

Watershed News

The President's Message

I've heard it said that 'great rivers are made in the shade', a reference to the relationship between forested landscapes and wild, scenic and biologically diverse rivers. Our watershed is over 80% forested and these forests are intimately linked to our cold, clear streams and their brook trout, as well as to the watershed's abundant and diverse plant and animal life. It is also true that the watershed has not always looked this way. Here in the northeastern U.S. we are not strangers to transformations in our landscapes. We are able to 'read' the stories written in stone walls and sugar maple-lined country lanes. This past inspires us with its feats of labor and environmental knowledge, and often with its foresightedness. Importantly, it also offers cautionary tales about how not to use our land and water resources.

At this year's WRWA symposium we'll hear about some of the fascinating work going on in the watershed and in the region. We'll hear about developments in forests and forestry, wildlife restoration and monitoring, and fresh water fisheries ecology. This work involves deepening our understanding of both past and present. It also involves the challenging task of considering the future landscape of our watershed. We know that development pressures are increasing, that we need to provide jobs and housing for the next generation, and that the increasing frequency of disasters must be considered. So what is our plan? *Changes to the Land*, a study conducted by Harvard Forest ecologists and conservation planners, helps us to consider our options by presenting four scenarios for the future of Massachusetts. Our keynote speaker and lead author of the report Jonathan Thompson will present the major findings of the report on Saturday, April 5. Please join us for his address and talks on the past, present, and future health of our watershed.

Thanks as always for your generous support of the WRWA! Please read on to learn details about our many other activities this spring.

Warm Regards,
Brian W. Conz, WRWA President

IN THIS ISSUE!

| | |
|---|---|
| 20 th Annual River Symposium | 2 |
| Spring River Cleanups | 2 |
| Demo Day 2014 | 3 |
| WRWA's Annual Meeting | 3 |
| Welcome to New Members | 3 |
| 2013 Financial Summary | 4 |

20th Annual River Symposium: The Health of Our Watershed

By Mike Young

On **Saturday April 5** WRWA will sponsor the twentieth annual Westfield River Symposium in Scanlon Banquet Hall at Westfield State University. The theme for this year's event is "The Health of Our Watershed: Forests, Wildlife, Water" and the keynote address will be given by Jonathan Thompson, Senior Ecologist at the Harvard Forest, lead author of a recent report considering the future of forests in the Commonwealth under different models for development. His talk is titled "Changes in the Land: Four Scenarios for the Future of Massachusetts".

The morning will begin with registration, warm drinks and snacks from 8:00 to 8:30, with the keynote beginning shortly thereafter. Two sets of concurrent sessions will follow the keynote. Other speakers include Elia Del Molino of the Berkshire Environmental Action Team (speaking on their tracking work in Huntington and Worthington), Meghan Blumstein of the Harvard Forest (speaking on land use changes and the resulting impacts on ecosystem services over the past three decades), Tim Bridges of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (speaking on water testing that was carried out within the watershed in 2011 and 2012), and Leanda Fontaine Gagnon of the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (speaking on trout and coldwater streams in the watershed).

The morning will also feature 15-20 exhibitors from local, state, and national organizations and government agencies

with a presence in the watershed. We're particularly enthusiastic about the return of the Watershed on Wheels exhibit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which includes a stream table display. Other exhibitors include the Appalachian Mountain Club's Noble View, the Connecticut River Watershed Council, Friends of Robinson State Park, the Naturalists' Club of Springfield, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, The Nature Conservancy, and the Westfield River Invasive Species Partnership. In addition to being available during registration and between the morning sessions, a half hour at the end of the morning is devoted solely to the exhibits.

A raffle drawing at noon will end the morning program, to be followed in the early afternoon with the opportunity to join Brian Conz, WRWA President and a professor in the Geography and Regional Planning Dept. at Westfield State, on an excursion to property along Rt. 20 where he'll discuss animal tracking. Please mark your calendars and join us for this annual day of learning more about our watershed! Additional details of the program can be found at our website, westfieldriver.org.

Spring River Cleanups

By Mark Damon and Sheryl Becker

This year, our spring cleanup will take place over two days on the weekend following Earth Day - **Saturday April 26** (working out of Westfield) and **Sunday April 27** (working out of Agawam). As is usual with river cleanups, we ask that people show up in clothes that can get dirty and wet and bring their own work gloves if possible. We'll supply trash

bags. Depending on the sites we work at, we may take anywhere from 2-4 hours. The Westfield group will meet at 9:00 AM on Saturday at the Westfield Gas and Electric substation parking lot off Meadow Street (across from the Westfield School of Music). For more information, contact Mark Damon at 413-977-1577 or via email to mjdamon@verizon.net. The Agawam group will meet at 9:00 AM at Pyncheon Point (River Road) just north of the Rt. 57 bridge over the Connecticut River. For more information, contact Sheryl Becker at (413) 374-1921. Last spring, we had a great turnout and got to several sites we had never been to before. We're aiming to make it even better this year. Hope to see you there!

Demo Day 2014

By George Reichert

The fifth annual Demo Day will be held at Hampton Ponds on **Saturday May 17** from 10 AM until 4 PM. Over eighty kayaks, canoes, paddle boards and fishing kayaks will be available for attendees to try on the water. This fund-raising event is a great opportunity for those interested in trying the latest boats and seeing the latest equipment. A raffle, featuring a kayak as first prize and numerous other prizes will be held. Rain date is Sunday May 17th. Be sure to check the WRWA web site for all the details as the date becomes closer.



2014 Annual Meeting

WRWA's annual membership meeting, where the members of the Board of Directors for 2014-2015 will be elected, has tentatively been scheduled for **Thursday May 22**. The details of the event have yet to be worked out, but repeating something along the lines of last year's meeting, which was held at the Westfield Athenaeum, is the initial plan. Save the date and check the website (westfieldriver.org) for details as the date approaches.

