

CURRENTS

working together for the health of the white river watershed

fall 2009

mission

The White River Partnership (WRP) brings together people and local communities to improve the long-term health of the White River and its watershed.

contact us

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Conserving Ecosystem Services

Ecosystem services are the benefits people obtain from natural ecosystems.

The White River Partnership (WRP) has received 2 grants from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to help watershed landowners conserve ecosystem services. Ecosystem services are the benefits people obtain from natural ecosystems, including water purification and recreational opportunities. The White River watershed provides vital ecosystem services, many of which face pressures from non-point source pollution, development, non-native invasive species, and other threats.

National Conservation Innovation Grant

The WRP was one of five partners to receive a \$500,000 grant to support a \$1 million effort to conserve ecosystem services provided by forests in two critical watersheds in the Northern Forest region: the Upper Connecticut River watershed in Vermont and New Hampshire, and the Crooked River watershed in Maine. The WRP will partner with the American Forest Foundation (Washington, DC) and the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation (Hanover, NH) to coordinate work in the Upper Connecticut River watershed project area.

During the next three years, the project partners will engage communities with education and outreach activities to demonstrate a new market-based framework in which they will “broker” the sale of ecosystem services by private landowners to buyers such as private citizens, nonprofit organizations, corporations, and others. By combining ecosystem science with innovative payment techniques to private landowners, project partners hope to create a replicable model for preserving essential ecosystem services provided by our forested watersheds.

State Conservation Innovation Grant

The WRP also received a \$12,000 grant, which is being matched by the US Forest Service, to pilot a Landscape Auction. This proven market-based payment mechanism will help conserve ecological, historical, and social values that are provided from privately-owned forest and agricultural lands in the White River watershed. During the next year, the WRP will work with the Green Mountain National Forest, the Vermont Department of Forests, and Triple E, a consulting firm based in the Netherlands, to test the application of this approach as one more tool to improve forest and agricultural working lands while conserving clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, and other ecosystem services. ● ●

Calendar

Contact us at: info@whiteriver-partnership.org to receive event notifications via email.

Upcoming Events:

September 12: Source to Sea River Cleanup, 1:30 – 3:30pm, Vermont Law School Debevoise Hall, South Royalton. Join the Down Stream Team and Vermont Law School to help clean up the river in South Royalton and enter your trash in a contest for the oddest and biggest items found. Gloves, trash bags, and refreshments will be provided. Free and open to the public.

September 15: White River Water Quality Forum, 6:00 – 8:00pm, Vermont Law School Oakes Hall Room 012, South Royalton. Join WRP consultant Dr. Fritz Gerhardt for the second of two presentations about water quality in the White River watershed. Dr. Gerhardt will be discussing his analysis of data gathered by WRP volunteers since 2001, and will give recommendations for addressing specific water quality problems. Free and open to the public.

September 26: WRP Annual Meeting, 7:00 – 9:00pm, Royalton Academy Building, Royalton. We hope you'll join us to eat some appetizers, visit with your neighbors, and celebrate another year of hard work to improve the White River watershed! Don't wait to buy your raffle ticket for the 12- x 16-foot timberframe (see form on page 4) — we'll draw the winning ticket at the end of the evening! Free and open to the public.

September 26, 27: Forest Stewardship 101, 2:30–4:00, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Park, Woodstock. Join us to learn more about the Upper Connecticut River ecosystem services project as well as to hear from experts on how to manage woodlands for water quality, wildlife, and forest health. The WRP is co-hosting the session on both days with the American Forest Foundation, Vermont Woodlands Association, and Vermont Department of Forests as part of the Park's Forest Festival Weekend. Free and open to the public.

October 8: Groundwater Workshop, 3:00 – 5:30pm, location TBD, Randolph. As part of our well mapping project in Randolph, Larry Becker, geologist from the Vermont Geological Survey, will do a presentation on Vermont geology, groundwater, and the need for data on drilled wells in Randolph. Free and open to the public.



Rochester School students and community volunteers helped plant over 400 trees along the Upper White River.

