

The

Winter 2012

WatershedNews

The President's Statement

Hi Everybody,

Spring is on the way!!!! Time to shake off the winter doldrums and get back to outdoor activities. Soon we will be walking, gardening, fishing and getting involved in WRWA activities. The theme this year is "GET INVOLVED" The board has gotten involved by planning a number of activities for 2012.

Lets start with the spring. The line up for the spring starts with the River Symposium on March 24. This is followed by salmon stocking in April. There will be two chances to stock salmon that month, on Saturdays April 14 and 28. Then, later in the spring is "Demo Day" on May 19th. This is an opportunity to try out a number of different kayaks and canoes, and a chance to win a kayak. For the summer we have the fish ladder open house in June. Then various times during the summer we will have storm drain labeling in Westfield. So, you see there are many chances to "GET INVOLVED"

Our members are our eyes and ears in the watershed. If you have any concerns please don't hesitate to contact a board member. You can get contact information on the web site or near the end of this newsletter. Remember, our members are our most important asset!!!! If you've not yet renewed your membership for 2012, you can send in the form on the last page of this newsletter. Now is the time to "GET INVOLVED" with the many activities that will be offered. SEE YOU THERE!!!

Bill Rose

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18th Annual River Symposium

By Mike Young

The 18th annual Westfield River Symposium will be held in Scanlon Banquet Hall on the campus of Westfield State University on Saturday, March 24. The theme for this year's event is "Protecting Our Watershed: Challenges and Opportunities". Registration is from 8:00 to 8:30, followed by the keynote speaker, Andy Finton, MA Director of Science & Conservation for The Nature Conservancy, who will speak on forest protection and Biomap 2. Following the keynote, we'll have a variety of speakers in several concurrent sessions, with a half-hour break for viewing exhibits and networking mid-morning. Other confirmed speakers include Caleb Slater (MA Wildlife), who will talk about anadromous fish, Julie Richburg (The Trustees of Reservations), who will talk about invasive plants, Carrie Banks (Westfield River Wild & Scenic Coordinator), who will talk about the effects of Tropical Storm Irene, Beth Lambert (MA DER), who will speak about dam removal, Alison Bowden (The Nature Conservancy), who will discuss efforts to improve stream connectivity, and Dana Ohman (MA Wildlife), who will speak on coldwater fisheries and habitat enhancement. There will also be a showing of the new DVD version of "The Watershed Waltz", a puppet show about healthy watersheds, targeted for elementary schools, developed by Marmalade Productions. Sessions will run until about 12:45, with two afternoon field trips leaving campus around 2:00 p.m. The first will be a visit to the West Springfield Fish Ladder, led by Caleb

Slater (MA Wildlife), and the second will be a tour of one or both of the large flood control dams in Huntington, led by Tom Wisnauskas (US Army Corps of Engineers). Raffle tickets will be available throughout the morning at the WRWA Booth, with the drawing to be held at the close of the morning program. Proceeds will help to support WRWA's activities. Additional details will be posted on the WRWA website (www.westfieldriver.org) as they become available.

There's an App for That!

By Julie Richburg

Westfield Invasive Species Partnership

As part of the Westfield River Watershed Invasive Species Partnership, I have been working for the last couple of years to understand the key invasive plants within the watershed and where they occur. In 2010, WISP sponsored a roadside survey of the watershed to gain a broad view of invasive plant distribution in the watershed, and followed that study up with some surveys of protected lands in 2011. These surveys, along with the knowledge of WISP partners and volunteers, provide a picture of invasives in the watershed: the lower and more urban portions of the watershed have some areas that are heavily infested with the most common invaders in the region – Japanese knotweed, oriental bittersweet, multiflora rose – and also some that are not as common – Japanese stiltgrass and autumn olive. The upper, more rural portions of the watershed have some of the same invaders, as well as some

additional species such as glossy buckthorn and moneywort.

With the initial survey complete, WISP has created an early detection list – a list of species that if found, would likely be one of the first times that that species has been found in the watershed (or a portion of the watershed). The best way to control an invasive species is to prevent it from getting established. If found, early detection species should be tackled immediately before their populations become unmanageable throughout the watershed. Of course, learning about these species and keeping an eye out for them is a big job. Luckily WISP will be working this year on several projects to help volunteers, landowners, and land management professionals learn more about early detection plants and insects (contact wrwisp@gmail.com for more information).

In addition to our continued outreach and educational programs, WISP is partnering with researchers at UMASS to use mobile phone technology for interested citizens to identify and report invasive species and connect more people with the environment in the digital age. University of Massachusetts Amherst Professor of Environmental Conservation and Public Policy Charlie Schweik, in partnership with Jennifer Fish of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) received a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to use smartphone technology to engage citizen scientists to map invasive species. Their project, "Outsmart Invasive Species," enables citizens to learn about, identify and report invasive species on their own time, using a free

"Outsmart" iPhone application or simply a digital camera and access to the Web, without any formal time commitment to the project. After downloading the free "Outsmart" application through iTunes, participants simply keep a lookout for the species on the target list as they visit places within the watershed and beyond. The application provides images and descriptions of each species, and enables participants to take photographs tagged with GPS coordinates and submit observations to an online database to be verified by expert biologists (for the Westfield watershed, WISP partners will help serve as experts). For those without a smartphone, GPS tagged photos can be uploaded via a website.