Welcome to New Members

By Lynn Bannon

We are happy to welcome several new WRWA members for 2014. It's gratifying to see our membership numbers growing. Thank you to the following new members for their support:

Russ Cohen, Boston
David and Paula McClellan, Westfield
John Pelli, Westfield
Laura Stinnette, Russell
Jack Swiatek, Montgomery
Ed and Elena Szela, West Springfield
Forrest Thompson, Westfield

To all those who continue to maintain their WRWA memberships, some for many years, thank you for your loyalty and encouragement. You make it possible for WRWA to present fun and educational events every year and to work to maintain and improve our local environment. We hope to see you all at the Symposium and other events throughout 2014.

2013 Financial Summary

By Fran Siska and Mike Young

WRWA is a 503(c) non-profit organization. Total organizational assets at the end of 2013 were \$27,601.62, most of which was held in Certificate of Deposit accounts.

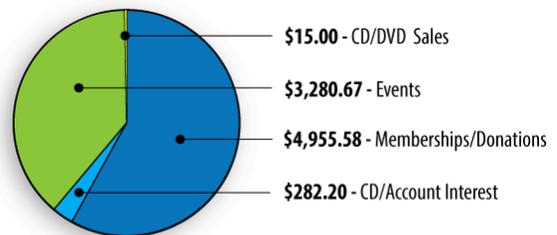
Our primary sources of income are membership dues and donations plus income generated by some of our events, particularly Demo Day, the Fish Ladder Open House, the Canoe Cruise, and the raffle held at the annual River Symposium (see pie charts below). On occasion we've also received funds resulting from the settlement of lawsuits brought by other organizations. One such settlement in 2008, related to a case brought by Clean Water Action brought us \$20,000 of restricted use funds – targeted for a variety of initiatives related to water quality issues in the lower watershed.

Our largest category of expenditures for 2013 was for programs, with the bulk of that money being spent on the Annual River Symposium (coffee and snacks for attendees, speaker's fees, lunch for speakers and exhibitors), the Atlantic Salmon Egg-Rearing Program and its replacement, Trout in the Classroom (which involves considerably more expense for aquarium maintenance), and support for the artists' suitcases project co-sponsored by the Westfield River Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee. Administrative expenses were the second largest category, with most of those funds being expended on supplies and wages for our part-time administrative assistant. Stewardship expenses, funded by the restricted use monies, were primarily for the storm

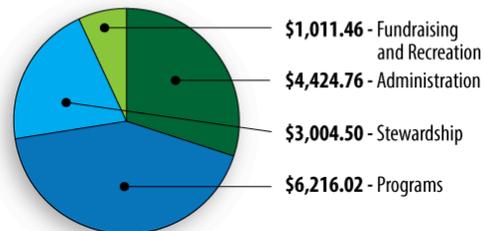
drain labeling project that's been ongoing for the past several years, with some funding also being used to support our river cleanups.

Approximately \$8,200 of that settlement money remains to be spent. Finally, some funds were spent on Demo Day (food, T-shirts, park rental fee) and the Canoe Cruise (insurance, water, transportation assistance from the YMCA) in support of those fundraising and recreational events.

2013 Income



2013 Expenses



Overall, WRWA's finances are in good condition, though expenses did exceed income in 2013 by approximately \$6,000. That's been a common situation over the past several years as we've spent down the settlement funds and have used earlier surpluses to support a variety of projects.

Thanks to Board member Timblin Judy for producing the graphics that accompany this report.

Save the Date!

Our annual canoe/kayak cruise down the Westfield River from downtown Westfield to Robinson State Park in Agawam is tentatively scheduled for **Saturday, June 21** (coinciding with Robinson Park Day). Though the event is dependent on weather and river conditions, it's a great way to see the Westfield River from a different vantage point and is a surprisingly natural paddle – despite paralleling Rt. 20 for much of the way. Details will follow in the May newsletter!

Here are the names and addresses of our officers and directors for 2013-2014.

| Officers: | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------|----------|
| President: | Brian Conz | 53 Balfour Drive | Springfield | 01118 | 572-8084 |
| First Vice President: | Aaron Reyes | 100 Park Drive | Westfield | 01085 | 572-8380 |
| Second Vice President: | Sheryl Becker | 101 Regency Park Dr. | Agawam | 01001 | 821-0818 |
| Secretary: | Mark Damon | 54 Pleasant Street | Westfield | 01085 | 572-9991 |
| Treasurer: | Fran Siska | 47 Salvatore Drive | Westfield | 01085 | 562-4998 |
| Directors: | | | | | |
| | Daniel Demers | 1307 Main Street | Agawam | 01001 | 626-7163 |
| | Allan Guagliardo | 72 Colony Circle | Westfield | 01085 | 568-4770 |
| | Timblin Judy | 15 Lake Shore Drive | Southwick | 01077 | 569-9018 |
| | Allan Ouimet | 16 Russell Rd. | Westfield | 01085 | 539-0964 |
| | Sabine Prather | 123 Sackett Rd. | Westfield | 01085 | |
| | George Reichert | 75 Blair Road | Blandford | 01008 | 848-2074 |
| | Bill Rose | 39 Sunset Terrace | Feeding Hills | 01030 | 786-0195 |
| | Phillip Sousa | 29 Yankee Circle | Westfield | 01085 | 568-3982 |
| | Henry Warchol | 2 Sackville Road | Westfield | 01085 | 562-3467 |
| | Mike Young | 721 West Rd. | Westfield | 01085 | 562-8498 |
| Honorary Directors: | | | | | |
| | Dan Call | 777 College Highway | Southwick | 01077 | 569-9677 |

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