Thank you!

The Following individuals, businesses, towns and organizations have contributed significant volunteer time in 2009. Thank you for making our 2009 projects a success!

Abby Armstrong
Amanda Wheeler
Andrew Klimkowski
Becky Burgee
Becky Hooper
Becky Miller
Bethel Elementary School
Brookhaven Learning Center
Camp Killooleet
Carl Russell & Lisa McCrory
Carol Langstaff
Chris Moore
Chris & Sherri Murray
Chris Smith
Clara Compare
Corner Stop
Dan McKinley
Dave Crosby
Dave Huber
Dave Phillips
David Eastman & Family
Diane Teetsel
Don Munro
Dustin Brucher
East Valley Academy
Ehud & Vatsala Sperling
Frank Pendleton
Gayle Poinsette
Gene & Jackie Hammond
Geo Honigford
George D. Aiken RC&D
GMNF Fish Crew
GMNF Rochester Ranger Station
Greg Russ
Gretchen Alexander
Heather Skehan
Ian Blackmer
Ina Anderson
Jackie Bowie
James Marcot
Jane Olds
Janni Jacobs
Jim Martin
Jim Ryan
Jim Shallow
Jody Lowes
Jon Bouton
Judy Romero
Karen & Gary Douville
Karen & Marlys Eddy
Karen Waterworth
Kari Dolan
Kate Dowling
Kate Seeger
Keefer Irwin
Ken Gillette
Ken Grecsek
Kevin & Patrick Dougherty
Kevin Hall
Laura DiPietro
Lori Farrington
Leslie Matthews
Lloyd Rudolph
Locust Creek OutFitters
Lynn McNamara
M&N's
Madeleine Lyttle
Mark Heckmann
Mary Pavone
Marybeth Deller
Matt LaMothe
Meg Mitchell
Mike McDonnell
Mike, Anthony, & Patrick Bald
Mimi Evans & Family
Nora Skolnik
Paul Calter
Peter & Kathy Leonard
Pittsfield Planning Commission
Randolph Elementary School
Randolph Technical Career Center
Randolph Union High School
Richard & Alvina Harvey
Rich Kinn
Rob Stainton
Rochester School
Ron & Betsy Rhodes
Ross Wright
Rudi & Andy Ruddell
Ryan Fitzpatrick
Salmon stocking volunteers
Scott Allen
Seth Dunn
Sharon White River Task Force
Shelly Parker
Sheryl Dickey
Steve Roy
Stockbridge Town Clerk
Sue Sellow
Susan Shea
Tera Woods
The Sharon Academy
Tom & Sandy Pierce
Tom Macnair
Tony Velturo
Vermont Technical College
VLS Environmental & Natural Resources Law Clinic
Walt Wells
Walter Hastings
Walter Pruiksmas
White River National Fish Hatchery
WRP Stream Teams
WRP Partners

Project Updates

Watershed Assessment

- WRP staff **inventoried 73 Class IV Town Roads** in the White River watershed to identify water quality impairments. Project partners are developing a list of potential restoration projects for each watershed town, and will help interested towns seek implementation funding.
- Fitzgerald Environmental Associates **conducted a scientific assessment** of the White River and its tributaries in Sharon. Data gathered will help town government and residents reduce the possibility of flood damage, improve public health and safety, and enhance recreational use.
- WRP staff and volunteers are **completing the 9th year of our water quality monitoring** program, testing three parameters at 24 sites, every two weeks from June through September. Results are shared via email and our website.
- The Upper White River Cooperative Weed Management Area partners have begun an administrative study along Route 100 to **determine the most effective way for road crews to control wild chervil** along road edges, where it has become prominent in recent years. Plots have been marked and different road sections have been slated for different treatment regimes. The extent of wild chervil and other species will be monitored over the next three years.

