



Thames River Basin Partnership

Partners in Action Quarterly Report

Spring 2011

Volume 10

The Thames River watershed includes the Five Mile, French, Moosup, Natchaug, Pachaug, Quinebaug, Shetucket, Willimantic, and Yantic Rivers and all their tributaries. We're not just the "Thames main stem."

Greetings from the [Thames River Basin Partnership](#). Due to extreme winter weather, the TRBP was unable to meet in the winter of 2011. This newsletter includes partner updates through Spring 2011. Our partners continue to prove their ability to work cooperatively on projects compatible with the [TRBP Workplan](#) and in support of our common mission statement to share organizational resources and to develop a regional approach to natural resource protection. I hope you enjoy reading about these activities as much as I enjoy sharing information about them with you. For more information on any of these updates, just click on the blue website hyperlinks in this e-publication, but be sure to come back to finish reading the rest of the report.

*Jean Pillo, Watershed Conservation Coordinator
Eastern Connecticut Conservation District*

If you missed the autumn meeting of the Thames River Basin Partnership meeting at the Ledyard Town Hall Annex on April 19, 2011, then you missed a presentation given by Jen Pagach of the CT DEP Long Island Sound Program. Jen overviewed a series of workshops prepared for Groton, CT that related to Climate Change Science and Local Impacts.

TRBP News

Due to many factors, there was a delay in preparing the Thames River Basin Partnership FY 11 Plan of Work, followed by another delay to approve it because of weather related issues. At the April TRBP meeting, the TRBP Plan of Work for Fiscal Year 2011 was finally approved.

The 11th Annual Thames River Basin Partnership Floating Workshop has been scheduled for June 24, 2011. This year's workshop theme will focus on the Conservation Efforts in the French River Watershed and The Last Green Valley Water Quality Monitoring Program. The workshop will take place on June 24 at Point Breeze Restaurant in Webster, MA, followed by an on-water field trip on Webster Lake. This year's workshop is funded in part by The Last Green Valley and is being co-hosted by the Webster Lake Association. For more information, please visit www.trbp.org and click on Floating Workshop 11 in the "What's New" box.

Partner Reports

Municipal leaders of all eight towns within the Natchaug River watershed signed the [Natchaug River Basin Conservation Compact](#). A special signing ceremony took place on April 29, 2001 at Diana's Pool in Chaplin, CT. The compact was one of the outcomes of a Natchaug River system Conservation Action Plan process led by Holly Drinkuth of The Nature Conservancy. For more information, click [here](#). John Meyer, a member of the Natchaug CAP team, created a video to

provide education and attention to the Natchaug River Basin and the signed Conservation Compact. In late June, the Education and Outreach subcommittee met to discuss options for sharing the video and additional materials and all felt John's wonderful "home movie" would be well received in our communities. Click here to see this video <http://youtu.be/493uu3Ap138>.

Avalonia Land Conservancy provided an update on the third year of Phragmites spraying in Poquetanuck Cove, located between Preston and Ledyard, CT. David Bainbridge organized another successful volunteer effort to report bald eagle counts on Poquetanuck Cove during the annual Mid-winter Bald Eagle Survey. In March, a Harp Seal visited the cove and was enjoyed and photographed by many people.

In partnership with Avalonia Land Conservancy and the Thames River Basin Partnership, the US Fish and Wildlife Service will install an information kiosk about Poquetanuck Cove at the Royal Oaks Drive boat launch in Ledyard. They will also fund a canoe/kayak guide for Poquetanuck Cove based on the prototype developed for the TRBP Floating Workshop 10.

The Thames Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited volunteers will be conducting a culvert survey in nine eastern Connecticut towns. Culvert size and design can impact in-stream fish migration patterns.

Twenty schools participate in TU's [Trout in the Classroom Program](#). Permits have been obtained to release the juvenile trout into local streams. More mentors are needed. Contact Dixie Goodwin for more information.

Professor Mike Whitney of UCONN Marine Science Program published an article on hypoxia in Norwich Harbor in *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science*, an international journal focused on salt water environments.

The Eastern Connecticut Conservation District (ECCD) has completed and submitted a watershed based plan to CT DEP for Spaulding Pond, located in Mohegan Park in Norwich, CT. Staff is currently drafting watershed based plans for Baker Cove in Groton, and Mashamoquet Brook in Pomfret.

