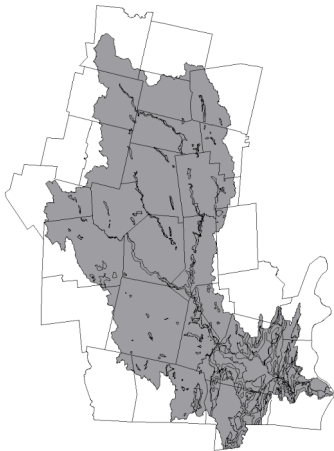


The *SPRING 2007* WatershedNew

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The President's Message

Spring is the busiest season for WRWA. By the time you read this, the yearly stocking of Atlantic Salmon fry in the Westfield River and its tributaries will have been nearly completed, and our 13th Annual Westfield River Symposium will be a distant memory. But May and early June will bring our Annual Dinner Meeting, our second (annual?) Fly Fishing Clinic, the open house at the West Springfield Fishway and, weather permitting, a leisurely canoe cruise down the Westfield River. In addition, May and June are the months for fry releases for the local schools that are involved in the Atlantic Salmon Egg-Rearing Program. This May, we'll also be submitting a progress report to the Highlands Community Initiative, of The Trustees of Reservations, whose recent grant is allowing us to produce "The Watershed Waltz", a puppet show that will teach children some basic watershed concepts and encourage them to develop a sense of stewardship for their own watersheds. The show will premiere at the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield in early May.

WRWA's Board of Directors plan and, for the most part, carry out all of these activities, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank them for their efforts. I'll begin by recognizing the work of some of our longest-serving Board members, Henry Warchol and Ken Taylor. Henry has, for many years, organized volunteers to staff the West Springfield Fishway when state staffing has been absent or incomplete. He's also actively involved with the salmon stocking program and the Fishway open house. Ken has served as treasurer of our group for longer than I've been a member. Other Board members have, of course, been busy as well. Kathy Meyer, having completed two very active years as President, has gone back to being our membership director and publicist, both roles that require continual attention. She's also taken care of planning for the Annual Meeting and many of the details for the

River Symposium. Bob Thompson, Bill Rose, Mark Damon, Dave Lovejoy, Tom Condon and Carl Grobe all helped out with the River Symposium. Bill is also organizing the upcoming Fly Fishing Clinic. Mark is chairing our Audit Committee this spring, and will be coordinating our participation in the "Source to Sea" river cleanup in late September. Tom organizes and runs a variety of outdoor trips that are co-listed with Springfield's Naturalists' Club. And Matt DeMonte, a WRWA member who's not on the Board, has edited this newsletter for more than five years!

As you can see, there's a lot going on! If you're reading this, you've got an interest in the watershed. If you've also got a little time, we could certainly make use of your talents - as a Board member or as a volunteer for a specific event. Let me know (myoung@wsc.ma.edu, 572-5741) how you're able to help out!

Best, Mike Young

River Symposium Addresses Global Warming

By Kathy Meyer

WRWA's 13th Annual River Symposium held on Saturday, March 31 offered thought-provoking sessions for adults and fun for children with two newly-added children's sessions. This year's theme was "Water, Woods, and Warming".

Keynote speaker Ray Bradley, a well-known paleoclimatologist from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, presented an update on global warming, citing evidence from ice cores indicating that current levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide are well outside the range of natural variability for the past several hundred thousand years. He suggested some of the possible effects, including a modest, but very inconvenient, rise in global sea level, and changing climatic patterns in most areas. Already, substantial reduction in the Arctic ice pack is occurring, and it's likely that the Arctic will soon provide a major shipping route between Asia and Europe - one potential benefit of warming! Following the keynote address, participants could attend nine concurrent sessions.

Alex Haro of S.O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center spoke about the American Eel



migration including the remarkable fact that no one has found the breeding place for this species or seen them born! Young eels are found in the Sargasso Sea, so the breeding place is assumed to be somewhere near Bermuda. Gary Beluzo of Holyoke Community College gave us a multimedia tour of old growth forests and special trees within watershed. Meredyth Babcock and JoAnne Spies of Marmalade Productions delighted young and old alike with a preview of puppets and songs from "The Watershed Waltz", an environmental puppet show currently under development.

Charles Darling and David Billips from the City of Westfield Water Resources Department gave a very informative presentation on where drinking water comes from and how wastewater is processed for the City of Westfield. Paul Catanzaro of ACORN explained a new internet-based tool designed to help forest landowners within the watershed. Meanwhile, WRWA Board members Dave Lovejoy, Mike Young and Tom Condon led about 50 children on a tour of the Biology and Geology Departments at Westfield State College.

