

Local Watershed Council Activity Reports

Taken from: RI Rivers Council Meeting Minutes, October 12, 2016

Blackstone River Watershed Council/Friends of the Blackstone as reported by Ms. Hadley: On Saturday Sept. 17th, the BRWC and Trout Unlimited Chapter # 737 hosted a fly fishing clinic at the BRWC's environmental center. A total of 12 youths and adults participated. The TU volunteer instructors taught the students how to tie a Woolly Buzzer fly. They also taught them about the various kinds of fish found in the Blackstone and what types of insects they feed on. In the afternoon, everyone broke for a lunch of hotdogs and hamburgers. After that, each person or team was paired up with an instructor who taught them the proper casting techniques. Everyone went outside and got to practice their casting technique with fly rods. A good day was had by all. Representatives from New England Hydropower Company came to one of our meetings and spoke about their proposal to install 2 Archimedes screw hydropower turbines at 2 locations on the Blackstone. They promise that they will be fish friendly. It is only in the planning process currently.

At a different meeting a developer spoke to us about his plans to restore and rehabilitate an old mill building on Meeting Street in Cumberland. He plans to make it into a multi-use building of residences, a restaurant and possibly some office space. He is very interested in involving the BRWC and other local groups in the process. More information will be forthcoming in the months to follow.

The BRWC will be assisting with the safety and operation of the 8th annual Boys and Girls club duck race on Sunday October 23rd. This is a fundraiser for the B&G club and for other groups who sell the duck tickets for \$5 apiece. The festivities begin at 11 AM on the Hope Global property, Martin Street Cumberland. At 1:00 PM, 17,500 individually numbered ducks will be dropped into the Blackstone River and drift to the finish line. Prizes for the winners.

www.blackstoneriver.org/blackstone/

Friends of the Moshassuck – As reported by Greg Gerritt:

The FOM re-designation package has been submitted, it includes a description of a walk along the Moshassuck with the wildlife and plant life (particularly salt marshes) likely to be seen. A number of videos have been completed, capturing amphibians, menhaden, and herons. The FOM worked with the National Park Service to recently hold a program for the public on Menhaden in downtown Providence. The trees that were planted over the years with RIRC funds, now cover almost all the available area in Collyer Field by the Peter Pan Bus Lines, the remaining soil is covered with gravel.

www.themoshassuck.org

Narrow River Preservation Association – as reported by Richard Grant:
Annual Meeting

The Narrow River Presentation Association held its 46th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, October 4, at the Coastal Institute on the URI Bay Campus in Narragansett. More than 60 individuals attended the reception and meeting. The featured presentation was a showing *Woven in Time, The Narragansett Salt Pond Preserve*, Marc Levitt's film about the preservation of the pre-contact settlement at the head of Point Judith Pond (Archaeological site RI 110). Marc introduced the film and led a vigorous discussion after.

The meeting also included a Year in Review by Richard Grant, a report by Veronica Berounsky and Annette DeSilva on the two-year study of water quality in lower Narrow River conducted for U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the NRPA River Watch program, Treasurer's Report and introduction of the Board of Directors for 2016-2017 and Kayak Raffle drawing. Also, Alison Kates was introduced, she is replacing David Smith as Program Coordinator.

David was presented with W.E.R. La Farge Memorial Friend of the River Award. This award was given to David for his outstanding service as the NRPA Program Coordinator from 2011 to 2016 and for his dedicated and active participation in many initiatives and events concerning Narrow River and its Watershed. David has been the NRPA Program Coordinator since 2011. So he has attended all the NRPA activities except for the few occasions when he has been out of town. But more than that he coordinates our annual membership drive and keeps track of members and sponsors; he supports our Road Race and Turnaround Swim by keeping track of participants and sponsors; also he puts together text and photos for our NRPA Newsletter and actually writes quite a bit of it. In addition, he and his wife Rosemary have been River Watch Volunteers for many years, they are active in the Friends of Canonchet Farm group, particularly in re-claiming the land from invasive plants, they coordinate the "On Pettaquamscutt" winter lecture series, and they have attended too many bike path town meetings to count. In short, in very many ways, David is the living embodiment of the NRPA mission statement: to preserve, protect, and restore the natural environment and the quality of life for all communities within the Narrow (Pettaquamscutt) River Estuary and Watershed.

This year's winner of the Kayak Raffle was Barbara Rezendes and she lives in the watershed on Lafayette Ave. in South Kingstown, near Middle Bridge. She and her husband both enjoyed the meeting and loved the film. This was the first time in years that a person attending the Annual Meeting won the kayak! The kayak was donated by Narrow River Kayaks and NRK owner Jason Considine delivered it the next morning and Barbara was very excited about it.

