

## River subcommittees tackle water issues

### Public input is sought on draft priorities

THE five local river subcommittees of CRJC have just completed two years of work updating and drafting revised water resources chapters of the local versions of the Connecticut River Management Plan.

Each subcommittee has selected 10 priorities for water resources out of approximately 100 recommendations from each region. Representatives of each subcommittee presented their draft findings to the Connecticut River Joint Commissions and agency representatives from both states at CRJC's annual meeting on April 30.

The subcommittee draft plans will be available for public comment until June 15.

The new Water Resources chapters represent a substantial expansion of the topics treated in the 1997 version. Among new top-

ics are groundwater, sediment quality, flow, gages, climate change, stormwater management, results of fluvial geomorphological studies, combined sewer overflows, airborne pollutants, and condition of the tributaries.

From the five regions several common priorities have emerged:

- River floodplains should stay open and undeveloped, to provide natural flood storage, keep agricultural soils of national importance available for future food production, and protect habitat and scenic qualities.
- Vermont should enact statewide shoreland protection. It is the only New England state that has not done so. New Hampshire should improve education and enforcement for its shoreland protection law.

*continued on page 4*

### Inside

Changing faces .....	2
New officers .....	2
New LRS members.....	2
Progress on the Plan.....	3
Conte Refuge planning.....	7
Israel River monitoring.....	7
Shoreland Protection.....	8
Calendar.....	8

## Studies focus on Connecticut River mercury

THE Environmental Protection Agency released the long-awaited results from a study of Connecticut River fish contamination at the October meeting of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions. Results reveal that mercury, PCBs, dioxins, and DDT are a threat to people and wildlife who consume the fish, but these threats vary in different parts of the river.

The Connecticut River Fish Tissue Contaminant Study is the first river-long, multi-state investigation of its kind. The study resulted from a recommendation in CRJC's Connecticut River Corridor Management Plan. Fish sampled were smallmouth bass, yellow perch, and white suckers. Mercury concentrations in all three species were significantly higher in upstream parts of the river, above Moore Dam, than in downstream reaches. Here, mercury poses a risk to recreational and subsistence fishers and to fish-eating wildlife.

*continued on page 6*



### EROSION SEASON

Heavy rains and snow melt led to flooding in many parts of the watershed in March and April. Here, River Road in Plainfield is losing its bank into the Connecticut after ice jams led to high water levels. Communities and private landowners can replace, enhance, and maintain riparian buffers to help protect property and roads from flood damage. For more information, see CRJC's series of 10 riparian buffer fact sheets, available from our office and on-line, at [www.crjc.org/riparianbuffers.htm](http://www.crjc.org/riparianbuffers.htm).

Photo: Nancy Franklin

## CRJC Commissioners

Robert Christie, *Lancaster, N.H.*  
Glenn English, *N. Haverhill, N.H.*  
Nancy Franklin, *Plainfield, N.H.*  
Peter Gregory, *Woodstock, Vt.*

Robert Harcke,  
*Westmoreland, N.H.*

Cleve Kapala, *Concord, N.H.*

Tom Kennedy, *Ascutney, Vt.*

Robert Kline, *Plainfield, N.H.*

John Lawe, *Norwich, Vt.*

Beverly Major, *Westminster, Vt.*

Jim Matteau, *Brattleboro, Vt.*

Alison Meaders, *St. Johnsbury, Vt.*

Denise Meadows, *Keene, N.H.*

Gary Moore, *Bradford, Vt.*

J. Cheston Newbold, *Cornish, N.H.*

Gayle Ottmann, *Quechee, Vt.*

Robert Ritchie, *Piermont, N.H.*

William Roberts, *Hinsdale, N.H.*

Joe Sampson, *Bradford, Vt.*

John Severance, *Whitefield, N.H.*

Mary Sloat, *Lancaster, N.H.*

Michaela Stickney, *Montpelier, Vt.*

Henry Swan, *Lyme, N.H.*

Nathaniel Tripp, *St. Johnsbury, Vt.*

John Tucker, *New London, N.H.*

Stephen Walasewicz,  
*Perkinsville, Vt.*

George Watkins, *Walpole, N.H.*

Brendan Whittaker, *Brunswick, Vt.*

Norman Wright, *Putney, Vt.*



*River Valley News* is published by the Connecticut River Joint Commissions with support from the N.H. Dept. of Environmental Services.

