

Watershed Update



Missisquoi River Basin Association

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Trees for Streams – Work Days 2/4
 Thank You! 2
 Give the Gift of a 2014 MRBA Membership 3
 MRBA Through the Years 3
 EPA / State of Vermont Restoration Plan 3
 Trees for Streams involvement 4

Your Impact on Your Watershed – Alisha Sawyer, MRBA Coordinator

I am still settling in to my new position as coordinator of the MRBA and loving every minute of it! I hit the ground running on October 10th and haven't stopped since. This organization is a busy one, with many water quality improvement projects lined up, and community partners to help us get the jobs done. I am new to this "water world" having worked previously in community organizations of various types but have already learned that each of us has a role to play in the clean-up of the ground water within the Missisquoi watershed (shown at right.) The rain that hits our roofs, our driveways, our other impervious surfaces is our responsibility and how we deal with it – or don't deal with it, directly impacts the water quality of this watershed.



For too long, too many of us

have looked to others to do this job and it is clear at this point that this is not going to get accomplished without everyone getting involved.

Through community outreach and education we hope to be able to inform more people about best management practices and how to be an active member of the watershed.

I would like to extend my thanks to Laurie Martin who served as interim coordinator for the MRBA over the summer, and Cynthia Scott who served as coordinator for 16 years before retiring this past spring. Cynthia remains involved and active as a board member-for which I am especially thankful!

-Alisha



Photos from River Clean up 2013 – anyone missing a couch? You never know what you might find...and have to carry in your canoe.



Bugworks

We are happy to say our 2013 Bugworks program was a great success!

We had nine schools participate and hundreds of students learn about what a watershed is – and

that they are a part of it!

We plan to continue offering the Bugworks program to all schools within the watershed. Through this early education and outreach

we will continue to engage and train responsible watershed stewards. **If you are interested in the Bugworks program, please contact us: mrba@pshift.com**

Trees for Streams - Workdays



Above: Photos from the fall workday at the Monastery

We couldn't do it without you!

Thank you for the water samples you collected, the miles you drove, the meetings you attended, the trees you planted, the trash you picked up, and thank you—most of all, for sharing your time with us.

Time is our most valuable asset – and we are thankful and humbled by your generosity of spirit and continued support of the MRBA.

We are so fortunate to have you as a volunteer, and we hope you will continue to help us work toward our goal.

Community volunteer and student plantings were held on Saturday April 13th and Monday April 15th at Stony Pond Farm owned by Tyler and Melanie Webb. 12 community volunteers came on the Saturday workday and about 75 students from the Fairfield 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th grades planted approximately 450 trees. The planting project along Wanzer Brook in Fairfield was funded through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and the Partners in Wildlife (PIW) Program. Ben Gabos of VT AAFM and Chris Smith of USF&WS have provided the program planning and technical services to most of the planting projects in our watershed.

The third planting workday was held with 15 community volunteers on Saturday, April 20th on the Kearney Farm in Westfield. The planting site is along the upper Missisquoi River and the total project area that was planted by a mixture of contractors and volunteers was 11.8 acres with 2950 trees and shrubs. A great milestone was achieved on this day, with Cynthia Scott planting the **20,000th** tree of MRBA's volunteer work since 1997!

Friday, May 3rd was the date of the fourth volunteer

workday at the Beebe Farm in Swanton. Employee volunteers from Ben and Jerry's provided the bulk of the labor and the 400 trees for this site were provided through a USF&WS and Intervale Conservation Nursery grant. Thanks to Pam Hakey of Ben and Jerry's and Leah Szafranski of USF&WS for supporting supplemental planting at this site that was originally planted via the CREP and PIW programs in 2010.

The following Friday, 7th graders from Bakersfield school were able to start planting on our first Trees for Streams project site. Terry and Joanne Magnan, owners of Diamond Hill Custom Heifers, agreed to a substantial project planting over 1500 trees, live willow stakes and shrubs along the Tyler Branch in Enosburgh and the Missisquoi River in Sheldon. Thanks to Bakersfield farm to school coordinator Rachel Huff and other staff for organizing the students who planted 105 trees. The next day, May 11th, 14 community volunteers worked on the next section of the project along the Tyler Branch, who planted an impressive 445 trees, shrubs and live willow stakes. The third group to work on this site was Sheldon 7th graders, planting on Wednesday May 15th.

This group was able to plant 415 stems during their time working on the Missisquoi River portion of the site. The fourth group was the Fairfield 7th and 8th grade classes planting on May 23rd. These groups were able to close out the project planting, getting 590 stems in along the Tyler Branch.