Recent Events

In September, NRPA and Narrow River Land Trust put on three events at Middlebridge Marina:

- What Lives in River and Saltmarsh walk, September 17, each part of the Gansett Days celebration

- Narrow River Land Trust walk at Garrison House Acres, September 24, part of R.I. Land Trust Days

NRPA River Watch

On weekend of October 22-23, NRPA will complete the 25th season of NRPA River Watch. As part of the FY2016 Rivers Council Grant, we are working up more data aligning the two-year USF&WS project and the Stormwater Grant project with NRPA Watershed Watch database.

Membership Drive

We have received 240 membership contribution in 2017 Membership Drive launched in August with a mailing to 3,300 households and businesses in the watershed that included an invitation to the Annual Meeting, Summer 2016 *Narrow River Notes*, and tickets for our kayak raffle. The campaign is on track with the 2016 campaign, which brought in 327 new memberships and renewals.

The issue of *Narrow River Notes* is available at: <http://www.narrowriver.org/>

Activities on the River

As reported, last month, on August 25, Craig Swanson, Swanson Environmental Associates, and Malcolm Spaulding and Alex Shaw, Ocean Engineering, University of Rhode Island, submitted their final report on study funded by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a Rhode Island House Legislative Grant of proposed dredging of the mouth of Narrow River in order to increase flushing of the lower river and provide material for marsh resiliency projects and beach nourishment. The report is available at: [http://www.narrowriver.org/clientimages/40529/dredging/narrow%20river%20report%20final%2008262016%20\(003\).pdf](http://www.narrowriver.org/clientimages/40529/dredging/narrow%20river%20report%20final%2008262016%20(003).pdf)

The models discussed in the report show that dredging would increase tidal range on the lower river, reduce the number of days it takes to refresh the river and provide enough material to nourish the Narragansett Town Beach. However, there are multiple stakeholder concerns including more frequent flooding of the marshes and duration of the benefit with and without storm events.

Spaulding will discuss the findings at the January 29 presentation in the 2017 On Pettaquamscutt Winter Speaker Series. He will be joined by Jennifer White of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, who will talk about the dredging near Middlebridge for thin layer deposition to increase the resiliency of the marshes. On Pettaquamscutt is jointly sponsored by NRPA, Friends of Canonchet Farm and South County Museum.

The kayak launch and parking at Sprague Bridge continue to be a concern and we are working with the Town of Narragansett and the R.I. Department of Transportation to improve safety and protect this heavily used site.

www.narrowriver.org

Pawtuxet River Authority and Watershed Council -- as reported by Mr. Horbert: The PRAWC has done a couple clean-ups at our Randall Pond property and our Harris riverwalk, and will be helping with another clean-up on our Howard Preserve property along the main branch Pawtuxet this Friday. We've used the new brush hog on these cleanups and it has really helped.

Randall Pond Project: The entrance to the boardwalk at Randall Pond has been reconstructed, and it appears that our street run-off problems have been resolved. Now we just need to get another grant or otherwise find more money to complete the extension of the dock into the pond as originally planned.

<http://www.pawtuxet.org/>

Salt Ponds Coalition – as reported by Ms. Eichinger –

1. Our newsletter, the Tidal Page, is being sent out to our members now!
2. The group committed to cleaning up Green Hill Pond is still going strong. They just had another “executive committee” meeting, and will be hosting another public informational meeting soon.
3. The Town of Charlestown was awarded an EPA grant to in short, maximize the efficiency of de-nitrification systems in the area and replace some older septic systems. Also the grant will pay for the installation of demonstration rain gardens and for water quality testing at certain sites in Green Hill Pond. SPC will be handling some of the education/outreach portions of the grant, as well as the water quality monitoring.
4. We had a booth at the South County Museum Family Day – similar to the set up that we had at Narragansett Environmental Awareness Day (kid’s water quality testing program and sea shell ID). It went well; we had quite a few families stop by our booth.
5. Art, Claire, and I attended a walking tour of the Sachuest Point marsh restoration area to get a preview of what the Ninigret marsh will look like post restoration this winter.
6. We coordinated with the Westerly Land Trust to do a field trip for second graders from the Tower Street Community School. Art and I did a modified Salt Pond Safari in Winnapaug Pond, and one of the teachers read our book Salt Pond Sleuths to the kids. We worked with about 60-70 kids.
7. I am currently working on processing our 2015 water quality data.