Sharon Francis, *Executive Director*  
Rebecca Brown, *Editor, Communications Director*  
Adair Mulligan,  
*Conservation Director*  
Barbara Harris, *Office Manager*

P.O. Box 1182  
Charlestown NH 03603  
www.crjc.org  
e-mail: [contact@crjc.org](mailto:contact@crjc.org)  
phone 603/826-4800  
fax 603/826-3065

## Kapala, Major to lead commissions

CRJC elected new officers at their annual meeting April 30. **Cleve Kapala** of Hopkinton, N.H., director of government affairs and relicensing for TransCanada, is president. TransCanada operates hydro plants on the Connecticut and Deerfield rivers.

**Beverly Major** of Westminster, Vt., is vice president. Major's family raises sheep and makes cheese on the Major Farm.

**Peter Gregory**, of Woodstock, Vt., will serve as secretary. Gregory directs the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Planning Commission. **George Watkins** of Walpole, N.H., a retired engineer with a long history in watershed conservation issues, will serve as treasurer.

Kapala will also chair, and Watkins will serve as secretary/treasurer, of the N.H. Connecticut River Valley Resource Commission. **Nancy Franklin**, owner of Riverview Farm in Plainfield, is vice chair of the commission.

Major will also serve as chair of Vermont's Connecticut River Watershed Advisory Commission, and Gregory is secretary/treasurer. **Steve Walasewicz** of Weathersfield, the natural resource manager for the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish, N.H., will serve as vice chair. Together, the two state commissions make up CRJC. 🌿

## New commissioners join CRJC

**William Roberts**, of Hinsdale, is the newest member of Connecticut River Valley Resource Commission. Roberts brings a wealth of municipal and civic experience to CRJC. He has served two terms on the Hinsdale Select Board, chaired the zoning board, and has chaired the conservation commission. He is active with the Hinsdale Historical Society and serves as president of the Friends of Pisgah, Inc. He served many years as Hinsdale's representative to the Wantastiquet Region Local River Subcommittee.

N.H. Gov. John Lynch also reappointed **Robert Ritchie** of Piermont, who represents agricultural interests, to another term on the New Hampshire commission.

**Joe Sampson** of Bradford joins the Vermont's Connecticut River Watershed Advisory Commission. A long-time select board member, he is well acquainted with issues around roads and drainage. He is an assistant scoutmaster with Boy Scout Troop 978, and is a member of the Masons, Charity Lodge No. 43. 🌿

## New members join subcommittees

AMONG the 70 members of CRJC's five local river subcommittees are a number of new faces.

Lancaster has sent **Dr. Traci Wagner** to represent the town on the Riverbend Subcommittee. The Upper Valley River Subcommittee has welcomed **Mary Daly** of Fairlee, **Linda Wilson** of Hartford, **David Kotz** of Lyme, and **Alex Nuti-deBiasi** of Bradford.

Joining the Wantastiquet Region River Subcommittee are Richard Schmidt of Westmoreland, Heather Freedman of Brattleboro and Sheldon Sawyer of Walpole. This subcommittee will greatly miss Jim Grandy of Westminster, Vt., who passed away after a long illness, and retiring members Paul Happ of Walpole and Gwen Mitchell of Westmoreland.

This new list of citizen volunteers includes several riverfront landowners, a select board member, a conservation commission member, a farmer, an artist, a retired energy company executive, a nurse, a pediatrician, a media specialist, a computer science professor, recreationists, business people, and conservationists.

There are seats at local river subcommittees open for residents from these currently unrepresented towns: Clarksville, N.H., and Lemington, Ryegate, Hartland, Weathersfield, and Vernon, Vt. Citizens interested in joining their local river subcommittee should contact their board of select board members.

For more information, contact Adair Mulligan, CRJC's conservation director, at [adair.mulligan@crjc.org](mailto:adair.mulligan@crjc.org) or 603-795-2104. 🌿

# Every Drop Counts

## Progress on the Connecticut River Corridor Management Plan

🌿 **Pittsburg, N.H.**, is pumping with plans for historic preservation and public recreation. A committee has formed to preserve the covered bridge link to Clarksville and the historic Indian Stream schoolhouse, and to set up a town recreation committee. Headwaters Subcommittee member **Lisa Savard** is helping out.

