



Northfield Riverbank Views

P.O. Box 44, Northfield, MA 01360

gnwa@comcast.net

Volume 5 No. 1

Watershed Waltz returns to Northfield Elementary School



NES students were treated to a wonderful show about what makes a watershed work on April 12th when GNWA and the PTO co-sponsored a performance of the *Watershed Waltz*. Using shadow box, puppetry, music and humor, the troupe entertained while teaching 3rd and 4th graders about wildlife biology, evaporation and groundwater, pollution, and how to responsibly care for a watershed. There were lots of questions and laughs as the kids were taken on a fun trip under the river and into the clouds where they swam with Alvin the trout, flew with a dragonfly, and learned that what goes down the drain is going to return eventually as our drinking water.



GNWA is on the Move!

The GNWA Board of Directors has decided that GNWA will become more “mobile.” and will no longer maintain an office. GNWA will allocate all funds to projects and events that promote conservation and active recreation in the Northfield watershed. For now, rather than continuing to occupy and pay rent on permanent office space, GNWA will design a moveable display to maintain visibility in town, while expanding our annual activities. GNWA is looking for volunteers to help create an attractive informative and portable display case to set up wherever people are gathering. GNWA is also working to build our social networking on Facebook and to improve our website. When tables and chairs are necessary to our work the plan is to take advantage of public meeting places. You can find us anytime by going to www.northfieldmass.org/GNWA or contacting any of the Board members. We are also on Facebook.

Inside this Issue

<i>Watershed Waltz returns to Northfield</i>	1
<i>GNWA is on the Move!</i>	1
<i>GNWA Conservation Monitoring</i>	2
<i>Thermal Effects of Vermont Yankee</i>	2
<i>PVRS Land Management Plan</i>	3
<i>Will Northfield be a Green Community?</i>	4
<i>Invasive Plant Workshop with Joan Deely</i>	5
<i>Spring/Summer Calendar of Events</i>	5

GNWA Conservation Monitoring

GNWA is currently conducting the first annual Conservation Restriction (CR) Monitoring of two properties in Northfield that are protected under the Forest Legacy Program. GNWA members have been trained by Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust and have already been out at the Town Forest (Brush II) and the Richardson property along the New England Scenic Trail surveying property lines and collecting data to confirm compliance with the terms of the CR. The reports will be submitted to the Northfield Conservation Commission, the board responsible for managing town properties, and to the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation.



Richardson Property



Northfield Town Forest (Brush Mountain II)

Thermal Effects of Vermont Yankee

The Connecticut River Watershed Council has released two reports on the flawed science behind Entergy's use of the Connecticut River to dump warm water from the Vermont Yankee plant. Vermont Yankee has been allowed to bypass its cooling towers and discharge hot water directly into the Connecticut River. Entergy operates under a State permit allowing the nuclear power plant to raise the temperature of the river up to 13 degrees during winter months and up to five degrees in the summer and fall. According to the reports, the decision is based on flawed science. If you want more details you can read the reports yourself at http://www.criver.org/programs/advocacy/thermal_pollution/index.html

Issues covered include: HydroAnalysis' critique of Entergy's computer modeling

- Midwest Biodiversity Institute's report about Entergy's narrow wildlife focus
- A legal analysis of the issues
- An easy-to-digest summary of the issues



PVRS Land Management Plan

---Nearing the Final Steps

How do we prepare a new generation of land stewards?

The Pioneer Valley Regional School embraces this core value, which has become the focus of land management plan by sustainable landscape designer and veteran PVRS teacher, John Lepore. Two open community meetings held in December and February along with input from juniors and seniors has guided development of a preferred design appropriately named "Resilience".

It incorporates many sustainable land use management practices that will:

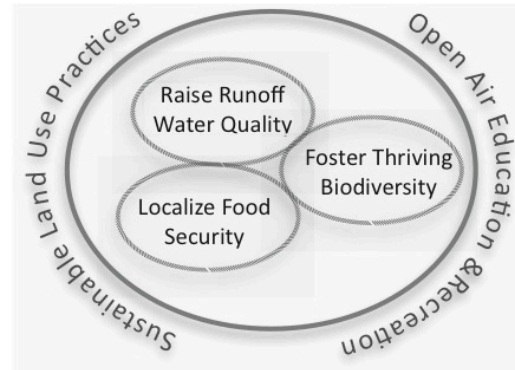
- Improve water runoff quality into a Bennett Meadow- a BioMap2 Critical Landscape
- Foster thriving biodiversity
- Localize food security

These practices will include a wide range of educational and recreational opportunities for students and community members including:

- Permaculture gardens
- Rain gardens with native plants
- Rain capture from rooftops
- Pollinator habitats that reduce mowing and improve biodiversity
- Exotic plant removal, management, and replacement
- Outdoor classrooms
- Productively managed forests
- Trail system with welcoming kiosks and guiding signs
- Wetland walkway and viewing platform
- Photovoltaic array that will supply the schools electrical needs

The plan will include extensive development resources that support these changes, plus recommended next steps for implementation. Next steps include gathering input from teachers in May and drafting the final plan for the PVRS School Committee's endorsement, which is targeted for September 2012. For further information on the designs and the process, please visit future-lands.com. If you would like further information, please contact John at ask@future-lands.com

Pioneer Valley Regional School
LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN



Future-Lands.com



Town Meeting Time: Will Northfield be a Green Community?