The final sessions of the day included Carrie Banks and Tim Purinton from the Riverways Program talking about dam removals in the watershed and efforts to maintain river continuity for animals that live in the river and use its banks for migration. Jim DiMaio of the MA Department of Conservation & Recreation discussed sustainable forest management on public and private lands. "An Inconvenient Truth", Al Gore's award-winning documentary was screened.

Use of a new location for the symposium, the Scanlon Banquet Halls, allowed us to have more exhibitors than in past years with about 30 exhibitors sharing their time with us. About 110 adults and 50 children attended the symposium this year. Many thanks to the symposium planning committee - Mike Young, Carl Grobe, Bob Thompson, and Bill Rose for a wonderful event.

Ballou Dam Removal Dedication

On Friday, May 11th, from 1-3pm at the Becket-Washington Elementary School (Maple St, Becket), join the Town of Becket, students and restoration partners in the celebration of the completion of the Yokum Brook Restoration Project. The event will include a special dedication ceremony for the Ballou Dam Removal and release of the Atlantic salmon fry by restoration partners and elementary students. All are welcome to join in the celebration. Please RSVP to Tim

Purinton, Riverways Restoration Planner, at (617) 626-1542 or Tim.Purinton@state.ma.us.



Westfield River Canoe Cruise

By Mike Young

Weather permitting, our annual Canoe Cruise, from downtown Westfield to Robinson State Park in West Springfield, will launch at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 9. Registration will be from 12:30-1:00 p.m. at the River Walk entry point off Meadow Street in Westfield (just 0.1 miles SE of the Great River Bridge, where Rts 10/202 cross the Westfield River north of the center of town). This stretch of the river is mostly flatwater, with a couple of riffles to make it a bit more exciting, and seems surprisingly "natural" given the heavily populated region it passes through. Bring your canoe or kayak, PFD, paddle, and sunscreen and explore this very local stretch of the Westfield River! This event is free for WRWA members, and \$5 per person for non-members (to cover the cost of insurance). Contact Michael Vorwerk at 413-667-5152 for more information.

West Springfield Fish Ladder Open House

By Henry Warchol

The open house for viewing the West Springfield fish ladder will be held on Sunday, June 3rd from 10 am to 2 pm. The entrance and registering area will be at the gate near the former Southworth Paper Co. Office building, 150 Front street, West Springfield. Increases in salmon migration coming up the Westfield River (once known as the Agawam River) appears to be taking place. (6 came up the fishladder in 2003 – 12 in 2004 – 27 in 2005 and 34 in 2006). At last year's open house, we were rewarded with two salmon

coming up the fishway that day, one being 36 inches and the other 32 inches in length. Other migratory fish were also viewed at the viewing window. For information contact Henry Warchol at (413) 562-3467 or Bill Rose at (413) 786-0195.

Volunteers Needed for Stream Teams

By Meredyth Babcock

Throughout the Spring and early summer, volunteers will be WALKIN' THE WATERSHED – Stream Teams in Action 2007. Stream Teams will use their observational skills to document scenic, historical, geological, recreational and natural features found along the *Wild & Scenic* Westfield River. The Westfield River Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee has designated June 2nd & 3rd as Walkin' The Watershed Weekend and volunteers who submit their data by the end of June will be entered into the Riffle, Rapid, Run Draw. Free training sessions with Carrie Banks will be held: **May 16th** at Notchview Reservation in Windsor, 6:30-8:30 pm and **May 21st** at Stanton Hall in Huntington, 6:30-8:30 pm

There is still room!! Call to reserve your spot. You've hung up your walkin' shoes? Don't fret; there are many ways to HELP the Stream Teams flow. Just call Meredyth Babcock, Wild & Scenic Stream Team Coordinator, at 413 623-2070 or WalkintheWatershed@hotmail.com.

Annual Dinner Meeting: For the Birds

By Kathy Meyer

WRWA will celebrate its 55th Anniversary on Thursday, May 10 at the Annual Dinner Meeting to be held at Tucker's Restaurant in Southwick. Beginning at 6:00 p.m., the event will include a review of WRWA's 2006 accomplishments and finances, an elegant dinner with choice of three entrees, and a presentation by well-known birder Seth Kellogg.

Seth Kellogg, a native of Southwick, began birding in 1968 and is a noted local authority

with a weekly column on birding in the *Sunday Republican*. As a follow-up to our Annual River Symposium with its look at the effects of global warming on our environment, Seth Kellogg will be discussing "Changes in Local Birdlife Over the Last 30 Years" His presentation will include data from the Christmas Bird Count, The Allen Bird Club Annual Census, and his own observations and insights.