🌿 **Colebrook** is planning a new River Walk along the Mohawk River to its confluence with the Connecticut, and is looking ahead to future extensions. Residents and visitors will be able to walk, ski, or snowshoe from the busy center of this historic downtown through some of its most beautiful natural areas.

🌿 VTrans built a new storage shed in **Bloomfield, Vt.**, to shelter a supply of road salt that had been stored very close to the Connecticut River.

🌿 The **Israel River Volunteer Advisory Group's** first season of water quality monitoring was a great success as the volunteers found not only a clean river but town officials eager for information. This effort established the state's baseline for this northern tributary (see story page 7). The **Lancaster, N.H.**, Waste Water Facility handled *E. coli* testing, and area high school students conducted the October round of sampling.

🌿 Northeast Vermont Development Association and Lyndon State College completed a culvert survey in parts of the **Wells River watershed in Ryegate and Groton, Vt.**, identifying 12 culverts that are dangerously undersized or prevent fish from moving through them.

🌿 The **Grafton County Conservation District** helped owners of **Briarstone Farm** in the **Clark Brook watershed** with a Conservation Moose Plate Grant to construct a roof over a cow heavy use area to keep rain from mixing with animal waste and feed, conveying clean water to the brook. The district also assisted 17 producers with contracts for EQIP projects ranging from animal walkways to forest stand improvement to nutrient management to waste storage facilities, and 9 WHIP contracts for invasive species control, tree planting, and more.

🌿 The **Ompompanoosuc River Watershed Council** conducted water quality monitoring over the summer of 2006 in the towns

of **Strafford, Thetford, and Norwich, Vt.**, and discovered *E. coli* contamination in the East Branch.

🌿 The **Upper Valley Land Trust** has permanently protected the 472-acre Palmer Woodlands in **Thetford**, including a ridge-line visible for many miles. The Palmers had already protected 125 acres of farmland on the Connecticut River. The farm has been in Arthur Palmer's family since his ancestor bought the land in 1769. **Arlene Palmer** is a former Thetford representative to the Upper Valley River Subcommittee.

🌿 **Lebanon** is engaged in major planning efforts, including development of an open space plan and a comprehensive revision of the city's zoning ordinance. Both efforts are seeking greater protection for water resources, especially in the Mascoma River watershed, which supplies the public drinking water system.

🌿 **Putnam Brothers Farm in South Charlestown** won Farm of Distinction for 2007, announced at annual Farm and Forest Exposition Awards breakfast. **Ted Putnam** is co-chair of the Mt. Ascutney Region River Subcommittee. The farm has nearly 2,000 acres in production along the Connecticut River, with a herd of 900 milkers and young stock.

🌿 **Tom Hernon** of HB Plumbing and Heating Supply in Rockingham has volunteered to help solve a tough waste problem at Hoyt's Landing in Springfield by donating a portapotty for the summer recreation season. Tom is a member of the Mt. Ascutney Region River Subcommittee.

🌿 The Cheshire County Commissioners voted to relocate the county jail to Keene, far from its present site on the rich agricultural floodplain soils of the **Cheshire County Farm** in **Westmoreland**.

🌿 Riverbank Media has created a 75-minute documentary film about the **West River** in southeastern Vermont.

🌿 The Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District, the Windham Regional Commission, and the West River Watershed Alliance have presented the Draft Basin 11 Management Plan for public review. Basin 11 covers the **West, Williams, and Saxtons River** watersheds. 🌿

## WILD SUMMER FOR TEACHERS

N.H. Fish & Game is sponsoring five-day summer workshops for teachers on science process and related subjects. For information contact the Southeast Regional Education Service Center at 603-206-6816, or see [www.seresc.net](http://www.seresc.net).

## WATERSHED ECOLOGY INSTITUTE

Sponsored by N.H. Fish & Game and UNH Cooperative Extension, the institute offers hands-on techniques for applying watershed science. Contact **Judy Tumosa**, N.H. Fish & Game, at 603-271-3212 or [judy.tumosa@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:judy.tumosa@wildlife.nh.gov).

## Black River action this summer

### *River Festival July 7*

Join the Black River Action Team from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. in historic Springfield, Vt. for a wide variety of river-related exhibits, all free and fun: discover the River Zoo of wild critters, explore an 8-foot-long erosion model, learn about local history and natural resources, go on a ValleyQuest, and learn how you can help stock fish!