As we move into the 21st century, minimizing energy waste through energy efficiency and energy conservation will be a major part of Northfield's long range planning strategy. An energy efficient and conservation minded community will be better positioned to prosper in the coming years.

A YES vote on the following articles at the Northfield Town Meeting on May 7th will support Northfield becoming a Green Community. These 2 articles must pass in order for Northfield to be designated a Green Community and receive funding of approximately \$130,000 to do energy efficiency and renewable energy projects on town buildings (among other benefits).

Article 32. Solar Generation Zoning Bylaw does two things:

1. It satisfies criterion 1 of 5 toward becoming a Green Community by creating a "solar overlay district" (SOD) where large scale, ground mounted, photovoltaic (PV) installations can be erected "by right". There are currently 2 proposed SODs located on reclaimed strip mined land on Lane Construction property.
2. It establishes a definition of large scale, ground mounted, PV generating facilities for **all** of Northfield. A ground mounted PV generating system of less than 1500 square feet of total PV array area is allowed "by right". A system larger than 1500 square feet must go through the special permit process. Fifteen hundred square feet of array area is equal to a 20 kw peak capacity system which will produce enough electricity annually to supply 2.5 to 3 homes using the Massachusetts average residential consumption of 618 kWh/month.

Article 39. Adoption of the "Stretch Energy Code"

This article satisfies criterion 5 of Green Communities and has to do with increasing the energy efficiency of new construction, additions and some renovations. The stretch code raises the standard in energy efficiency about 15 to 20% over the current base code and creates higher value houses this saves homeowners hundreds of dollars a year in energy costs for the life of the home.



Richardson Property—What a View!

Invasive Plant Tour and Workshop



If you have been bothered by Invasive Plants and want to know how to identify and remove them, you are invited to attend the Invasive Plant Tour and Workshop led by Joan Deely on May 19th from 9 - 11 AM. The Ross family has invited GNWA members and friends to the meadow and forest at 253 Birnam Rd where participants will learn about invasive plants and how to control them. This is property where bittersweet is taking down trees, garlic mustard is spreading quickly, Japanese barberry is a nasty presence, staghorn sumac has a foothold, multiflora rose is ever present, and Japanese knotweed shows up every year. If you own property where invasive plants are a problem, don't miss this.



Joan is the Project Manager with Polatin Ecological Services, LLC, located in Gill, MA. PES specializes in invasive plant control and habitat restoration. She received a Master's degree from Antioch New England graduate school, and holds a Massachusetts Pesticide Applicator's license. Joan conducted an invasive plant survey at the former Mt. Tom Ski Area in Holyoke, MA, and attends a variety of seminars and classes related to habitat restoration. She has been a member of Northfield Conservation Commission for 8 years.

Upcoming GNWA Activities 2012

- | | | |
|--------|---|-------------------------------|
| May 3 | Coast Guard Aux. Presentation | Town Hall, 7:00 PM |
| May 19 | Invasives Workshop with J. Deely | 253 Birnam Rd , 9-11 AM |
| Aug 5 | Picnic & Paddle at Sawyer Pond | Mt Hermon Station Rd, 12-3 PM |
| | The Tufts family has invited GNWA members to spend a summer afternoon enjoying water sports, fishing or a walk in the woods. Invitation will be sent in early summer. | |
| Sep 29 | CRWC Source to Sea Cleanup | 9-1 PM TBA |
| Oct | GNWA Annual Meeting | Speaker TBA |
| Nov | Invasives Workshop | |

Several more programs and activities are in the works. A program on Organic Land development and a program co-sponsored with Dickinson Library will happen this summer. Members will be notified as speakers and activities are confirmed.

Think Globally--Act Locally

Count me a friend of
The Greater Northfield
Watershed Association

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

All dues/donations are
entirely tax deductible.

Please write check to:

GNWA
P.O. Box 44
Northfield, MA 01360

- ___ \$25 Family
- ___ \$15 Individual
- ___ \$50 Sponsor
- ___ \$100 Patron
- ___ \$100 Corporation
- ___ \$50 Small Business

My interests are:

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



Greater Northfield Watershed Association
P.O. Box 44
Northfield, MA 01301



Sawyer Pond in Northfield