Watershed Restoration

- With help from 350 volunteers, the WRP **planted 3,300 native trees and shrubs** along the White River and its tributaries in Bethel, Braintree, Chelsea, Hancock, Hartford, Randolph, and Rochester.
- The WRP is working with numerous local, state, and federal partners to **identify, design, and implement fish passage enhancement projects** in culverts located within the Upper White and Tweed River watersheds. To date, project partners have identified 6 potential project sites in the Town of Rochester and Pittsfield, and are working to determine implementation feasibility.
- The WRP **helped close 2 River Corridor Easements** — 1 on the Upper White and 1 on Ayers Brook — that will be held in perpetuity by the Vermont River Conservancy. The easement purchases channel management rights from the landowner in order to allow the river to achieve a state of equilibrium. Although the easement requires a minimum 50-foot buffer that floats with the river, the landowner may continue all land uses within the corridor for as long as the river allows.
- The WRP is working with the Town of Randolph and other partners to **repair an existing fish habitat project** at the Randolph Rec Park this fall. Several in-stream structures have shifted and need to be repaired to insure long-term project success.



Volunteers from The Sharon Academy, Sharon White River Task Force, and Vermont Law School cleaned up the river at the Sharon Dam parking area.

Summer Monitoring Coordinator Greg Russ measures the depth of a water quality impairment on a Class IV Road.



Watershed Stewardship

- The WRP helped coordinate a **River Day** for the students at Sharon Elementary School to learn about and celebrate the White River.
- The WRP helped **coordinate 2 river cleanups** in Sharon and Rochester to improve the health of the White River.
- The WRP **hosted a Trees, Streams & Birds Workshop** on the Tweed River to share opportunities to protect and restore the Upper White and Tweed River corridors for water quality, flood control, and migratory songbird habitat.
- The WRP helped coordinate a **wild chervil pull event** on Forest Road 101 in Granville to help prevent the spread of the non-native invasive plant in the Green Mountain National Forest.
- The WRP hosted a **didymo education event** on Locust Creek to raise awareness about preventing the spread of this invasive alga within and outside of the watershed. Attendees also helped distribute informational brochures to fishing license agents throughout the watershed.
- WRP consultant Jenna Guarino has recruited several Randolph-area teachers to attend **well mapping project training workshops**. Teachers will conduct field work with their elementary, middle, and high school students during the fall semester to complete the project.



Support the WRP!

There are many ways you can support our efforts to improve the long-term health of the White River and its watershed. We welcome membership contributions, volunteer time, and cash donations.

Become a Member/Volunteer:

___ Yes, I would like to join/renew my membership with the WRP.

\$30: Individual \$40: Family \$50: Business

Sweat Equity: 2 hours volunteering equals a 1-year membership!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Yes, I want to receive email updates about volunteer opportunities.

Email address: _____

Make a donation:

___ Yes, I want to make a cash donation (enter amount below).

___ Yes, I want to purchase ___ timberframe raffle ticket(s) at \$10/1, \$50/6, \$100/15 (raffle ends September 26)."

Membership dues: _____ Cash donation: _____ Raffle ticket(s) _____

(Please write in name and address above)

Total enclosed: _____

Please make checks payable to "White River Partnership" and mail to PO Box 705, S. Royalton, VT 05068.

Water Quality Forums

The WRP sponsored one of two public forums about water quality in the White River watershed on August 13 in Randolph. Dr. Fritz Gerhardt gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting his analysis of the WRP's 2001-2008 water quality monitoring data and making recommendations for future actions.

Attendees learned that although water quality in the watershed is generally very good, turbidity, conductivity, and *E. coli* bacteria are high in some places. To address these issues, Dr. Gerhardt recommended the following actions:

- Continue the monitoring program to track long-term trends;
- Follow-up with additional measurements at sites with issues;
- Protect or restore streamside vegetation; and
- Work to reduce sediment and nutrient inputs from land uses near shorelines.

You can catch **Dr. Gerhardt's second presentation on September 15 from 6-8pm** at the Vermont Law School Oakes Hall Room 012.

For more information about the forum or the WRP water quality monitoring program, visit www.whiteriverpartnership.org.



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WHITE RIVER
PARTNERSHIP



Non-profit Organization
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