### *RiverSweep August 25th*

8 a.m. 'til noon, lend a hand to clean up the Black River. Contact BRAT to find out how to get trash bags and gloves, yummy refreshments and a free 'thank-you' T-shirt. RiverSweep is done in conjunction with the annual Source-to-Sea Cleanup by the Connecticut River Watershed Council.

For more information on these events, visit [www.blackriveractionteam.org](http://www.blackriveractionteam.org)

## Water resources

*continued from page 1*

- Riparian buffers should be retained and enhanced wherever possible.
- Water quality monitoring should expand, and citizens should be aware of water quality conditions.
- Mercury pollution should be reduced.

The subcommittees' recommendations for improving or protecting water resources include both regulatory and non-regulatory steps, and are appropriate for landowners, local governments, private businesses and organizations, and state and federal agencies. CRJC will select key river-wide water resources issues from among these findings for further exploration and attention in the Overview section of the *Plan* over the coming six months.

CRJC will circulate the draft plan for review to ensure that anyone interested will have an opportunity to comment. Each subcommittee will hold a public meeting in its region this spring to invite comment on their plans, which will be posted at [www.crjc.org](http://www.crjc.org).

The local river subcommittees' work is made possible by grants from the N.H. Department of Environmental Services and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. Membership in the local river subcommittees currently numbers 71 citizens representing New Hampshire and Vermont riverfront towns.

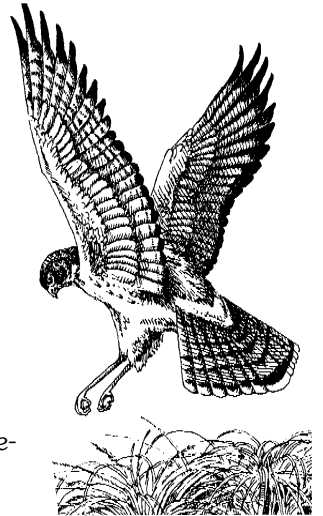
## SUBCOMMITTEE PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Headwaters*

1. Follow the principles of sustainable forest management, forested riparian buffers, and conservation easements.
2. Install an early warning system that will reach all communities in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Quebec that could be affected by a failure of Murphy Dam.
3. Ensure that remaining septic discharges to Bog Brook in Stratford Hollow are eliminated.
4. Test surface and groundwater near the equipment salvage yard in Colebrook, a possible candidate for a brownfields study.
5. Adopt ordinances prohibiting building in the 100-year floodplain and provide accurate floodplain maps
6. Process gravel at a safe distance from the river, to avoid contaminating the water

with fine rock powder particles; monitor and enforce permit conditions for gravel pit construction.

7. Educate developers about the need for stormwater permits.
8. Make water quality monitoring data easily accessible to the public, including those who do not use computers.
9. Establish updated rules for disposal or return of unused medicines.
10. Retain and enhance riparian buffers and be aware of the New Hampshire Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act.



### *Riverbend*

1. Ensure adequate and regular water quality monitoring.
2. Continue to legislate reductions in mercury contamination of the region, and conduct a comprehensive long-range study of sediment and fish contamination.
3. Purchase development rights from willing owners in the natural valley flood storage area to help prevent flooding downstream.
4. Continue communication between TransCanada and area towns, landowners, and the public about how the river and project lands are managed. Towns should participate in testing of the Connecticut River Emergency Action Plan in 2008.
5. Evaluate groundwater supplies for short and long term growth and protect aquifers from contamination.
6. Prohibit development in the 100-year floodplain, ensure that floodplain maps are accurate, and consider adopting agricultural soil protection ordinances.
7. Ensure that culverts are properly sized to handle flow and designed to allow fish passage.
8. Plan for stormwater control and look at ways to use "low impact development" techniques, including riparian buffers and other innovative, yet cost-free natural treatments.
9. Enforce best/acceptable management practices for agriculture and forestry, including winter spreading of manure.
10. Establish or retain riparian buffers.

## Upper Valley

**1.** Educate town officials, real estate agents, developers, and landowners about the New Hampshire Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act and provide protection for tributaries not currently covered by the Act.

