



## Rivers of the World Foundation

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# Annual Meeting Summary

## Program Planning and Implementation-2013-2014

**Date:** October 12, 2013 (Saturday) ~ **Time:** 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM

**Venue:** Prince of Peace Presbyterian Church, Crofton, MD

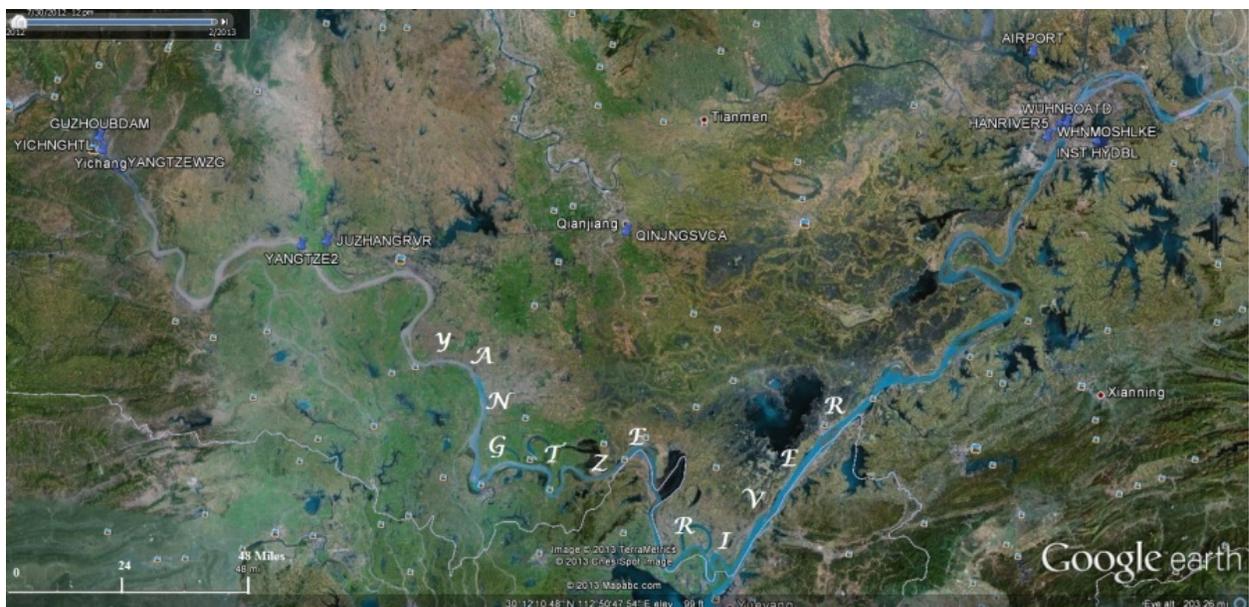
### 1. Background:

The primary objective of the Rivers of the World (ROW) Foundation is to make all efforts to cleanup highly polluted Rivers in US, India, SE Asia, S. America, Africa, Europe, and Other Parts of the World. In April 2009 the ROW Foundation has received approval of the 501(C)3 status. The Foundation is making charitable, educational, and scientific efforts to make a difference in the life, health and wellbeing of people.

### 2. Meeting Attendees :

Bill Roper, Chris Perry, Dennis Haag, Dick Lahn, KK Das, Matt Perry, Subijoy Dutta;

**By Conference Call (Domestic and International)** - Zhao Hong (Wuhan city, China), Victor Wooten (Tennessee), , Sucharit Dutta (Kolkata, India), Noel Hechanova, (Iloilo, Philippines), Evelyn Belleza (Iloilo, Philippines), Edmund Wong (Arlington, Virginia), Daryl Jackson (Poteau, Oklahoma).



Yangtze River, China (January 2013)

**Purpose of the Meeting** - to begin planning Rivers of the World (ROW) events for 2014; scheduled phone conference call conversations with ROW collaborators from locations around the U.S. and internationally, mostly in Asia.

**General Topic** - ROW plan for World Water Day 2014, which will be planned for March 22, 2014, however, can be observed during a week before or after in that timeframe. Like the last year we plan to have the WWD2014 observed in China - Wuhan city, Philippines - Iloilo City; India – Agra, Gokul, Rishikesh, Kolkata, Bhuvanewar, Silchar, Guwahati, and Vizianagaram; USA – Washington, DC, and Poteau, Oklahoma.

### 3. Agenda Items

#### A. Registration/Introductions

After initial registration, Bill Roper provided a short introduction and called the meeting to order.