ECCD will be working on three projects in Woodstock, CT this summer. One project is to assist a Woodstock farmer redirect silage leachate away from a local brook. Leachate will be directed to a new manure lagoon, being installed with assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. A second project will involve installing roof gutters on a dairy barn, to transport roof runoff away from manure contaminated areas near the barn. The third project will be to install demonstration rain gardens in public areas to collect stormwater and infiltrate it into the ground rather than into a storm sewer system. The need for these types of projects was indentified in the *Muddy Brook/Little River Watershed Based Plan* compiled by ECCD in 2009. All three projects have been funded by US EPA § 319 NPS Grants through the CT DEP.

The Last Green Valley Volunteer (TLGV) Water Quality Monitoring Program prepared two separate Quality Assurance Projects Plans for approval by CT DEP, MA DEP and Region 1 EPA. Approval was awarded in late March. These "umbrella QAPPs" for using an In-situ Troll

9500 multiparameter monitoring unit and a LaMotte Smart2 Colorimeter, will serve for all volunteer monitoring groups using the equipment as part of the program.

TLGV Water Trails project is moving forward. National Recreational Trail applications are being prepared for segments on the Quinebaug River, the Willimantic River and the Shetucket River.

TLGV has been a major funding partner of the Green Valley Institute (GVI). Federal budget uncertainty for the National Heritage Corridor Program through the National Park Service led to the difficult decision to discontinue their funding support of the GVI program and major staff reductions at TLGV.

GVI staff is looking for new funding sources and looking to expand to a statewide service.

Abbie Cadman was appointed to the position of Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area Coordinator. ECRC&D has been represented on the steering committee of the Thames River Basin Partnership for many years. Unfortunately, federal budget cuts have eliminated the RC&D program shortly after the appointment. ECRC&D Council, a standalone non-profit organization, is restructuring their organization and hoping to continue their mission without federally funded staff assistance.

News from the Municipalities

Dave Goodrich was appointed by the Town of Hampton to be their TRBP representative.

The Town of Woodstock was accepted into the US EPA's Green Power Leadership Club, the only CT municipality to receive the honor.

The Lisbon Inland Wetlands Agency is developing an open space inventory and plan as an important part of the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development update.

The Town of Thompson will be sponsoring their annual Roadside and French River Cleanup on April 30.

A Clean up of Riverside Park in New London is scheduled for May 1, 2011.

The Town of Putnam, as part of an effort to meet the requirements for a water diversion permit to withdraw water from the Little River in Woodstock, has succeeded in getting a USGS flow monitoring station in the Harrisville section of Woodstock. Data from this station is available at http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ct/nwis/uv/?site_no=01125490&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060.

If you would like your organization's efforts included in the next edition of the TRBP Partners in Action Report, consider attending one of our quarterly meetings. It includes a [Plan of Work](#) activity reporting session, which is an informal "round the table" discussion of Partner activities.

It is a great time to network with like-focused organizations. All meetings begin at 9:30 AM. Generally, the TRBP meet quarterly on the 3rd Tuesday of the month

The next meeting of the Thames River Basin Partnership will be held on Tuesday, July 19, 2011 at 9:30 AM at Project Oceanology.

Look for updates at www.trbp.org. Please mark your calendars to save the date. Meeting content and locations will be posted on the TRBP [Calendar](#) of upcoming events, or contact [Jean Pillo](#) at (860) 928-4948 for more information or to be added to the TRBP distribution list

If you are not already on the e-distribution list for this publication, contact [Jean Pillo](#) by email and request to be added, or you can download the most current version of this quarterly publication from the [TRBP website](#).

The Thames River Basin Partnership is a voluntary, cooperative effort to share resources, and strives to develop a regional approach to resource protection. The Partnership is made up of a variety of agencies, organizations, municipalities, educational institutions, companies, and individuals interested in the environmental health of the greater Thames River basin. Funding support for FY 11 for TRBP Coordinator time has been provided by The Last Green Valley. Sources of funding are being sought to continue the TRBP Coordinator position. Please consider making a donation to the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District and designate it to support the Thames River Basin Partnership Coordinator position.