**2.** Adopt measures to protect the Vermont shoreland of both the Connecticut River and its tributaries.

**3.** Adopt local ordinances prohibiting filling and building in the 100-year floodplain and encourage landowners to establish and/or maintain riparian buffers.

**4.** Retain current natural flood storage, such as in wetlands and floodplains.

**5.** Identify and map groundwater supplies and evaluate water supplies for short and long term growth.

**6.** Update rules for disposal of unused medicines.

**7.** Offer a bridge and culvert survey program in New Hampshire similar to Vermont's to identify culverts that are undersized or block fish passage.

**8.** Use "low impact development" techniques to reduce stormwater runoff and promote infiltration.

**9.** Study erosion, including hidden river-bank undercuts and effects of dam-related water level fluctuations; expand education and professional/financial assistance to riparian landowners for appropriate bank stabilization methods.

**10.** Take immediate priority action to reduce mercury contamination of the region.

## Mount Ascutney

**1.** Monitor river water quality to identify problems and track improvements.

**2.** Ensure that wastewater discharges no longer compromise the quality of the river.

**3.** Discourage development too close to the river.

**4.** Pay more attention to soil conditions, including varves, and to erosion.

**5.** Retain, protect, and enhance riparian buffers.

**6.** Continue and enhance good river stewardship by TransCanada.

**7.** Examine culverts to ensure proper drainage.

**8.** Improve stormwater management.

**9.** Ensure that farm operations help protect water quality.

**10.** Reduce mercury contamination.

## Wantastiquet

**1.** Expand water quality monitoring efforts in the region.

**2.** Expand education for landowners and real estate agents about best management practices for waterfront land and applicable shoreland regulations.

**3.** Encourage wide understanding of the value of riparian buffers.

**4.** Ensure that culverts are adequately sized and maintained so they will function well in times of high water.

**5.** Ensure that wastewater discharges are as clean as possible.

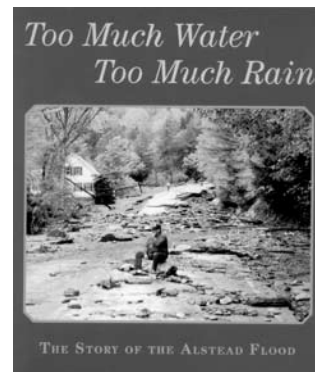
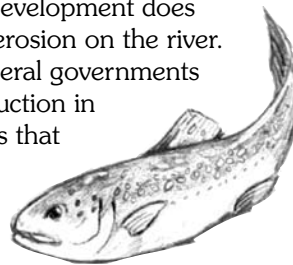
**6.** Improve stormwater management to reduce erosion and nonpoint source water pollution.

**7.** Protect shorelands and floodplains.

**8.** Ensure a coordinated, inclusive, and efficient response to floods and other river-related disasters that is based in good river science.

**9.** Ensure that development does not contribute to erosion on the river.

**10.** State and federal governments should pursue reduction in airborne pollutants that could affect the river. 🌿



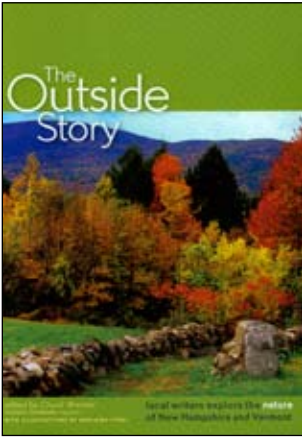
## The Story of the Alstead Flood

The Alstead Historical Society worked with local students to collect and document the flood of October 2005, which devastated the small New Hampshire town. The hardcover book was funded with a grant by The History Channel. The story of terrible loss, survival, and the coming together of the community is told through personal narratives and photographs. It may be ordered at [www.publishingworks.com](http://www.publishingworks.com).

## Public Meetings on local draft water resources chapters

**All comments must be received at CRJC by June 15.** Drafts will be posted on the CRJC Web site under "Local Action" and available in print from CRJC. Call 603-826-4800.

Subcommittee	Date (7-9 p.m.)	Place
Headwaters	June 6	Columbia Town Hall
Riverbend	May 31	Littleton Community House
Upper Valley	May 21	Thetford Bicentennial Building
Mt. Ascutney	June 5	Windsor Town Office, selectmen's room
Wantastiquet	May 29	Westmoreland Town Hall



## The Outside Story

*The Outside Story*, published by Northern Woodlands magazine, is a month-by-month account of the natural life of New Hampshire and Vermont. Delightfully written essays from a variety of authors range on topics from the life history of blackflies to buying local lumber. It is available at area bookstores, or see [www.northernwoodlands.org](http://www.northernwoodlands.org).

