

WRWA's 23rd Annual River Symposium



The Ups and Downs of a River:

Floods and Droughts on the Westfield

Westfield State University – Scanlon Banquet Hall

Saturday, March 25, 2017

8:30 – 9:00	Registration , viewing of exhibits from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
9:00 – 10:00	Welcome (Bill Rose, WRWA President)
Aud B	Keynote Address: Impacts and Recovery from Acute Weather Patterns; including Natural Disasters: David Billips (<i>Director of Public Works, City of Westfield</i>): Westfield experienced several major weather related events in recent years including a tornado, Tropical Storm Irene, and a significant October snowstorm. In 2016 lack of rainfall coupled with above normal temperatures led to extended and severe drought conditions. Collectively these issues caused catastrophic damage to both the water and wastewater infrastructure. How the city dealt with this and minimized long term impacts will be examined.
10:10 – 10:55	Concurrent Sessions I
Aud A	The Drought of 2016 in Regional and Historical Perspective: Karl Leiker (<i>Professor, WSU Dept. of Geography and Regional Planning</i>): The drought that affected the Westfield River Watershed in 2016 was the most significant in recent years and is only rivaled in recent memory by the drought of 1966. In this talk the 2016 drought will be examined in comparison to the 1966 event and their significance for southern New England. The causes of the drought will be addressed as well as the possible implications of long term droughts in the region in the context of global climate change.
Aud C	Trash Talkin' with Nancy and Helga: Zero Waste and the Watershed: Nancy Bobskill (<i>Zero Waste</i>): This powerful presentation (featuring Helga, the chicken purse) addresses ways to reduce our waste, while explaining how this directly benefits our watershed.
11:05 – 11:50	Concurrent Sessions II
Aud A	Knightville and Littleville Dams: 50 Years of Flood Reduction on the Westfield River: Matt Coleman (<i>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</i>): This presentation will focus on the history of the two dams, their major milestone events (especially in terms of flood damage reduction, and their current role in the watershed.
Aud C	Net Zero Water and the "Living Building Challenge:" Chris Chamberland (<i>Berkshire Design Group</i>): Construction often negatively impacts the natural balance of water cycles. Western Massachusetts is home to four innovative projects that are attempting to combat these issues through the principle of "Net Zero Water." This presentation will take a deep dive into the systems that allow these buildings to capture rainfall for drinking water as well as treat their own wastewater on-site. It will explore the technical and regulatory challenges faced by the project teams, and will highlight the ways in which these systems mimic not just traditional water systems, but also the natural systems found just outside the doors of these new buildings.
12:00 – 12:30	Viewing of Exhibits (raffle drawing at 12:15 p.m.) – see list of exhibitors on reverse
1:30 – ?	Field Trip: Flood Control Dams on the Westfield River: Matt Coleman (<i>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</i>): meet in the lobby of Scanlon Hall, just outside the banquet hall.

