



Connecticut River Watershed Council

Celebrating the expanded Connecticut River Paddlers' Trail

JUNE 21, 2014

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CALLING ALL PADDLING ENTHUSIASTS & RIVER LOVERS!

Each year, those looking for an adventure in New England embark on multi-day paddling trips down the Connecticut River. Our great river stretches approximately 410 miles from the border near Canada all the way down to the Long Island Sound. The river takes many forms along the way. It begins as a small stream, has sections of rapids as well as wide, slow-moving water, and finally becomes tidal as you approach the mouth near the Sound. Paddling the entire length of the river can take weeks and is not for the faint of heart. And yet every single year folks set out on this grand voyage.

We would like to celebrate those who have paddled the mighty Connecticut River. Whether you have paddled sections or the whole length, upstream or down—yes people do both! Whether you have already made a great journey or only wish that you had. **You are invited to join us for our Annual Celebration at Gillette Castle State Park in East Haddam, CT on Saturday, June 21.**

The celebration will feature Steve Grant, the longtime *Hartford Courant* columnist who has paddled the whole length of the Connecticut River. You'll have the chance to meet Jim Dina, author of *Voyage of the Ant*, who used Native American tools and technology to build and paddle his birchbark canoe upriver! You can also join us in celebrating



the summer solstice with a paddle on the Connecticut River. More details will be coming soon—keep an eye on our website for more or contact us with questions.



You can join us at Gillette Castle on June 21 to celebrate paddling along the CT River & the CT River Paddlers' Trail.

SOUTHERN EXPANSION

The Connecticut River Paddlers' Trail partnership has done great work in NH and VT to provide paddlers with campsites, river access points and other reliable resources. CRWC, along with the Appalachian Mountain Club, Trust for Public Land, Vermont River Conservancy, Silvio O. Conte Fish & Wildlife Refuge and many other organizations in the region, are building on this effort to create a southern expansion of the Connecticut River Paddlers' Trail in MA and CT. Together we are working toward a vision of a well-defined recreational trail spanning the entire length of the Connecticut River. But we can't do this great work alone—we need your help! You can make a gift and/or join us in celebration. Learn how you can get involved and the partners involved at our Annual Celebration at Gillette Castle on June 21 (see more page 8).

Learn more about the Connecticut River Paddlers' Trail at www.connecticutriverpaddlerstrail.org. Visit CRWC's online store to purchase a NH/VT Paddlers' Trail map or *The Connecticut River Boating Guide* – www.ctriver.org and click 'Store.'



Mission

CRWC works to protect the Connecticut River basin's diversity of habitats, communities and resources. We celebrate our four-state treasure and collaborate, educate, organize, restore, and intervene to preserve the health of the whole for generations to come.

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Contact Information

15 Bank Row Greenfield, MA 01301
 413-772-2020
 info@ctriver.org
 www.ctriver.org

Comments about this newsletter?

E-mail us at: editor@ctriver.org

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Thanks for three great shows!



Thanks to everyone who joined us at the Robin & Linda Williams and their Fine Group concerts in April. They put on three fantastic shows to benefit the annual Source to Sea Cleanup. We hope you had a great time and thank you for supporting cleaner rivers.

We are glad you stopped by!

Many of you joined us at CRWC's open house and World Water Day celebration at our Greenfield, MA office in March. It was such a pleasure to meet new friends and see familiar faces as well. "All the staff really enjoyed chatting with folks," said Executive Director Andrew Fisk. "It's great to learn more about everyone's interests and concerns for the River."

Visitors joined Christine Destrempe of *Art for Water* in a mini Stream of Conscience activity. Participants wrote their thoughts, feelings, or reflections about water on torn pieces of paper. These individual notes will join hundreds of others in a river of words art installation sculpture—a multitude of voices, young and old, reflecting on the importance of water, the inspiration it provides, and our responsibility to protect it. CRWC is planning to continue work with *Art for Water* to record your input about our rivers. Stay tuned for more details on this project.