## Connecticut River fish toxins

*continued from page 1*

Risk from dioxin-like PCBs was generally lower in upstream reaches than downstream, although this depended upon the fish species and their consumers (humans and other mammals, fish-eating birds, or fish-eating fish). PCBs pose a risk to recreational and subsistence fishers and to fish-eating mammals and fish-eating birds. Dioxin is a risk to both subsistence and recreational fishers and fish-eating wildlife.

The study confirmed earlier findings that mercury levels in Connecticut River fish may pose a risk to human health. Those particularly at risk are anglers who live off the fish they catch, pregnant women, women of child-bearing age who might become pregnant, nursing mothers, and children. Recent studies published in *BioScience* have identified the upper Connecticut River as one of five biological “hotspots” for mercury that appear to be associated with water level manipulation in reservoirs, such as those at Fifteen Mile Falls, where a more restrictive fish consumption advisory is in place.

The EPA study also finds risks for some fish-eating wildlife, as contaminants move up the food chain from organic matter and plankton to fish and then fish eaters like eagles, otter, and kingfishers. Other recent research is also revealing high levels of mercury in wildlife with no direct connection to fish. Examples include the Bicknell’s thrush, an endangered species that breeds in the high peaks of the White Mountains.

Mercury reaches New England mainly on the wind, carried from the smokestacks of Midwest coal-burning power plants. Local municipal waste incinerators had been a major source of pollutants, but recently installed emission controls have cut mercury by as much as 98 percent. New Hampshire, Vermont, and other New England states have adopted strict smokestack emissions standards. Water level fluctuations can cause bacteria near the shoreline to convert mercury into its more toxic form of methylmercury, which then gets into the food chain.

“Where is the federal leadership [on

curbing emissions]? That’s the problem,” said Hank Swan, river commissioner from Lyme. Swan noted that the cost of installing emissions controls should be viewed against the costs of greater public health problems, the loss of tourism revenue, and the loss of people’s enjoyment of the outdoors.


David Deen, a Vermont legislator from Westminster and river steward for the Connecticut River Watershed Council, noted the persistence of DDT, a pesticide banned more than 30 years ago that still shows up in fish tissue today. He also called on people to stop illegal backyard burning of trash and other debris. Such burning is a source of dioxin, another toxic substance found in the fish studied.

The EPA noted weaknesses in the study design that it recommends be addressed in future work. These include larger sample sizes and more species tested, particularly in the Headwaters, and tracking of individual fish samples so specific sources of pollutants may be pursued.


“EPA and the many partners who sponsored the Connecticut River Fish Tissue Contaminant Study have done a real service in helping us understand the level of toxins in Connecticut River fish, and in turn improved our understanding of the sources of those toxins and the ways by which they can be curbed,” said CRJC Executive Director Sharon Francis.

The idea for the study came originally from CRJC’s Mt. Ascutney Region River Subcommittee. Proposed by the representative from Springfield, Vt., who was an avid fisherman, the idea made its way into the 1997 Connecticut River Corridor Management Plan as a riverwide recommendation. “The impetus for this study is a prime example of why we believe volunteer citizen-based planning is essential to the future of the river,” said Francis.

All four Connecticut River states—New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut—plus the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission joined EPA in sponsoring the study.

For the complete report, follow a link from the CRJC Web site or go to [www.epa.gov/ne/lab/reportsdocuments.html](http://www.epa.gov/ne/lab/reportsdocuments.html). 

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

See CRJC’s fact sheet on where you might find mercury in your home and steps you can take to keep mercury from entering the environment: [www.crjc.org/pdffiles/toxins.pdf](http://www.crjc.org/pdffiles/toxins.pdf). Vermont and New Hampshire state advisories on fish consumption are also on the CRJC Web site. 

# New plans for Conte Refuge

THE Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge is starting to write a new conservation plan. A workshop at the Montshire Museum in Norwich, Vt., May 17th will give people from Vermont and New Hampshire a chance to voice their preferences about what the refuge should accomplish in the years ahead.