The objective of the Outsmart project is to cover more ground by enlisting citizens to be on the lookout, strengthening existing invasive species management efforts such as the Westfield Invasive Species Partnership. "With more people equipped with the tools to identify and report invasive species when they are out in the field, we hope to prevent destructive outbreaks like that of the Asian longhorned beetle in Worcester," said Jennifer Fish, DCR's Service Forestry Program head in Amherst. The beetle is believed to have been in Worcester for more than 15 years before it was detected by an observant citizen. The project team at UMass worked with developers at the University of Georgia's Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health to create the Outsmart application specifically for Massachusetts. The Outsmart Invasive Species project has also received technical support from UMass Extension's Mass Woods Forest

Conservation program. Other collaborators include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Trustees of Reservations, and WISP.

To learn how you or your organization can get involved – even without an iPhone – visit the project website at www.masswoods.net/outsmart, check out Outsmart Invasive Species on Facebook, contact the project team by e-mail at outsmart@eco.umass.edu, or contact WISP at wrwisp@gmail.com. You can also follow the project's progress by subscribing to the Twitter feed [@outsmartapp](https://twitter.com/outsmartapp). WISP is excited to partner with UMASS to test out the application within the watershed. If we find out about new problematic species early enough, we will be able to control or eradicate them before our native habitats are impacted!

Salmon Stocking

By Bill Rose

Salmon stocking is coming!! The dates this year are Saturdays April 14th and April 28th. This is an exciting way to learn the life cycle of the salmon and assist in keeping it active, and can be a fun way for a family to spend a Saturday morning together. We stock salmon fry, which are about an inch long, in several local streams, some of which are easily accessible for adults with children (April 14th is the better date for younger children). Last year we had a mother and 4 small children participate and they had a wonderful time. She was hoping to come back again this year. Tens of thousands of fry will be put into streams on each date, so there are plenty of fish to stock. So, get involved and join us for

great time!! On April 14th we'll meet at the Commuter Parking Lot at Westfield State (enter at the stoplight on Western Ave.) by 8:30 and will be stocking along Dickinson and Munn Brooks in Granville and Southwick. On the 28th we'll meet at the Gateway Regional High School parking lot in Huntington, and will be stocking along the Middle Branch of the Westfield River, above Littleville Lake. It's best to call Caleb Slater's voicemail (508-389-6331) the day/evening before the event to confirm the schedule. You can also check the WRWA website for additional information.

In Memory...

The Pioneer Valley region, and the Westfield River Watershed, lost two staunch environmentalists over the past couple of months; both will be sincerely missed.

Alexandra Dawson of Hadley, MA – attorney, teacher and awarding-winning environmentalist – died on Friday, December 30, 2011. A memorial celebrating her life will be held on Sunday, March 4 from 2 – 4 PM in the Parish Hall of Grace Church, 14 Boltwood Ave., Amherst, MA. In Alexandra's 30 years as an environmental activist, she provided legal advice to area conservation commissions and environmental non-profits and drafted key state environmental legislation including the sanitary code and Forest Cutting Practices.

David Pardoe, a long-time member and past president of WRWA passed away on January 26, 2012. Dave lived in Huntington, where he was actively

involved in the community, serving on the town's conservation commission and open space committee over the years. During his tenure as WRWA President, in the late 1990s, Dave organized a river shoreline survey along the Westfield River between Huntington and Westfield. Dave was the consummate gentleman, always polite and good-humored, but with strong convictions and an unwavering commitment to the local environment.

Atlantic Salmon Egg-Rearing Program

By Mike Young

ASERP is entering its eleventh year of continuous operation in the Westfield Watershed, with nine teachers, at both the elementary and middle-school levels, operating tanks in their classrooms this spring. WRWA is loaning the equipment (30-gallon aquarium tanks, chillers, filters, etc.) needed for the program, and also provides some support for setting up and maintaining the systems, and for doing outdoor activities in conjunction with the release of the fry later in the spring. Phil Sousa, one of our Board members, attended the annual ASERP workshop, held this year at the US Fish & Wildlife Service Regional Offices in Hadley in mid-January, along with dozens of ASERP teachers from up and down the Connecticut Valley. While the school program has been very successful in making children aware of the life cycle of anadromous fish and of the need to protect our rivers, the actual restoration program has had only limited success in re-establishing populations of Atlantic Salmon in the Connecticut River