Please don't wait until the next open house to visit. Staff are typically around Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm and we love visitors. Feel free to get in touch with us with any questions, concerns or great ideas you may have. You can reach our headquarters at 413-772-2020.



These notes about water will join hundreds of others in a 'river of words' art sculpture.



Noah Slovin, a UMass student, shares his thoughts on water during CRWC's open house.

Partners battle a new plant invader

If you go outdoors at all, you have likely come across many types of invasive plants. These plants spread quickly and can easily take over an area if not kept under control. Seeds of invasive plants can be spread by wildlife, wind and water. People can also accidentally spread seeds of invasives on their clothing or shoes and may unwittingly plant attractive invasive plants in their yards or gardens. Controlling invasive plants is a huge task that many organizations throughout the watershed work on.

One leader in this work is the Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge, which is raising awareness about newer plant invaders, such as Japanese stiltgrass, in an attempt to slow their spread.

“Japanese stiltgrass can spread under the radar, so it’s important for landowners to learn how to recognize and control it to protect their woodlots,” says Cynthia Boettner, Invasive Plant Control Initiative Coordinator at Conte Refuge. Japanese stiltgrass is an annual grass, growing from seed each year to a height of about three feet. The 1-3 inches long leaves have a distinctive shiny stripe running down the middle. This plant harms woodlots by taking over the ground layer and preventing young trees and other plants from growing. The dry, dead plants that build up year after year can also be a fire hazard. The recommended way to control this invasive is to pull it by hand or cut it back to the ground with a string-trimmer in August, before the plant flowers and drops seeds.

The Refuge is appreciative of Covanta Springfield, LLC, an energy-from-waste facility located in Agawam, MA.

Covanta’s facility is located right along the Connecticut River and the company has been a sponsor of CRWC’s Source to Sea Cleanup for many years. This spring, Covanta burned about 35 bags of last season’s Japanese stiltgrass to limit any risk of spreading the seeds of this prolific new invader.

Stiltgrass has been found in a number of MA towns in the watershed: Longmeadow, Springfield, Agawam, Easthampton, Northampton, Huntington, Amherst, Conway, and most recently Northfield and the border between Greenfield and Shelburne. It has already spread extensively in Connecticut but does not yet appear to have reached Vermont or New Hampshire.

You can learn more about Japanese stiltgrass and how to identify it by attending an informational session. To learn more, contact Cynthia Boettner at Cynthia_Boettner@fws.gov or 413-548-8002 X115.



Invasive Japanese stiltgrass has 1-3” long leaves with a shiny stripe down the middle.

USFWS



Invasive clams make their way upstream

LAKE GEORGE ASSOC.



These invasive Asian clams are making their way up the Connecticut River.

The invasive Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*) has been in Connecticut and downstream of the Holyoke Dam in Massachusetts, in the Holyoke canals and the Oxbow, for some time. In 2013, biologists with

Holyoke Gas & Electric also detected the invasive clam in the Connecticut River upstream of the Holyoke Dam.

The Asian clam is a small, round bivalve, typically less than 1.5 inches in size. It can spread rapidly—a single clam can reproduce alone and can release hundreds of juveniles per day. Asian clams have caused problems elsewhere by

clogging water intake pipes. The Asian clam is native to southern Asia, the eastern Mediterranean, and Australia.

You can avoid spreading the Asian clam, as well as other invasive species like the invasive algae known as rock snot, by following these guidelines:

- **Do not use Asian clams as bait.** Never release plants, fish, or other animals into a waterway unless they come from that waterway.
- **Check** and remove any visible mud, plants, fish or other animals from boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.
- **Clean** and eliminate water from equipment. Be sure to drain all water, including live wells and bait buckets. Wash your boat with high pressure, hot water before entering and when leaving any water body.
- **Dry** anything that comes in contact with the water.