Please plan to join us for an evening of fun, food and feathers. For further information, contact Kathy Meyer at 568-4252 or kmmeyer@comcast.net.

Fly-fishing Clinic

By Bill Rose



The Fly-fishing Clinic will be on May 12th. It will be from 10:00am to 3:00pm. There will be fly tying instruction and demonstrations as well as fly casting instructions (hopefully on the river). Insects living in the water and surrounding area will be collected and viewed under a microscope. Location will be the rest area with the pavilion in Russell located just before the Huntington town line. There is also a medical facility across the street. Any questions call Bill Rose at 413-786-0195 or e-mail at brose1525@comcast.net.

Clean Water Action

By Kathy Meyer

Earlier this year WRWA joined Clean Water Action's Massachusetts Campaign to Protect Drinking Water. This broad-based coalition includes organizations and individuals working for state funding, water protection policies, and regulations at the state and local level. Threats to our watershed and water supply come from a variety of sources, so the Campaign has launched various initiatives.

Passage of "An Act Relative to Mercury Management" in 2006 marked an important

achievement for the Campaign. With some of the strongest state laws in the nation, this act will reduce emissions from mercury-containing products such as thermostats, blood pressure equipment and other measuring devices. The law requires companies to use safer non-mercury containing alternatives and sets up a program for the collection and recycling of mercury-containing products currently in use.

Other recent victories include: passage of the toughest perchlorate drinking water standards in the country, getting the state to develop a global warming pollution reduction plan, and setting aside state funds to study safer alternatives to toxic chemicals as a first step on the road to phasing out hazardous chemicals.

So what's next? Passage of an expansion of the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Act, which will create programs to replace toxic chemicals with safer alternatives in consumer products, is next on Clean Water Action's agenda. While WRWA will be working with Clean Water Action, if you want to be involved directly, contact: Becky Smith, Clean Water Action, (617) 338-8131 ext. 210 or email at bsmith@cleanwater.org.

Sewage Diverted into Westfield River

By Matt DelMonte

On April 19th and 20th, officials in Westfield were forced to divert millions of gallons of raw sewage into the Westfield River due to a sewer main break on Meadow Street. Officials believe the break was caused by flood water eroding a 21-inch pipe. The city had previously declared a state of emergency due to the heavy flooding days prior. Municipal officials did receive approval from the MA Department of Environmental protection (MA DEP) prior to diverting the sewage. Several Westfield residents also reported having raw sewage in their basements. April's flooding event saw the river at its highest level in nearly 30 years.

If you would like to get this Newsletter (and the other benefits of membership in the WRWA), please join the Westfield River Watershed Association. Membership applications are available on our website (www.westfieldriver.org) or by calling Carl Grobe at 572-5304.

WRWA Board of Director meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month at the Geology Museum (3rd floor, Wilson Hall) of Westfield State College. All WRWA members are welcome. Contact Mike Young at 562-8498 for further information.

Here are the names and addresses of our officers and directors for 2007.

Officers:					
President	Mike Young	721 West Road	Westfield	01085	562-8498
Vice President	Mark Damon	54 Pleasant Street	Westfield	01085	572-9991
Second Vice President	Bill Rose	39 Sunset Terrace	Feeding Hills	01030	786-0195
Treasurer	Kenneth Taylor	8 Greylock Street	Westfield	01085	562-4947
Secretary	Dave Lovejoy	P.O. Box 219	Blandford	01008	572-5307
Directors:					
	Henry Warchol	2 Sackville Road	Westfield	01085	562-3467
	Carl Grobe	314 Russell Road	Westfield	01085	572-5304
	Joan Pearsons	59 Van Horn Street	W. Springfield	01089	736-5208
	Kathy Meyer	87 Old Farm Road	Westfield	01085	568-4252
	Eileen Rannenber	95 Regency Park Drive	Agawam	01001	786-5902
	Tom Condon	80 General Knox Road	Russell	01071	564-0895
	Bob Thompson	10 Lyon Hill Road	Chester	01011	354-9636
	Bill Toomey	19 Main Street	Chester	01011	354-7780
	Mirela Newman	GARP Department	WSC	01086	572-5307
	Joyce Platt	Log House Box 124	Russell	01071	862-3247
	Larry Meyers-McElwee	11 Laurel Terrace	Westfield	01085	568-8234
Honorary Directors:					
	Dave Pardoe	25 Sampson Road	Huntington	01050	
	Dan Call	777 College Highway	Southwick	01077	569-9677