8. We are currently planning our volunteer appreciation party to celebrate the end of our water quality testing season this month and the completion of our summer/fall educational activities.

www.saltpondscoalition.org

Ten Mile River Watershed Council – as submitted by Ben Cote:

The Ten Mile River Watershed Council welcomed over 50 walkers to our Harvest Moon Walk on September 16th. The moon was bright and everybody had a great time. The second walk on September 19th was canceled due to rain. The TMRWC spoke before the Attleboro Conservation Commission about our plan to have the Bungay River designated as Wild and Scenic. We will continue to get the word out in the coming months and will be conducting a cleanup of the Bungay River Conservation Area in Attleboro on October 15th. We also spoke to the NPS about the idea and it was suggested that we consider other sections of the Ten Mile River for future studies. We will continue the process in 2017. We held our Annual Members Potluck Picnic on October 2nd. It was well attended by members. We finished the picnic with a walk along the Hunts Mills Trail. Work has continued on our storage shed at Hunts Mills. The door to the shed has been primed and is ready to be painted.

<http://www.tenmileriver.net/>

Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association as reported by Ms. Torello:

1) Conductivity Monitoring

We are preparing to deploy 10 conductivity meters in the watershed to capture the effects of stormwater. We are adding this to our monitoring program as a result of our assessment of our water quality monitoring program funded by the BRWCT grant.

2) Jay Cronan River Access

We expect the permit to be issued next week, with construction to begin in three weeks, and completed by the end of November. The project will include addition of a handicapped accessible fishing pier, plus stormwater management.

3) Wild and Scenic River

The National Park Service has organized a meeting among WPWA and the two other rivers in New England that are in the process of their Wild and Scenic designation studies. This is a great opportunity for the three committees to get together to compare notes.

4) Flood Resilience and Management Plan (FRMP)

WPWA is hosting two community meetings for municipal staff and the public to share their knowledge and suggestions for improving flood resiliency and related issues in the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed as part of the FRMP. They will be held on:

- a. Thursday, October 13, 2016 from 10 a.m. to noon at the H.L. Arnold Fire & Safety Complex, 208 Richmond Townhouse Rd, Carolina, RI 02812.

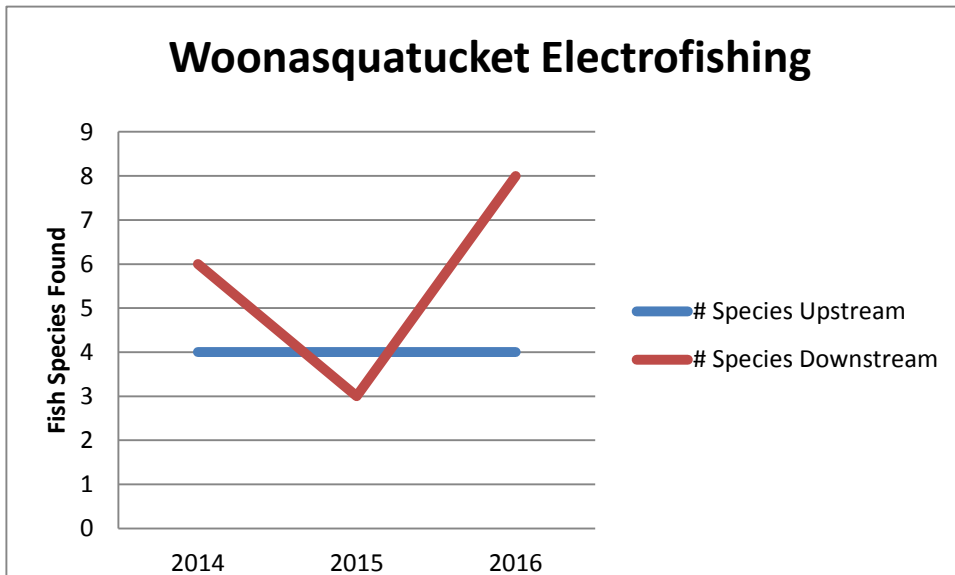
b. Thursday, October 20, 2016 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Westerly Library, Third Floor Terrace Room, 44 Broad St, Westerly, RI 02891. Public parking is available on the street (2 hour intervals) or the lot next to the Post Office located on High Street.