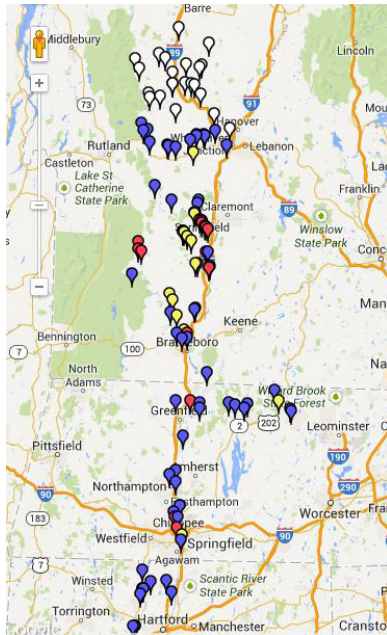
Out & About

WATERSHED-WIDE

Is your favorite river spot clean?

DID YOU KNOW?

About 25% of water samples tested by CRWC and partners in 2012 and 2013 were unsafe for swimming. If you swim, boat, fish or play in the CT River basin, be sure to visit www.ConnecticutRiver.us to see recent bacteria test results at your favorite spot. Click on 'Is It Clean?' to see a map of results before you head out this season! Remember to wait 24-48 hours after heavy rain to go in the water.



In 2013, CRWC worked with over 10 organizations and towns to provide information on river cleanliness at 110 sites from the White River in VT to the Farmington River in CT. New sampling partners in 2014 will include Goodwin College and the CT River Academy in Hartford, CT.

CRWC is also working in partnership with CT DEEP and river groups to plan a water quality monitoring networking conference to be held at Goodwin College in CT this summer. These projects are increasing partnership in the region and improving the visibility and success of water monitoring.

VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE



River restoration work continues

Thanks to a grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and support from our members, river restoration work in New Hampshire and Vermont will continue in 2014. In NH, we'll work with the Town of Piermont

to stabilize a streambank on Eastman Brook and will replace an under-sized culvert with the Town of Haverhill to improve fish passage and reduce flood risk on Oliverian Brook. In VT, we'll be working in Bradford to plant trees and stabilize a streambank on the Waits River and will remove a dam in Groton on the upper Wells River. Contact North Country River Steward Ron Rhodes for more information or to learn about volunteer opportunities on these projects. Reach him at rrhodes@ctriver.org or 802-457-6114.

Vermont Yankee vows to fight new discharge permit

On March 28, the same day Vermont utility regulators granted Vermont Yankee an operating license and endorsed the settlement agreement between Entergy and the state, Entergy sent an uncooperative letter to the Agency of Natural Resources that all but threatens an appeal if they are not allowed to continue operating under its existing and flawed pollution discharge permit.

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) now understands that Entergy's long-expired permit, as well as Entergy's pending application to obtain a new permit, are not compliant with what the law requires. As soon as a draft permit is issued, we will weigh in and keep you updated. Watch our email news for the most current updates. Sign up online at www.ctriver.org.



MASSACHUSETTS

Making sure our rivers and streams stay healthy

With Deval Patrick leaving the Governor's office at the end of 2014, a flurry of draft regulations are out for public comment. We are reviewing three laws this spring that will affect water quality and quantity and fish habitat throughout the Commonwealth. CRWC is working with state staff on proposed changes to the Interbasin Transfer Act, a law that governs how water can be moved between water bodies. Changes to the Water Management Act, which affect the flow of water in rivers and streams, described in previous newsletters, are finally out. Comments on these draft changes are due July 10.

And new rules that would limit the timing and location of fertilizers and other nutrient applications on agricultural and non-agricultural lands have comments due July 4. Stay tuned for updates in our email news or contact MA River Steward Andrea Donlon for more information. Reach her at adonlon@ctriver.org or 413-772-2020 x205.

CRWC appointed to CT River Atlantic Salmon Commission

Part of the Council’s work is to ensure that our perspective and expertise is heard in as many forums as possible. Council staff are members of a wide variety of advisory panels, working groups, commissions, and taskforces in all four watershed states. Recently, Andrew Fisk was appointed by Governor Deval Patrick to fill a Commissioner’s seat designated for the public on the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission (CRASC). The Council has been an active participant in the Commission’s committee work over the years and this appointment will ensure our perspective on the restoration of all migratory fish species and their habitat is heard and has a vote. This Commission is a congressionally-authorized compact where the four watershed states, federal agencies, and the public craft and implement migratory fish restoration and management strategies for the entire watershed.

