400 species. Bats range in size from 1.5 grams to over 1,200 gm, with wingspan of almost 6 ft. Horst noted that different bats eat insects, fruit, flowers, fish, frogs, scorpions, human blood, other bats, etc.; he reported as a myth the commonly-held belief that bats eat large numbers of mosquitoes.  
  
Horst also reported on recent research done on white-nose syndrome, which has a mortality rate of approx. 90%. Horst noted that white-nose syndrome appears to be a cold-loving fungus generally confined to the skin. Affected bats appear emaciated, dehydrated, and without sufficient fat reserves to last through hibernation. The sources of this fungus are unknown; preventive measures/treatments for affected bats are also unknown.  
  
Regarding bats and wind turbines, Horst reported that collisions between bats and rotor blades are common, due to the speed that blade tips can achieve (over 450 mph). Horst also reported that many bats, which miss rotor blades, still succumb to burst lungs, due to partial vacuums created in the wake of rotor blade movements.

**EMC: Everybody Must Care!**

4. **Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business:**  
The Order of Business was accepted by consensus.
5. **Approval of the Minutes of the November 19, 2008 Meeting:** B. Flavin noted that, in Item 11, it was he who voted against the motion. A motion to approve the November meeting minutes as amended (Flavin, Rudiger) was passed.
6. **Report by the Representative of the Board of Legislators:** L. Perry reported:
  - She will introduce a resolution to oppose NYS efforts to cap or reduce property tax payments on state-owned land in the Adirondacks.
  - Grand opening for the jail will be held on January 26<sup>th</sup>.
  - Proponents of a 4-lane highway are looking for support from the BOL; the Board passed a resolution of support in 2008.
  - Perry will continue as chair of the Board's IT committee.
  - Perry reviewed recent discussions about sales tax distribution.
  - She received a query from a constituent asking why not ban all open burning?
  - Perry reported that a space study, now underway, might inform discussions about what to do with the old jail.
7. **Reports by EMC Members on Conversations with County Legislators:** None.
  - B. Flavin reported speaking with V. Burns.
  - T. Cutter asked about protocol for contacting assigned legislators. D. Katz, A. Heidenreich, C. Rediehs reported on their experiences.
8. **Report of the Committees:**
  - a. **Executive** – D. Katz. No report.
  - b. **Education** – R. Horst reported:
    - The committee began to review the Work Plan for 2009 to establish priorities:
      - Several items are annual or on-going – these include the EMC Retreat, an Earth Day event; Envirothon; Conservation Field Days; speakers for monthly meetings; monthly message for BOL.
      - The committee decided to prioritize these items:
        - Wind issues
          - \* Find expertise on related topics; schedule presentations
          - \* Promote information/education for the public
        - Other energy projects: Ogdensburg hydro; photo-voltaic; other hydro projects.
        - Citizen science
        - Proposed speakers on the following topics:
          - \* Climate change
          - \* Oswegatchie relicensing
          - \* SLU Field Station/Johnson Science Hall
          - \* Farm air/water quality

**c. Natural Resources** – A. Heidenreich reported:

- Regarding the proposed Ogdensburg pump/storage plant:
  - The committee recommended that staff write to FERC asking about a number of environmental issues related to this project; a motion (T. Cutter; G. Johnson) was approved.
- The committee discussed a proposed climate change resolution from the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce.
  - Several EMC members volunteered to work with the Energy Task Force; these included D. Katz; A. Heidenreich; L. Perry.
- The committee discussed DEC emergency firewood transportation regulations.

**d. NYSAEMC** – No report.

**9. Report of the Staff:** J. Tenbusch reported on preparations for the upcoming EMC Retreat at Camp Huntington.

J. Montan reported:

- The Bion project has been put on hold by the developers.
- Household Hazardous Waste pick-up days will be held at the Gouverneur Fair Grounds on a date in May; and at the Massena Transfer Station on a date in August.
- Potential speakers at future EMC meetings include: Pat Curran of Seaway Timber; Alliance Energy; Riverbank Energy.

L. Rudiger asked about the County's woodburning study. J. Montan stated that the study is completed; a presentation will be made to the Board of Legislators. Overall, Montan noted that there would be some savings, and that fewer greenhouse gasses would be emitted.

Tenbusch reported on several recent developments with the County's draft model wind farm regulation local law. The EMC approved a motion (L. Rudiger; R. Horst) to seek to reconvene the Ad Hoc Wind Farm Model Ordinance Committee (Ad Hoc WiF MOC) to revise the model law.

**10. Unfinished Business:** None.

**11. New Business:** None.

**12. Announcements:**

- D. Howard reported that the Soil & Water Conservation District's annual tree sales program has started.
- D. Howard reported that the County has decided to participate in the Adopt-A-Platoon program. Anyone is welcome to help out.
- A. Heidenreich reported that the North Country Energy Fair will take place the last weekend in April.

- J. Montan announced that DEC is accepting comments on its proposal for floatplanes on Lows Lake until Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>. In addition, comments on the draft Open Space Plan will be accepted until Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>.
- J. Tenbusch announced that Save The River's Winter Weekend will be held Feb.6-7 in Clayton.

**13. Message to Board of Legislators:** Please talk with your Legislator about the emergency firewood regulations. Impress upon them the seriousness of the issue – if invasive insects get a foothold in our county, there would be widespread damage. Suggest to your legislator that, even if the emergency firewood regulations are difficult to enforce, they will begin to affect citizens' behavior.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM.



Andrew Soutar, Secretary

Minutes prepared by J. Tenbusch, J. Montan

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