



Northfield Riverbank Views

P.O. Box 44, Northfield, MA 01360

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GNWA Tests Connecticut River Water

This summer the GNWA joined a larger effort by the Connecticut River Watershed Council to monitor *E.coli* levels in the river. Bacteria levels are influenced by run-off as well as rainfall, which puts this project directly in line with our mission. The goal was to provide information about safety for boating or swimming. For several years about 45 sites from Hanover to Hartford have been monitored. More information and a map of the testing sites can be found at <http://www.ctriver.org/portfolio-items/is-the-river-clean/>. Specific data from Northfield can be found there too.

For our part, it required some planning as the tests are regulated closely to ensure the integrity of the data. Both Barbara Richardson, GNWA member, and Andrew Vernon, GNWA vice president, were trained at the CRWC office on Bank Row. A location popular with swimmers near the ramp at Pauchaug was chosen, and samples were taken every other Thursday from May 30 to August 22. The samples were taken early and rushed to the Greenfield lab, occasionally with a transfer at Northfield Coffee to a CRWC employee passing through! Our stretch of river proved safe ; at only one point (late July) did it register over 250 CFU/100ml (a benchmark of *E.coli* safety).

We plan to repeat this volunteer effort in 2014 as we are the only tested site between Brattleboro and Turners Falls.

Mill Brook Wetlands

NMH School is preparing to sell the golf course and adjacent property to Ed Snow, who owns a landscaping business in the area, and who is currently managing the golf course property. The 154 acres includes 75 or so acres of the Mill Brook wetlands area between Birnam Road and Main Street and the open lands off Birnam Road. A group of Northfield residents that includes members of the Open Space Committee, the GNWA, the Conservation Commission and the Select Board will meet with Ed and discuss how the Town residents can enjoy the wetlands.



The Mill Brook conservation area, as outlined in the 2006 study that was commissioned by the Transition Committee, is a very important part of our Town. It is an area rich with history, and of vital importance to the health of our local ecosystem. We hope Snow will protect the Mill Brook Conservation area, manage for invasive species, provide outdoor recreation, encourage educational use and ensure a healthy source for the Connecticut River watershed. Stay tuned!

Submitted by Annie Chappell

Source to Sea Cleanup 2013



An enthusiastic turnout of 20 LANE Construction employees on October 5th ensured that the success of this year's GNWA-sponsored local cleanup effort. LANE has been a dedicated partner for the eight years GNWA has been lending a hand to the Connecticut River Watershed Council's annual event, providing manpower, trucks, and trash disposal. We filled a dumpster with 1.8 tons of debris collected around town, brought in 27 tires left along the roads, and countless bottles and cans, some old, some new. Thirty three Northfield Elementary School 6th Graders participated in the *Source to Sea Cleanup* again this year on October 7th with their usual energy and determination not to leave *any* trash along the walking route. Next year

it would be great to have at least as many GNWA members or Northfield residents as there are LANE employees!! Let us know how we can do a better job recruiting volunteers and raising awareness about the environmental dangers of litter.

Neighborhood Clean Sweep

Between the time the last roadside snow melts and spring's new grass starts to grow, homeowners and family members of the Old Bernardston Road area gather for a 4- to 5-hour block of time to clean up their neighborhood. The area loops from Route 10's entrance to Pioneer Valley Regional High School, along the length of Old Bernardston Road and then along Access Road to Route 10 again, and it extends up Bennett Brook Road to the back entrance of the school.

The area has its annual litter, especially because of the entrance to PVRS and traffic headed to the Transfer Station. It also has its share of old dump. Three pick up trucks were filled in 2010, the first year of the neighborhood cleanup. Tires, car parts, and old paint cans were dumped off the road or thrown over the embankment, all in the Bennett Brook watershed.

But it's a win-win situation, everyone agrees, and each year more neighbors join in. "It's actually a really great way to stay connected with our neighbors," says Deana Parrish, one of the original participants. "We get to spend time together and socialize, and it's good for the environment, too." She and her husband Barry walk Sierra, their golden retriever, daily along these roads, and they are grateful that litter isn't a problem any longer. "The hardest part," adds Deana, "is scheduling the day to do this." Submitted by Robin Conley

GNWA Needs Your Support--A Message from the President

As 2013 comes to an end and we reflect on the year's activities I am confident that GNWA is thriving and will continue to play an important role in shaping the future of Northfield for years to come. A lot of what GNWA does is behind the scenes supporting town committees, tracking potential threats to our watershed, liaising with other nonprofits and land trusts to determine priorities, and ensuring that opportunities will not be missed.

Since the mid 1990's GNWA has worked to protect and promote an environmentally sound agenda. This organization first came into existence when plans to allow a solid waste disposal operation on top of a medium-high yield aquifer in west Northfield threatened the watershed. Over the past decade the mission of this organization has deepened as needs were identified on both sides of the river.

This year I am particularly grateful for the initiative and dedication of GNWA directors, Kate Rossiter and Andrew Vernon who took the lead on water testing. Their efforts meant that there would be critical information available to swimmers and boaters about the health of the river. The Board is looking for more energetic citizen stewards like Kate and Andrew to work locally on watershed issues.

GNWA has been identified as a partner in the implementation of the 2014 Northfield Master Plan priorities to:

- Preserve and enhance access to the Connecticut River
- Promote preservation of open space and natural features
- Create opportunities for recreation and community gathering
- Develop an economy that connects to natural features, agricultural & historic heritage

These are goals GNWA can get behind wholeheartedly as they point to a belief in the value of our natural heritage versus a willingness to sell it off to the highest bidder. GNWA's role in implementing the new Master Plan depends on member input. Your ideas and involvement are essential and will define GNWA's role in the years ahead. I look forward to hearing from you! -- Jenny Tufts, GNWA President.

Think Globally--Act Locally

Count me a friend of
The Greater Northfield
Watershed Association

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GNWA
P.O. Box 44
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My interests are:

- ___ Wildlife
- ___ Wetlands
- ___ Recreation
- ___ Land-use planning



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