CONNECTICUT

Calling all alewives: Mill Brook is open!

The Rogers Lake Fishway in Old Lyme is officially open! Thanks goes to the generous support from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation’s Long Island Sound



Future’s Fund and close collaboration between the Town of Old Lyme, CT DEEP Fisheries, CRWC and many partners who have been working hard together for over 10 years. The Rogers Lake Dam Fishway is the most upstream of three fishways on Mill Brook. The fishways work together to fully reconnect the alewives with their historical habitat, blocked for over 342 years. This will lead to great increases in numbers of fish returning to the area in future years. This fish passage reconnects landlocked and sea run alewives, a fascinating reunion described in a recent *New York Times* op-ed. A celebration for the fishway is currently planned for June. Contact Lower River Steward Jacqueline Talbot for details at jtalbot@ctriver.org or 860-704-0057. You can read the *New York Times* piece here: <http://goo.gl/RAxDvE>

You deserve clean water all year

Currently, waste water going into rivers in CT is only disinfected for bacteria from May 1 - September 30. CRWC is working with other river groups to change this



since CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) is revising their clean water standards this year.

We are grateful to the waste water treatment plant operators who work to provide communities with clean water. We are also grateful to all of you who sent us photos of yourselves using our rivers before May 1st this year as we seek to document ‘off-season’ use. “We appreciate your enthusiasm behind this effort. Your feedback gives us a better understanding of year round river use statewide,” says Lower River Steward Jacqueline Talbot.

We will share your recreation photos with CT DEEP as evidence of off-season use while we work together to find the balance between protecting river users and the impacts of disinfection. Disinfecting rivers of harmful bacteria can have a negative impact on aquatic life, typically from the chlorine used. Chlorine disinfection is still a standard in many plants, though waste water treatment plants that upgrade to UV disinfection are safer for aquatic life. Thanks also to all CRWC partners involved in this effort to improve the health and safety of our waters for all life above and below the surface. To learn more, contact Lower River Steward Jacqueline Talbot at jtalbot@ctriver.org or 860-704-0057.

4 ways you can protect clean water

Pack a reusable water bottle. Each year, thousands of plastic water bottles end up in our rivers. This trash is ugly and can harm fish and animals in our rivers and oceans.

Don’t over-fertilize your lawn and wait for dry weather to apply it. Excess fertilizer not absorbed by your lawn will get washed into storm drains and into our rivers next time it rains.

Skip lawn chemicals. Your lawn doesn’t need weed or pest-killing chemicals to thrive. Like fertilizers, these chemicals can get washed into our rivers when it rains.

Capture rainwater by installing a rain garden or rain barrel near your home. Rain gardens absorb water before it has a chance to enter a storm drain and head to our rivers. Rain barrels store rain water for use during dry weather.

Member Spotlight: Ryan O'Donnell

A bright future for one young environmentalist—and for our rivers

“There is hope for our rivers,” says CRWC member Ryan O'Donnell, a young environmental scientist. “Even the most affected rivers are not 100% dead and they can always be improved.”

As an undergraduate student at the University of Massachusetts, Ryan played an important role in restoring the Chickley River. Hawley, MA was devastated by flooding during Tropical Storm Irene. In a misguided attempt to protect their town, officials had the Chickley River dredged and channelized. This caused significant damage to the river, which is an important home to many cold water fish like trout. “I knew that Vermont was devastated in Tropical Storm Irene, but had no idea that Hawley, MA had been so affected,” noted Ryan.