and its tributaries. The program was dealt a substantial blow this past summer when Tropical Storm Irene caused extensive damage to the White River National Fish Hatchery in Bethel, VT – where many of the fry used in the restoration effort have been raised. With an estimated \$14 million needed to rebuild the facility, the storm may ultimately be seen as having effectively ended the restoration effort. Stocking of salmon will continue this spring, but with only about half the number of fry that have been available in previous years. Damage was also sustained at the fish ladder in West Springfield, located at the first dam that migrating fish encounter as they move up the Westfield River. WRWA has strongly supported the restoration effort, and applauds the successes the program has had in raising awareness about the river and in improving fluvial habitats, but it's becoming more difficult to justify the costs of the salmon effort in view of the small number of fish that have been returning from the Atlantic. Workshop presenters suggested that the school program may transition to raising trout or some other species if the salmon program is ended over the next couple of years.

Berkshire Highlands Pentathlon

The pentathlon (run, bike, kayak, snowshoe, ski) is being held in Charlemont, MA on March 31, 2012 as a fund-raiser for the Highland Communities Initiative. Participants and volunteers are needed. Contact HCI at (413) 628-4485 (ext. 1) or via email to highlands@ttor.org if you're interested!

Save the Date!! Demo Day – May 19, 2012

In conjunction with Wilderness Experiences of Southwick and the Hampton Ponds State Park, WRWA is co-sponsoring the third annual Kayak/Canoe Demo Day at Hampton Ponds on Saturday, May 19. This year's event will be better than ever, with the opportunity to test paddle dozens of kayaks and canoes, food, and a raffle! The rain date is Sunday, May 20.

Here are the names and addresses of our officers and directors for 2011-2012.

Officers:					
President:	Bill Rose	39 Sunset Terrace	Feeding Hills	01030	786-0195
First Vice President:	Sheryl Becker	101 Regency Park Dr.	Agawam	01101	821-0818
Second Vice President:	Brian Conz	53 Balfour Drive	Springfield	01118	572-8084
Secretary:	Mike Young	721 West Road	Westfield	01085	562-8498
Treasurer:	Fran Siska	47 Salvatore Drive	Westfield	01085	562-4998
Directors:					
	Cory Andros	139 N. Blandford Rd.	Blandford	01008	231-4330
	Mark Damon	54 Pleasant Street	Westfield	01085	572-9991
	Allan Guagliardo	72 Colony Circle	Westfield	01085	568-4770
	Timblin Judy	15 Lake Shore Drive	Southwick	01077	569-9018
	Kathy Meyer	39 Rachael Terrace	Westfield	01085	568-4252
	Allan Ouimet	16 Russell Rd.	Westfield	01085	539-0964
	George Reichert	75 Blair Road	Blandford	01008	848-2074
	Aaron Reyes	100 Park Drive	Westfield	01085	572-8380
	Phillip Sousa	29 Yankee Circle	Westfield	01085	568-3982
	Henry Warchol	2 Sackville Road	Westfield	01085	562-3467
Honorary Directors:					
	Dan Call	777 College Highway	Southwick	01077	569-9677
	Dave Pardoe	25 Sampson Road	Huntington	01050	

For more information on WRWA's activities, check our website at
www.westfieldriver.org

If you've already renewed for 2012, THANKS!! If not, here's the form:

WESTFIELD RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

2012 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New _____ or Renewal _____ ? (Note: Memberships run Jan.-Dec. Memberships submitted on Oct. 1 or later will be credited to the next calendar year.)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

(We send email updates re: events to our members, so it's very helpful to have your email.)

NEWSLETTER: I would like to receive the WRWA newsletter by (check one):
Email link _____ (saves on postage and printing) or Snail Mail hard copy _____

GET INVOLVED: Please fill out this next section, even if you've filled it out in previous years. I would like someone from WRWA to contact me about becoming actively involved in the following areas:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| _____ River Cleanup | _____ Fishway Monitoring |
| _____ Water Quality Studies | _____ Salmon Stocking and Restoration |
| _____ Open Space Preservation | _____ Membership Development |
| _____ Newsletter, Public relations | _____ Serve as Board Member |
| _____ Event staffing | _____ Other (please offer details/ideas): |

Please make check payable to "Westfield River Watershed Association, Inc." and **SEND TO:**
WRWA Memberships, P.O. Box 1764, Westfield, MA 01086

Membership Categories (check one):

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| _____ Individual (\$20) | _____ Family (\$30) | _____ Student (\$10) |
| _____ Life Member (\$300 and up) | _____ Business (\$50-100) | _____ Corporation (\$100-500) |
| _____ Government (\$100-300) | | |

Additional Support: If you would like to make an additional contribution to support the activities of the Westfield River Watershed Association, please note the additional amount here: \$_____.
(Note: WRWA is a 501-c-3 charitable organization. Membership dues and additional donations are tax deductible.)

Thank you for your support of the Westfield River Watershed Association. www.westfieldriver.org

