

Ulster County EMC Meeting Notes December 10, 2014

Meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM

Members in Attendance:

Steve Noble, Chair, At Large

Cindy Lanzetta, At Large,

Kristen Schara, At Large

Catherine Quick, Esopus

Amanda Lavalley, UC Dept. of Environment

Jim Littlefoot, New Paltz

John Sansalone, Gardiner

William More, At Large

Ann Brandt, At Large

Guests: Betta Broad - Energy & Climate Program Manager Catskill Mountainkeeper, Kevin McEvoy –
Kingston, Julie Noble - Kingston

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

Amanda presented an overview of the UC action plan to address the EAB infestation. The EAB attacks all species of ash trees. Signs of infestation include extensive woodpecker damage (blonding), trunk sprouts and trunk splits. Dead and damaged ash trees can cause significant road hazards because the trees tend to break up and fall in large segments. Quarantine areas have been set up but the infestation is spreading quickly. UC initiated a plan in 2010 to address the problem. The most effective deterrent at this time is to remove infected trees. UC surveyed trees along county roads and infested trees were prioritized for removal. Residential and forested areas are the most likely to contain infested trees. The current protocol is to leave waste materials at the site. Limbs with a diameter less than 14 in. are mulched. However, there is danger that the large chunks will be taken and transported outside the quarantine zones. Injection treatments from arborists are available to homeowners who want to preserve trees on their properties.

Because the EAB only damages the outer layers, the wood is still usable and has potential value. Solutions for handling the waste materials were discussed. Areas in Michigan where the EAB was first discovered, allow transport of material within quarantine zones. The UCCRA may be expanding composting operations which would allow them to accept larger quantities of mulch. The Rockland County Solid Waste Management Authority operation was also suggested as a possible processor of infected materials.

Ulster County Dept. of Environment Update

Local Law No. 4 has been enacted to remove the term limits that had been imposed on EMC members. The Dept. of the Environment still needs to be included on the EMC.

The UC Energy and Environment Committee is considering a pilot program to convert county transport vans from gasoline (currently 10 mi/gal) to propane. The cost is projected to be \$5,000 per van. UC Dept. of the Environment analysis shows that the project payback rate would not justify the expense. Purchasing new vans with higher gas mileage (~20 mi/gal) may be a better option. Other options suggested include biodiesel. Amanda will continue to study. Suggestions included looking at data from NYC and post office data of vehicle life cycles and costs. Whatever method is chosen, the transportation maintenance crews will have to be retrained.

NYSERDA has funding to install up to 40 electric vehicle charging stations. The stations typically cost about \$6,000, but costs can be greatly reduced if the work is done in-house. UC will be installing EV charging stations at locations such as the courthouse and UCCC for use by county fleet vehicles, employees and the public. Public access will be available after work hours.

Amanda provided copies of the proposed Pilgrim Pipeline route. Six towns in UC have passed resolutions opposing it. Landowners have complained about receiving threatening letters from surveyors regarding access for the project. The pipeline will probably run under streams based on state standards. Local first responders will have to be trained and equipped to handle accidents resulting from spills and leakages, including explosions/fires. Pipeline companies are not required to pay for cleanup. There is disagreement regarding the best method for transport of shale oil. The current options are rail, river barge and/or pipeline. Using the oil will add to global climate change as is is extracted, transported, processed and used.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00.