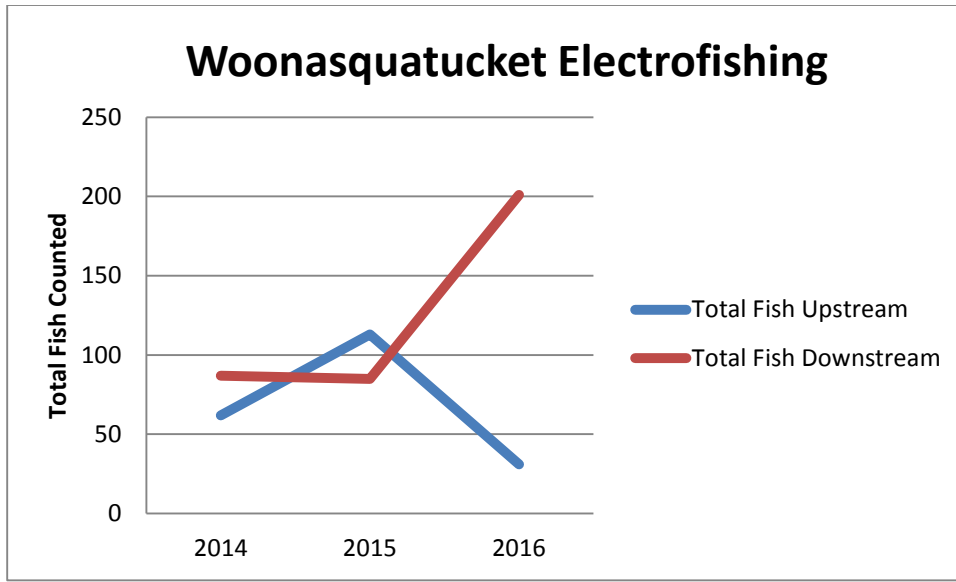
<http://www.wpwa.org/>

Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council – written report submitted by Kassi Archambault:

- **Fish Monitoring:** Electrofishing Assessment We completed assessments of the Woonasquatucket, Ten Mile and Moshassuck Rivers. Kassi will monitor the lower Runnins River with a student group from Wheeler High School.

Here are some electrofishing results for the Woonasquatucket:





- Educational Programs: Kassi has begun teaching the K- 12 educational programs.
 - ✓ Fish in the Classroom with William D’Abate Elementary, with 6 classes November through June
 - ✓ River Adventurers with Providence After School Alliance at DelSesto Middle School, with one group October through December.
 - ✓ Environmental Leaders with the Met High School, two classes October through June.
 - ✓ Environmental Leaders field trips with Wheeler High School, YouthBuild and possibly Classical High School in the fall and spring.
- Green Infrastructure: Projects include GI in Olneyville, Citizens Bank, PVP Riverside Park has a lot of green infrastructure as part of a green infrastructure showcase and tour in Olneyville. We re-planted the bioswale throughout the park and installed the green roof on the Red Shed Bike Shop. There are extra roof modules in the garden for display, until we install them on the second section of the Red Shed.

We are planning to install a rain garden at William D’Abate Elementary School, rain boxes and bioswales on One Neighborhood Builders properties, and perhaps an installation at Joslin Recreation Center.

Pleasant Valley Parkway green infrastructure and downspout disconnection outreach has finished, two Rain Barrel Workshop’s have been completed and we are discussing which homes to assess for demonstration projects.

The GIC Is focused on developing signage and a communications strategy. The WRWC’s consultant, Josh Hernandez, is working on most of the designs as we will be using the first signs designed in both our Pleasant Valley Parkway demonstration retrofit projects and our Olneyville GI Showcase.

- River Rangers: Junior and Senior Rangers have been hard at work beautifying the park for the Woony Ride, installing green infrastructure and working with community and company volunteers. Rangers have been installing green

infrastructure and restoring habitat along the river, including plantings at Riverside garden, The Red Shed, Cricket Field and even the retaining wall facing Route 6. The next big volunteer event is a river-clean up near the Providence Place Mall, with more to come.

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- Our 2016 Clean Days on the Greenway (CDGW) Series is underway. Interesting tidbit - the greenway team started a tracking metrics on our cleanup activities, both Ranger daily rounds and Clean Days activities. Here's how much has already been done this year, January through last week.
 - ✓ 717 total volunteers have donated 2,787.5 hours, \$65,673.50 in in-kind time
 - ✓ We've removed from the Greenway & River:
 - 659 bags of litter
 - 81.275 cubic yards bulky debris & general garbage
 - 38 large tires
 - 248 small tires (um - whoa!)
 - 176 small graffiti tags removed (under 2 sq ft)
 - 141 large graffiti tags removed (over 2 sq ft)

WRWC has been busy on the Greenway!

And we'll keep counting... we hope this provides a snapshot of just how much is happening on the Greenway throughout the season

- The Red Shed Bike Shop is Closing Soon:

Bike Camp has now completed for the season. We had 87 campers this year, gave away 75 bikes, 84 lock and 84 helmets. We had a wonderful end of camp celebration thanks to all our generous board members. This was the strongest season of camp. Donny Green, our Bike Camp Director, secured a donation of 100+ bikes from the several bike rental businesses on Block Island. We are very close to meeting our bike needs for 2017 now.

We are exploring options for making Red Shed programs part of the WRWC's year round programming.

www.wrwc.org

Note: October 2016 Activity Reports were not available from the Buckeye Brook Coalition and the Kickemuit River Council.