

**Carmans River Partnership
Together with
Carmans River Management Plan Performance Committee
2022 Annual Meeting
Thursday Dec 1, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.**

Summary:

Introductions- Thomas B. Williams & James Tripp, Partnership Co-Chairman

Town of Brookhaven Supervisor Edward Romaine addresses the group with a reminder that the Carmans is the only river that is totally within TOB and is the heart of Brookhaven. One of the greatest things he has contributed in the beginning of his term was the preservation of lands surrounding the Carmans and its connection to the Pine Barrens. It is critical to preserve these areas.

A Day in the Life of The Carmans River 2022- Presented by Melissa Griffiths Parrott, Education and Outreach Coordinator, Central Pine Barrens Commission. Aleida Perez Supervisor of Student Research and Citizen Science, Brookhaven National Laboratory.

A day in the Life continues to be an amazing program bringing together 47 schools and 47 experts to learn about river and tidal ecosystems. Data collected by students using materials that are clean and specified to ensure accuracy and year to year comparison. Working on improving comprehensive data sets by increased communication with teachers to clarify data finding. Major goal and outcome of the program is that teachers will use data in their curriculum STEM and research projects science math and other disciplines and programming.

Land Management Updates and Acquisitions in the Carmans River Watershed- Presented by Luke Ormand, Town of Brookhaven Senior Environmental Analyst

Land Acquisitions

- Brush Property- 38 acres for 3.1 million within 0-2 and 2-5 year groundwater zones.
- Islander East- NYS Grant Funding being used to acquire 4.1 acres at ~\$700,000. Parcel significant because it adds on to an existing 23.2 acre preserved parcel adjacent to Clare Rose facility.
- Brookhaven Hamlet- cooperative acquisition and management. Partnering with the Post Morrow Foundation, acquired 3 lots totaling 6.37 acres, with an additional donation of 2 acres connecting the acquisitions. Adjacent landowners have expressed interest in selling. Outparcel on the HOG Farms is likely being converted to a PDR lot.
- Town partnering with NYS to demolish a structure along the river just south of upper lake and adjacent to the town's Camp Olympia facility. The land will forever be preserved by the state. Start 2023.
- The town has Identified multiple encroachments on open space within the 0-2 and 2-5 groundwater contributing areas. These encroachments were removed with assistance from DEC and the Pine Barrens Commission.
- Kayak rental facility- new lease agreement signed in 2021 and continues to be one of the most popular recreational facilities in the Town. Native planting area will be established in Spring 2023.

Land Management

- Agalinis acuta*, sandplain gerardia a federally listed plant. Last documented a decade ago and after surveys conducted in Carmans Watershed locations- not found in 2022. Needs specific conditions to

survive and this year's drought conditions probably hindered its growth. Physical management of open space is needed to protect and reestablish.

-Cameras positioned at narrow crossing to capture usage of the river by humans and wildlife. Amazing footage of wildlife was shared with the group.

Best of the Rest- Presented by John Turner, Town of Brookhaven Division of Land Management

LI Pine Barrens Society coming up to 30th anniversary of Pine Barrens Protection Act, ensuring the preservation of critical areas on LI. *Best of the Rest* presented to a number of groups-Southampton, Riverhead, and Brookhaven Town Boards, County Exec Staff, and State Legislature. Planning to present to a number of civics. *Best of the Rest* campaign identifies land important to acquire because of a need to establish a more continuous landscape. Recognizing that we have acquired a great deal of land to preserve natural landscape there is now an issue regarding privately owned lots making it difficult to manage the open space. Management such as with invasive species, running recreational trails, and conducting prescribed burns. Hoping the gov't's will work together to eliminate old file maps.

TOB Supervisor Ed Romain fully supports seeking recent Bond bill funding to acquire more open space. Also stated he will work with tax mapping agency and the county to modernize and eliminate overlap with the old file maps.

Please see the *Best of the Rest* Campaign document for lands identified as priority in acquisition and preservation.

Lower Lake Fish Passage- Presented by Peter Scully, Deputy County Executive for Water Resources

Thanks and Congratulations to TOB Supervisor Romaine for his success in open space initiatives and acquisitions. Also for his support in recently signed 1699 that transferred 200 parcels into the county park system, many of which are in the Carmans River Watershed.

Lower Lake Fish Passage Complete after 10 years of planning with 2 necessary redesigns. Project constructed attractively and will restore fish passage for the first time in 200 years.

County also involved in land acquisition with Real Estate Division's Michael Kerr working with the TOB to secure 17 parcels in the watershed area. Using money that resulted from the 1988 referendum derived from drinking water protection program.

Water Quality Monitoring of the Carmans River, Watershed, and Central Pine Barrens Update- Presented by Amanda May, USGS

5 year monitoring of discharge and groundwater levels. Looking to expand and operate a comprehensive water resource monitoring program for the Central Pine Barrens Region with a publicly accessible database, baseline conditions to future assess changes and trends, and identify sources of ecohdrologic stress. 5 stream testing sites along Carmans River. Also sampling for nutrients, inorganics, physical parameters, pharmaceuticals and pesticides. Total nitrogen is a focus of analysis and determination for water quality conditions. Nitrogen and Chloride are being compared to 1970's data. Collecting last round of data for the water year and will be analyzing the 5 year data set- to provide an interpretive report for Winter 2024.