#### Through Conference Call

##### A. Project Presentations

- a. **Zhao Hong(China)** – Plans for Yangtze River Cleanup and Protection – Ms. Zhao Hong organized cleanup for World Water Day in conjunction with ROW in 2013 and **plans to do it in a bigger way in 2014**. We would provide support by shipping bags/gloves for the cleanup activity in 2014. She mentioned that the volunteers are interested in learning about water monitoring and want to conduct such monitoring. Another factor to look into there is the decline in population of the Finless Porpoise or River Dolphins, and if a preliminary study is undertaken by ROW to look at the water quality and quantity for the upstream and downstream of Wuhan City, it may provide some understanding and may help to determine the possible steps needed for protecting and monitoring the water quality of the River. Subijoy Dutta will coordinate with Zhao Hong on this issue.
- b. **Victor Wooten:** Renowned Bass Guitar ([www.victorwooten.com](http://www.victorwooten.com)) player from Nashville, TN, with Bass Nature Camp on the Duck River, a pristine, bio-diverse, "scenic" river in Tennessee called in but our call in system got into a temporary technical problem, and we couldn't hear him, but got his text message. We will continue to provide technical support for protecting the pristine Duck River near Victor's Bass nature camp in Tennessee.
- c. **Sucharit Dutta (India):** Our lead coordinator in Kolkata India called in to confirm their great support in protection and awareness for the Hooghly River, considered to be a part of the Ganges river. They plan to conduct the World Water Day 2014.



- d. **Noel Hechanova** (Iloilo City, **Philippines**), and **Evelyn Belleza** – Unfortunately about a month after the annual meeting a serious disaster took place in the Philippines by Typhoon Haiyan. We had an appeal <http://rowfoundation.org/content/row/Typhoon-Haiyan-Iloilo-Philippines.pdf> for help and have sent 100% of what we received directly to Noel Hechanova for extending help to the impacted rivers and people in Estancia and/or Roxas city area. Noel is continuing with the plans for Iloilo River Cleanup and Protection. Both Noel and Evelyn discussed briefly that they are looking into the Environmental training. An outline of the training program have been developed by ROW and sent to Noel earlier. Noel said that they will be conducting a survey involving 20 or more students and then Will send proposal; Evelyn (Vice Cancellor) was also on line; Noel will get survey results and look into where will the money come from to do the environmental training program. They plan to bring ROW trainers from the U.S. They confirmed that they will conduct World Water Day 2014 River cleanup in a big way. (it was Midnight for Participants in China and Philippines).
- e. **Edmund Wong** called in from Virginia and mentioned about his visit to India last march where he participated in the WWD 2013 at Kolkata. He also mentioned that he will look into United nations a global water monitoring database (<http://www.gemstat.org/>) and see how ROW can use it effectively to help with the protection and restoration of rivers.
- f. **Daryl Jackson** (Poteau, Oklahoma) called and discussed about making an effort on developing an economic Plastics to Fuel machine, which can be used easily and economically in the developing countries. Dick will follow up with Daryl and find out how he will approach this issue.



### At the Meeting Location

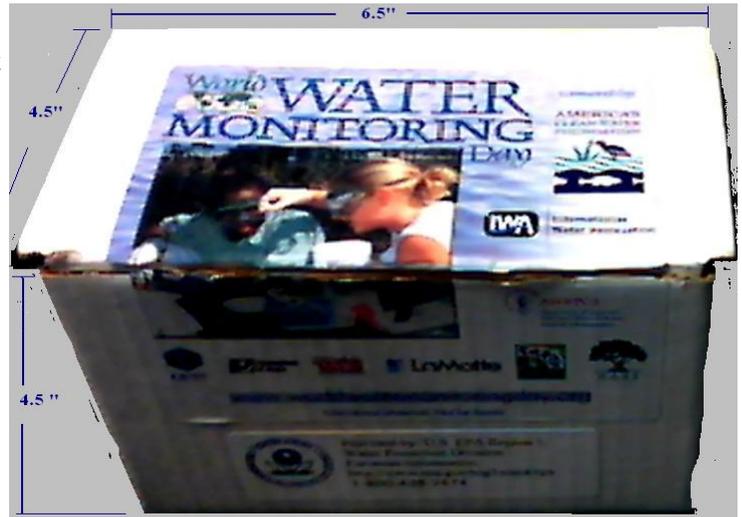
**Dr. K.K. Das**/Subijoy Dutta., – Barak River Reconnaissance - Dr. K.K. Das: Director of the Sundari Mohan Seba Bhavan Hospital (<http://sundarimohan.org/>) in Silchar, India, which has a mission to treat the poor. There seems to be a significant level of increase in Cancer cases in this area during the past ten years. Being concerned about this issue, and considering the **Barak River** (as in the adjacent picture) water as the primary drinking water source of the local people along the River valley, he spoke about conducting a bacteria testing of the water there, which will bring a lot of attention to the water quality from the local authorities. He mentioned that the only results the authorities care for is the bacteria level



there, and a monitoring of that parameter is of key importance. Subijoy Dutta will be getting some water monitoring (Bacteria Testing Kit) from Bill Danshin of Pure Water Corporation in BC, Canada. Using those kits an initial sampling and testing could be conducted there.

After the testing Dr. Das with the help of other ROW local volunteers will arrange some discussions with various local communities/villagers of the areas of concern about the quality of the water in the river and the health of the local people who use the water from the river.