CRWC member Eve Vogel, an assistant professor of political and environmental geography at UMass who had told Ryan about the situation in Hawley, asked if he would help CRWC to undo the damage done to the Chickley River. Ryan agreed and signed on as an intervenor to ensure that MA Dept. of Environmental Protection enforced the law and fixed the river. In return, he learned a considerable amount about local politics and settlement negotiations. “In so many cases, those negotiations take place behind closed doors. I was glad to see what was going on and what that looked like in a small community. CRWC added transparency to the process to make sure there was someone else at the table besides the state, town and contractors—someone who was looking out for the river.”

Impressed by his experience with the Council, Ryan volunteered to work in CRWC's water quality monitoring lab. The following year, he interned with the Southeast Vermont Watershed Association (SeVWA) and the Ottauquechee River Group. These opportunities gave

him hands-on experience in both lab and fieldwork. In August, Ryan earned his Master's degree in Sustainability from UMass. His goal is to work with river groups doing public outreach and education. He wants to help to make river and environmental science accessible to the public.



“There is hope for our rivers,” says CRWC member Ryan O'Donnell, a young environmental scientist.

“A large watershed like the Connecticut is proof that nature does not respect political boundaries,” says Ryan. “You need to work with different states, towns, and counties to tackle environmental issues. Rivers aren't static. They need room to move and to be connected to their environments. In making decisions about how to develop their town and build near the river, decisions about dams, understanding that it is a dynamic system could change how you decide to live and work near the river.”

We're grateful that Ryan is one of the young people stepping up to help address these challenges. “As part of Valley Gives,” says Ryan, “I gave to the Pioneer Valley Symphony and CRWC. I didn't have a lot of money, but I wanted to give both organizations a chance at some extra funding. I promoted them on Facebook, telling friends that it would mean a lot to me if they donated to them.”

One of Ryan's goals this summer is to go paddling for the first time. We hope you'll see him out on the river.

Thanks for joining us!

Welcome, as new members to CRWC, you join a community of people committed to protecting the Connecticut River watershed. Together, we celebrate our four-state treasure and collaborate, educate, organize, restore and intervene to preserve the health of the whole for generations to come.

The following new members joined us between January 1, 2014 and March 31, 2014.

John Dudula
Ed Finley

Dotty Janke
Debbie Querner

Elizabeth Slade & Mary Price
D. Joe Stein

Gifts in Memory:

Esther & Hayden Smith, from Nancy S. Lovejoy

Gary Bastarache, from Anne Bastarache, Nancy Blanchard, Laura Coonan, Country Cottages and Motel, Inc., Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Dalton, Carol Desjean, Denise & David Lucier, Susan Parenteau, PowerDownDebt, Inc., QinetiQ North America, William Ribich, David Royfe, Judy Spiridigliozzi

If you joined during this time & your name was omitted or you prefer a different listing, please contact Marion at 413-772-2020, ext. 201 or mgriswold@ctriver.org.

River of Words in the Holyoke schools

Thanks to an exciting collaboration initiated by the Enchanted Circle Theater Company and the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, the River of Words Along the Connecticut River worked in every Holyoke, MA fifth grade classroom this winter and spring. This partnership joined students and teachers for a 12-day science and arts program all about water, stormwater, and municipal wastewater treatment. CRWC staff with River of Words Coordinator Carol Berner created a lesson on water stewardship, ownership and how things like trash can mess up our waterways. This fall the students' art and poetry created during this program will be turned into a community festival in Holyoke. Four lucky students will have their artwork painted onto the streets around storm drains in downtown Holyoke. Not only will the art beautify the town, but it will also educate community members that those storm drains go directly to the river.



E. SLADE

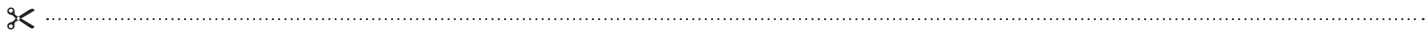
Students' water art & poetry will be featured at a community festival and painted near storm drains in Holyoke, MA.

DO YOU GET OUR EMAILS?
SIGN UP ONLINE AT WWW.CTRIVER.ORG

FIND CRWC ONLINE:

"The Connecticut is one of America's great rivers. It is a life force. In the words of a retired river trip outfitter and guide, 'Rivers are good for the soul.' How can we not support it?"