Please visit the project page at: [USGS.gov/lipinebarrens](https://www.usgs.gov/lipinebarrens) or email questions directly to

amay@usgs.gov, ifisher@usgs.gov, asimonson@usgs.gov

Invasive Species in the Carmans River & Watershed-Presented by Bill Jacobs, Program Manager, & Long Island Invasive Species Management Area Team

Carmans river is one of LISSMAS high priority water bodies on LI. Rake toss surveys conducted for aquatic invasives using SAS Pro App. Lily Lake heavy with invasives. Watercress found in several places on the river. Aquatic Invasive Plants Species- Watercress, Variable leaved water milfoil, Reed canary grass and Carolina fanwort. Species of Concern, Small Carpet Grass *Arthroaxon hispidus* and Floating Water Primrose *Ludwigia*. Returned this year in June to look for *Ludwigia*. found none in lower lake or upper lake. Keeping Carmans clear will require annual monitoring and immediate action to remove new detections. Asian clams also found. DEC reported *Ludwigia* in Artists Lake and they have been working with Luke and TOB to control it there so it does not spread.

Spotted Lantern Fly- confirmed report from October in the Pine Barrens. Poses a threat to grape vines and problematic for plants and human materials. Not sure yet how to prevent them or eradicate them.

Recommended strategies: prevention, early detection and containment, suppression and eradication

Address Pathways of Invasion, respond to new infestations, signage, and decontamination stations.

Meeting soon with county at Southaven to assess invasives.

Bill Jacobs: liismaprism@gmail.com, Abby Bezruczyk: abby.liisma@gmail.com, Melody Penny: melody.liisma@gmail.com

Southern Pine Beetle in the Central Pine Barrens-presented by Polly Weigand, Science and Stewardship Manager, Central Pine Barrens Commission

SPB significant resurgence and exponential growth in Carmans river watershed. outbreak moving up the river corridor and watershed to Warbler Woods, Longwood Estate lands and southern end of Rocky Point Pine Barrens. Moved through Southaven county park with extensive damage. Also damaging Ridge, BNL, Firemans field, Brookhaven state park, Manorville Hills, one of the largest outbreaks in Napeague, Hither Hills.

Response being coordinated by DEC, monitoring by air and ground surveys. cut and leave suppressions. 5000 trees cut since August by emergency response contracted forester.

Proactive and Preventative Management- thinning to reduce density and dissipate pheromones as well as prescribed fire to reduce understory competition and fuel loads, promote pitch pine regeneration.

Call to Action- further cooperation between the State, NFW, and the Commission to continue preventative management and response. Concern for drought in spring and resurgence after a possible warm winter.

Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge-

Presented by Annjanette Bagozzi, Refuge Manager, LI NWR Complex

Visitor service highlighted: NYS Birding trail, new info and videos with QR codes, took part in visitor surveys, website completely updated, selected for America the Beautiful passes, recreational lands pass.

2023- improving fishing access through Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) and working with the TOB. Redoing parking lot, revamping exhibits in visitor center, installing new signage, highway signs, wayfinding signs and entrance signs.

Invasive species surveys summer 2022- 52 invasives recorded on 530 plots or 328 acres. 1,000 lbs removed from Morton, Wertheim and Oyster Bay. 2023 invasives inventory of all habitats. Sayville will receive herbicide and Wertheim will have black swallowwort removal, post herbicide monitoring, invasive species volunteer days.

Grassland management and monitoring freshwater impoundment. water movement models. waterbird surveys at the big fish impoundment every two weeks.

Awarded \$412,000 dollars to manage dead trees especially on the east side. Looking to Establish fuel breaks and fire roads, fuels reduction, thinning vegetation manipulations and invasive species management- additionally be able to do prescribed burns. Really need some fire regime to prevent wild fires and to promote regeneration.

Sandplain gerardia- Sayville location 682 compared to 1,000-2,000 plants recorded in recent years. Most likely due to drought conditions.

Trout Population and River Conditions-

Presented by Michael Barger, Trout Unlimited-425 Art Flick Chapter

Commends the group for watching the river. This 2022 season April 1-Oct 15 fished carmans river 26 times- caught 9 different species brook, brown, rainbow, perch, bass, pickerel and sun fish. Saw carp and alewife. Did not catch but know striped bass were present. Two snapping turtles the size of bathtubs.

12 thermometers will be managed by Ivan and an environmental group from Longwood School.

Temps were high north of power lines. Will not fish days that the water is over 70 degrees as to not stress the fish population any further. The same practice should be followed by others fishing the river and will talk to Trout Unlimited about spreading the word. Sometime in mid-June there was poaching with a casting net. Very disappointing that they took all stocked and native fish near gate E or blind 5. Spoke with Heide and recommends DEC put in signage.

Monofilament collection- emptying from 3 collectors along river. Chairman Williams asked for one to be placed at Beaver Dam. Ann Marie Chapman has eagle scouts looking for projects and will connect them.