**Dick Lahn** - Suggested modifying the mission statement to include special focus, in considering/taking on new projects, on rivers which flow through the capitals of countries, states, counties, districts, so that improving conditions on those rivers through ROW's work, the projects will serve as models for work which can be done in other rivers within that jurisdiction. Dick also suggested that ROW could possibly prepare a simple water quality testing kit which could be distributed in cities where ROW has partnerships with the local people. These kits can be used to test water quality in rivers above and below cities to establish roughly the impact the city is having on the quality of the river. Subijoy and Dick are looking into getting a simple Kit ready from Pure water corporation. Once the water monitoring kit is ready we will test its usefulness in several cities where we have been working, in the US, Gokul, Agra, Silchar



**Subijoy Dutta** – presented the Annual Report for 2012-2013 thereafter which listed all the different activities ROW conducted during the past year (12 months) . He touched upon some of the activities undertaken during the past year including..

- Rivers of the World volunteers and members information have been laced on the website with pictures, which everyone should browse through and use to share knowledge and experience from each to provide effective help. (The file is kept password protected to prevent the volunteers from any electronic vulnerability, such as misrepresentation, ID theft or other issues). Following a few other similar site, this protection was introduced. The password is rivers. It was mentioned to the audience and asked not to share it publicly. If the members and volunteers consider that the protection is not necessary, please send a note to [Subijoy@verizon.net](mailto:Subijoy@verizon.net) and it will be discussed with the members and steps taken to clear or keep it. Members who are in favor of this may also provide their views for an appropriate disposition of the matter.
- Watersheds – like Neurological Structure of Rivers - a comparison of river with human life



- Screening level water quality testing of the Yangtze River near Wuhan City, China
- Conducted a workshop on Rivers with mostly students in Wuhan City, Jan. 19, 2013
- Iloilo River water testing on a boat in collaboration with the local ENRO.
- Provided advice to the Iloilo River Committee involving all Governmental Bodies, Industries, Congressman, and Mayor at Iloilo City, Philippines, January 2013.
- Met with the local Power plant officials in Iloilo concerning Flyash management
- Visited Several Rivers in India:
- Barak-Silchar,
- Yamuna-Agra, Delhi,
- Ganges-Rishikesh and initiated River Protection Activities
- Established Partnership with United Nations Environment Programme for conducting Water-related educational program, such as World water Day.
- World Water Day (WWD-2012) Activities Summary Report –
- <http://www.rowfoundation.org/0/WWD2013-Reports>

**Dennis Haag** – presented Constructed Wetland Treatment Systems which can be used for treatment of various water bodies. He presented information on the use of plants to:

- Lower ground water tables
- Evapotranspiration for water and vapor release to the environment.
- Enhance insitu bioattenuation of pollutants
  - Supply an electron donor to microbes
  - Enzyme systems to mineralize organics
  - Uptake nutrient and inorganic pollutants
- Filter sediments from storm water runoff
- Control soil erosion by wind and water
- Treat pollutants in wastewater and storm water
- Phytoremediation is currently considered to be a subset of the more inclusive term: Phytotechnology

Plus

- Treatment Train Concept:
  - Woodland, Grassland, etc.
  - Wetlands
  - Stream Buffers
  - Lakes and Ponds
  - Groundwater Recharge
- Aquatic Systems
- Wetland Systems
- Terrestrial Systems

He touched upon some of the projects implemented successfully in the US.

**William Roper** – presented information about a newly patented technology Micro Desal for water treatment. It involves -

- Mechanical evaporation (with low waste heat)
- No filters, membranes, or chemicals
- One pass removes redundant systems
- Significant cost and support savings

He provided information about the effectiveness and economic benefit of this new system.

**B. Financial Report** - prepared by **Donald Henry** (was not present at the meeting) .. need to establish a real, public understandable budget; fiscal infrastructure and soundness to support grant writing and support from other organizations.

**C. GROUP Discussion** - Led by Subijoy Dutta, P.E..

During the group discussion a number of issues and planned activities for 2014 were discussed between the participants.

Projects for 2014

1. Financial Accounting -- need to establish a real, public understandable budget; fiscal infrastructure and soundness to support grant writing and support from other organizations. Subijoy will talk to Donald about this.
2. Plastics to Oil ... Daryl Jackson will investigate to find economical solution. Johanna Von Halem and Dick will transfer/translate Darrell's findings into a project marketable in India/China.
3. Water Quality Test Kit - Dennis Haag and Subijoy will do. Dick will do marketing
4. Bacteria Test Kit to KK Das - Subijoy will do
5. Grant Writer - Dennis Haag will talk to Jeff Neel, his associate to help ROW
6. Airline Environmental Foundation. Major portion of ROW budget goes to purchase of airline tickets. Approach airlines to create foundation where unused international seats can be used for charitable, environmental projects. Airlines would benefit from good will with public (they are much lacking). Also, banks may have a role as they offer benefits of frequent flyer miles, many of which go unused. Dick will check on this.
7. Environmental Training Program in Philippines - Subijoy, Matt Perry, Noel ... How to fund travel expenses? – Noel and Evelyn is checking on that.
8. Patuxent River – Impact of population and cultural diversity on water quality, plus wetlands projects. A possible demo of taking river through constructed wetlands. Will convene meeting to scope out project - Subijoy, Matt, Kusuma, and Chris.
9. Better communications, conference calls every 3 months. Suggested by Bill Roper - Subijoy will initiate the calls. Further discussion on the projects will take place during the call.