Jan & Mary Edick, Littleton, NH



Individuals like you have helped to transform the Connecticut River from "the best landscaped sewer in the nation" into a nationally-recognized treasure. Since our founding in 1952, CRWC members have come together to form a powerful force for positive environmental change in New England.

Please join us today.

Yes! I want to help protect and preserve the Connecticut River and its watershed.

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

I'd like to become a sustaining member with a monthly gift of \$ _____

Payment method: Check Visa Mastercard

Card # _____ exp. ____/____

Signature _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Checks: payable to CRWC.
Donate online: www.ctriver.org

CRWC Membership Benefits

- Current & Eddies newsletter
- Invitations to the Annual Celebration and other special events
- Priority on event sign-ups
- Discounts on paddles and other events
- Email updates, news and action alerts
- Opportunity to vote for CRWC Trustees
- CRWC decal
- Access to CRWC's research library

And most important.....The satisfaction of knowing that you are making a contribution to the present and future health and vitality of a most precious natural resource.

Upcoming Events



CRWC ANNUAL CELEBRATION & SUMMER SOLSTICE PADDLE

Saturday, June 21; 11am
Gillette Castle,
East Haddam, CT

Join fellow river-lovers at this annual event to learn more about the southern expansion of the CT River Paddlers' Trail. Hear tales from Steve Grant of the Hartford Courant of his 410 mile paddle along the CT River. See Jim Dina's handcrafted birchbark canoe (weather permitting) that he paddled upriver. Join us in celebrating the summer solstice with a paddle on the CT River. Keep an eye on our website and your mailbox for more details.

RIVER WALK: TALES OF ROCK AND STURGEON

Tuesday, July 15; 6-8pm
Turners Falls, MA

Join us for an evening with geologist Steve Winters and international sturgeon expert Boyd Kynard along the river in Turners Falls, MA. We will explore the rocky formations in the Connecticut River below the dam and



travel to a second site off Migratory Way to talk about geology and the life history and challenges of the

endangered shortnose sturgeon. Bring your own dinner or snacks to share at our second site (optional). You should have proper footwear and ability to traverse rocky and uneven terrain. Meet in the parking lot of Great Falls Discovery Center promptly at 6pm. Heavy rain cancels—rain date July 22. Pre-registration preferred but not required. RSVP to Andrea Donlon at 413-772-2020 x205 or adonlon@ctriver.org.

A RIVER BACK IN TIME

Thursday, August 7; 5-7pm
Bellows Falls, VT

The Bellows Falls region has a rich history, including the first bridge across the CT River in 1785. Join us at the Bellows Falls Fish Ladder Visitor Center to learn more about the local history, historical aspects of the Bellows Falls Project and the current relicensing process. After an indoor presentation, we'll head outside (weather permitting) to explore the CT River more closely. Pre-registration preferred but not required. RSVP to Angela Mrozinski at 413-772-2020 x204 or amrozinski@ctriver.org.

SWALLOW PADDLE

Thursday, September 18; 5-8pm
Old Lyme, CT

Join CRWC & the CT River Museum for a sunset paddle on the CT River to see the swirling flocks of Tree Swallows, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, performing their nightly aerial ballet. Each year, in late summer, Tree Swallows from all over southern New England begin to amass on the CT River to feed on insects preparing for their southern migration. Every night through late summer they collect above the marshes at the mouth of the CT River and swirl overhead in enormous flocks before descending into the tall grass marshes to roost for the night. A spectacular sight. To register, contact the CT River Museum at 860-767-8269 x110 or crm@ctrivermuseum.org.

18TH ANNUAL SOURCE TO SEA CLEANUP

September 26 & 27
VT, NH, MA & CT

Registration opening soon! www.ctriver.org/source-to-sea-cleanup



New CRWC gear in our River Shop

CRWC's online store has been redesigned and filled with exciting new gear.

Visit www.ctriver.org and click on 'Store' to find new items and old favorites.