Conte was established in 1997 as a new type of refuge. Instead of the traditional model of a piece of land with borders, it came to life in countless places in the 11,000 square mile watershed, anywhere where fish or wildlife habitat needed to be safeguarded or restored.

The refuge's first conservation plan was based on over 150 public meetings in the four-state watershed. Public discussion strongly favored partnerships with private landown-

ers, education, and protection of "special focus areas," primarily to be accomplished through conservation easements. Conservation achieved through federal acquisition of large tracts of land was not popular, especially in the northern part of the watershed.

Over the last 12 years, the Conte Refuge has evolved, and refuge managers are again asking the public to join them in assessing the refuge's accomplishments and available resources, and in evaluating a course of action for the future. Reservations are required for the May 17 workshop. Call the Connecticut River Joint Commissions at 603-826-4800, or e-mail [contact@crjc.org](mailto:contact@crjc.org) for more information. The agenda and speaker list is on the CRJC Web site: [www.crjc.org](http://www.crjc.org). The workshop is sponsored by Friends of Conte, assisted by CRJC. ♻️

# Volunteers monitor Israel River

THE Israel River Volunteer Advisory Group is demonstrating what a group of committed citizens can accomplish in the area of water quality. Based in Jefferson, N.H., the group was formed two years ago and has been actively collecting water quality data on the Israel River through the N.H. Volunteer River Assessment Program (VRAP). Its 20 volunteers include residents from Randolph, Jefferson, and Lancaster, and students from the White Mountains Regional High School.

The group received a 2006 Partnership Program grant from CRJC, and last fall received a loan of thermal monitoring equipment from the regional office of the Environmental Protection Agency. It has also received financial support from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation – Northern Division.

"The effort grew out of an Israel River restoration project that was being worked on by the Jefferson Conservation Commission, said avid angler, conservation commissioner, and advisory group member Bob Ball. "We were working on a grant proposal when we found out that little baseline data existed for the river, and most experts recommend taking a complete watershed view before doing localized restoration projects. Although we didn't get the grant, we learned a lot and found out there was interest in the river from both Randolph and Lancaster. So, we formed a watershed-wide Israel group."

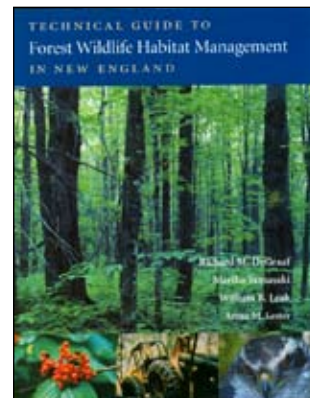
The advisory group is slowly building a

baseline of information about the river's condition that will be useful for future management. After taking over 350 data points in two years, the trends are showing that the Israel has excellent water quality, probably some of the best in the state, according to Ball.

At regular five measurement sessions through the year, the group measures water, temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, and specific conductivity at eight different stations on the river using instruments obtained through the CRJC Partnership Program. The station locations were coordinated by VRAP to follow the assessment unit methods used by the N.H. Department of Environmental Services and N.H. Fish and Game. The group also does special sessions involving lab samples that are tested for *E. coli*, phosphorus, and chloride. They also assisted DES in doing a complete biological sample at one of the stations.

"Aside from the data gathered, our group has found that there are other, less tangible benefits to water quality monitoring," said Ball. "Clean rivers seem to bring people closer to their natural environment. Getting local citizens and students involved in a measurement team on also brings the community together. We are hoping that future citizen involvement will help protect this valuable natural resource in the Connecticut River watershed."

For more information, contact Ball at [caravita@ne.rr.com](mailto:caravita@ne.rr.com). ♻️



## Managing Forests for Wildlife

The recently published *Technical Guide to Forest Wildlife Habitat Management in New England* is written for foresters, land managers, and landowners who want a comprehensive look at the relationship between forestry practices and specific wildlife species. Want to know which species use slashpiles? Or the preferred forest matrix for the pine marten, northern water thrush, or blue-spotted salamander? It's all here. For more information visit the University Press of New England Web site, [www.upne.org](http://www.upne.org).

## Want to be a river volunteer?

Learn how by joining a New Hampshire Volunteer River Assessment Program (VRAP) training.