There were two additional spring workdays through the TFS project at Huguette Pion's farm in Lowell on the upper Missisquoi River. The first community volunteer workday on Saturday May 18th brought out 7 volunteers who planted 100 trees. A second group of six volunteers, including students from Dave Smith's Environmental Science class at North Country Union High School, was able to complete the project by planting another 190 trees and shrubs.

Fall brought additional volunteer workdays, including two more sites through the TFS project. On October 12, 15 community volunteers planted around 200 trees and shrubs on the property of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Monastery in Westfield. This is the first phase of planting at this site along the upper Missisquoi River, with primarily live willow stakes planned for spring.

Cont'd on page 4

Give the Gift of a 2014 MRBA Membership

As the Holiday season draws near many folks look to charitable gifting for their loved ones. We would urge you to consider purchasing a 2014 MRBA membership for your friends and family that share a connection with the watershed and through your gift will better understand the

importance of our work and mission:

Restoring and maintaining the ecological integrity of the Missisquoi River system so that the uses and values desired by the community are supported by the river and quality of its water

Suggested donation levels:

- Creek \$10
- Brook \$35
- Stream \$100
- River \$200
- Student \$5

Donations via PayPal available at: www.troutrivernetwork.org/mrba



Checks may be mailed to:

Missisquoi River Basin Association
9534 Rt 36 – Unit 5
East Fairfield, VT
05448

MRBA is a non-profit organization with an approved and current 501(c)(3) status. Your donation is fully tax deductible. These funds help us to cover expenses and projects not covered by specific grants.

A cash donation is not the only way to support the MRBA and the work we do; we always need volunteers and would be more than happy to welcome you, your friends and families to our ranks!

MRBA through the years-some of our projects

- More than 20,000 trees planted
- Over 18,000 volunteer hours logged
- Canoe outing and clean up for the past 17 years
- Public forums held on various water quality issues for the past 17 years
- Field work on over 100 sites throughout the watershed
- Over a dozen bank stabilization projects
- Clearing brush for canoe access to the river and tributaries on dozens of sites
- Prior to the state's mandatory enrollments; MRBA cost shared nutrient management with over 20 farmers within the watershed
- Watersampling by MRBA volunteers since 2005; we've collected over 2,000 nutrient and sediment samples

We still have a long way to go, and we need your help to get there!

EPA/State of Vermont Restoration Plan

The State of Vermont was recently charged by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to make some drastic changes to improve the state of Lake Champlain. They are currently in the process of presenting some of their proposed actions to citizens around the lake for their comments and

questions. Secretary of Agriculture, Chuck Ross and Commissioner of Vermont DEC, David Mears led the discussions in St. Albans and Swanton on December 2nd, 2013. It is clear that the State is under federal pressure to make measureable

improvements or face the consequences as outlined by the EPA. They will accept comments until January 17th, 2014.

For more information, or to submit a comment: <http://www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov/erp/champlain/>

NEW ADDRESS in 2014

Missisquoi River Basin
Association
9534 Rt 36 – Unit 5
East Fairfield, VT 05448
Phone 802.752.7247
E-mail mrba@pshift.com

**Trees for Streams (TFS)
grant involvement-**

*For more information, or to
see if your property could
be considered for this grant
please contact MRBA at
mrba@pshift.com or (802)
752-7247*

We're on the Web!
[www.troutrivernetwork.org/
mrba](http://www.troutrivernetwork.org/mrba)

Work days cont'd from page 2

The second TFS fall project was at Randy Callan's farm along the Black Creek. Students from the Fairfield 7th and 8th grades were able to plant around 225 trees and shrubs on October 29th. This is also the first part of a two-phase project where MRBA will return in the spring. Thanks to Andrew Evans and other Fairfield staff for getting students out to project sites so many times this year.

Last but not least, the 14th volunteer workday of the season was held at Wynn and Pauline Paradee's farm on October 30th. The farm is along the Hungerford Brook in the towns of Swanton and Sheldon, and initially had a CREP buffer project planted in 2009 and 2010. The maple trees were planted with plastic tube protectors to reduce damage to the bark by rodents, and after several years of growth some of the tubes were restricting further growth and needed to be cut. Chris Smith and Leah Szafranski of the USF&WS helped identify the need and worked with and provided background to the 8th grade Sheldon students who came out on a cold morning. Thanks to Joanna Jerose and Scott McKim of Sheldon school who organized the student group to come and remove the tree tubes.

Thanks also to Jaime Tibbits for leading a number of the field projects over this past season, in her role as Field Assistant on the TFS project. It was a big year for projects and we appreciate all the time, energy and good humor the many volunteers contributed to accomplish all this work. Please feel free to contact myself, Jaime or Alisha if you have ideas or would like to volunteer in 2014!

-Brian Jerose, MRBA Technical Advisor