Contact Jen Drociak, VRAP coordinator, at or (603) 271-0699 or [jdrociak@des.state.nh.us](mailto:jdrociak@des.state.nh.us).

### WORKSHOP

May 16  
1–3 p.m.  
New Hampshire Community  
Technical College  
646 Union Street #300  
Littleton, N.H.

# Calendar

For the most current information and agendas, visit [www.crjc.org/calendar1.htm](http://www.crjc.org/calendar1.htm)

## MAY

- 21 Upper Valley Subcommittee, Bicentennial Bldg, Thetford Hill, 7-9 p.m.
- 29 Wantastiquet Subcommittee, Westmoreland Town Hall, 7-9 p.m.
- 29 (Tuesday) CRJC meeting, 12:30 p.m., location TBA
- 31 Riverbend Subcommittee, Littleton Community House, 7-9 p.m.

## JUNE

- 5 Mt. Ascutney Subcommittee, Windsor Connection Resource Center, 7-9 p.m.
- 6 Headwaters Subcommittee, Columbia Town Hall, 7-9 p.m.

## JULY

- 30 CRJC meeting, 12:30 p.m., location TBA

## SEPTEMBER

- 5 Headwaters Subcommittee, Columbia Town Hall, 7-9 p.m.
- 11 Mt. Ascutney Subcommittee, Windsor Connection Resource Center, 7-9 p.m.
- 17 Upper Valley Subcommittee, Bicentennial Bldg, Thetford Hill, 7-9 p.m.
- 18 Wantastiquet Subcommittee, Westmoreland Town Hall, 7-9 p.m.
- 24 CRJC meeting, 12:30 p.m., location TBA
- 27 Riverbend Subcommittee, Littleton Community House, 7-9 p.m.

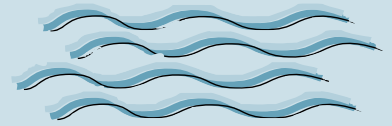
## OCTOBER

- 16 Wantastiquet Subcommittee, Westmoreland Town Hall, 7-9 p.m.

## NOVEMBER

- 7 Headwaters Subcommittee, Colebrook Town Hall, 7-9 p.m.
- 13 Mt. Ascutney Subcommittee, Windsor Connection Resource Center, 7-9 p.m.
- 19 Upper Valley Subcommittee, Bicentennial Bldg, Thetford Hill, 7-9 p.m.
- 26 CRJC meeting, 12:30 p.m., location TBA
- 29 Riverbend Subcommittee, Littleton Community House, 7-9 p.m.

# River Ripples



## Vermont, New Hampshire consider shoreland protection

**B**OTH New Hampshire and Vermont are considering how best to protect their shorelands this session. Follow their progress at [www.crjc.org/legislatures.htm](http://www.crjc.org/legislatures.htm).

New Hampshire has had statewide shoreland protection on the books for 15 years, but the law has been difficult for the public to work with, applies to only a small part of the state's waterways, and is nearly impossible for the Dept. of Environmental Services to enforce, with one staff person for the entire state. The legislature is considering four bills (HB 383, 663, 665, and 857) that would set up a permit system with adequate state staff, make the buffer protection language easier to understand, educate town officials and landowners about the law, and protect third order as well as fourth order streams, among other updates. These changes reflect the recommendations of a legislative study committee, and also the Connecticut River Management Plan.

Vermont is the only state in New England that does not have statewide shoreland protection. The House Fish, Wildlife, and Natural Resources Committee is considering two shoreland bills, 119 and 297, looking at various ways to approach the challenge. The Senate is expected to take up the resulting recommendations next year. 🌿

## Vermont Clean Water Day is June 9

**J**OIN Gov. Jim Douglas and members of the state's Congressional Delegation in celebrating the Second Annual Clean Water Day. Events will take place around the Connecticut River valley, including a kick-off press conference and public event at the Montshire Museum in Norwich at 11 a.m. Other events are at [www.vermont.gov/cleanandclear](http://www.vermont.gov/cleanandclear). 🌿



Fourth graders from Union Elementary School join singer-songwriter Colin McCaffrey in singing "The River is Imagination" at last year's Clean Water Day. The children recorded on compact disc an album of songs, poems and narratives about why people should cherish the Vermont environment.

**PO Box 1182 • Charlestown NH 03603**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No 86  
WhtrvrJct, VT

