Thames River Basin Partnership

Partners in Action Quarterly Report

Summer 2022 **Volume 62**

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. Once again this quarter our partners have proven their ability to work cooperatively on projects compatible with the TRBP Plan of Work 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 Project Manager
Eastern Connecticut Conservation District
And TRBP Coordinator

Special Presentation

TRBP Updates

The TRBP Floating Workshop took place on June 10, 2020. This year is the 50th anniversary of both the CT Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Act as well as the US EPA Clean Water Act. The event took place at the Plainfield Fish Hatchery. Denise Savageau, President of the Connecticut Association of Conservation Districts, gave the keynote address. Following her remarks, Chief Ranger Bill of The Last Green Valley, recounted the history of how the Quinebaug, Willimantic and Shetucket Rivers became designated as National Recreation Trails by the National Park Service. He also spoke about TLGV's participation in the National Mid-winter Eagle Survey and how this data has shown an increase in Bald Eagles in Connecticut. Jean Pillo, as the Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator for The Last Green Valley and Eric Thomas of CT DEEP, spoke on water quality monitoring and how the data is used to prepare a biannual report to the US Congress. Following the tent talks, a tour of the Plainfield Trout Hatchery was conducted, led by Bryan Decker, the Hatchery Supervisor for the Quinebaug Valley State Fish Hatchery. After lunch, participants enjoyed a paddle on the Quinebaug River, departing from the Brooklyn boat launch. An ESRI StoryMap to recapture the day is available at this link https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/50b96f59ce6145958cf07c36d2b339ba

The TRBP Plan of Work expired in 2021. A new TRBP Plan of Work has been prepared and was distributed for review and approval. The dates for the new PoW will be 2022 to 2025. Thank you, Eric Thomas, Dan Mullins and Lois Bruinooge, for your input.

Using ECCD as the lead TRBP partner in an RCP 2022 Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund grant opportunity, ECCD applied for funding to support the creation of a new TRBP subcommittee focused on coordination services for the Natchaug Healthy Watershed Protection Plan. A key recommendation of the Plan is to organize a Natchaug Watershed Advisory Board. The two-year grant, if funded, would have supported ECCD staff time to organize the Natchaug Watershed Advisory Board and establish 13 working groups under the Board to implement the recommendations of the Natchaug Healthy Watershed Protection Plan. Unfortunately, we received word that this project was not funded.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Project Summaries

The 2014 Farm Bill included new ways for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to innovate, leverage additional contributions, offer impactful solutions and engage more participants. One such program is Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The purpose of the program is to promote coordination with partners to deliver conservation assistance to agricultural producers and landowners. This is done by providing technical assistance through agreements and direct funding for conservation practices. Through Thames River Basin Partnership, partners meet to discuss ways to collaborate on projects like these. TRBP is conducting outreach for three Regional Conservation Partnership Programs.

FY14/15 (State level funding): The Last Green Valley was lead partner in this $400,000 NRCS RCPP project entitled **Improving Soil Health and Water Quality in the Thames River Watershed**. The project addressed two national priorities (soil health and water quality), and all five Connecticut state priorities (water quality degradation, soil erosion, soil quality degradation, degraded plant conditions and livestock production limitations). Through the TLGV RCPP, four collaborating partners implemented soil health conservation practices on cropland in eastern Connecticut's Thames River Watershed. Funding to implement the practices was provided by Natural Resources Conservation Service through its Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The long-term objective of the project was to improve soil health, as well as edge-of-field and in-stream water quality by decreasing nutrient and turbidity levels.

Project update: Funding for the TLGV RCPP, *Improving Soil Health and Water Quality In the Thames River Watershed*, expired on June 25, 2021. A summary of final project outcomes is available at this link. https://thamesriverbasinpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/TLGV-RCPP-Improving-Soil-Health-and-Water-Quality-in-the-Thames-Watershed-Project-Summary-Presentation.pdf. This project is now completed.

FY15/16 (State level funding): The University of Connecticut is the recipient and lead partner in an RCPP, *Path to Reduce Pathogens in CT Agricultural Runoff (PATH)*. This $669,000 NRCS RCPP is focused on reducing high bacteria levels in Connecticut's rivers and shellfish beds, which is, in part, caused by runoff from agricultural operations. To address water quality degradation, ten conservation partners are collaborating to achieve the objectives of the project: University of Connecticut, Eastern Connecticut Conservation District, The Last Green Valley, Inc., CT Department of Agriculture Bureau of Aquaculture, CT Department of Energy and

Environmental Protection, CT Sea Grant, Stonington Shellfish Commission, CUSH, Inc. (Clean Up Sound & Harbors), the Thames River Basin Partnership and UCONN Extension.

Project update: ECCD, in partnership with NRCS, is working on conservation plans for several farms in the watershed, with recommendations for practices to improve manure storage and management. Some of the practices include manure storage facilities and bedded pack facilities requiring Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMPs). All of the financial assistance available for implementation of conservation practices through the project has been expended, but technical assistance funding is still available. A portion of the technical assistance funding has been appropriated to support updating the Muddy Brook and Little River Water Quality Improvement Plan (Woodstock, Putnam, Pomfret, Thompson). The project was granted a one-year extension ending on September 30, 2022.

FY16/17 (National level funding): The Last Green Valley (TLGV) was awarded $6,144,000 through NRCS' RCPP for **Accelerating the Pace of Conservation in the Southern New England Heritage Forest**. The Southern New England Heritage Forest (SNEHF) is a uniquely positioned forest corridor stretching north along the Connecticut and Rhode Island border to the Quabbin Reservoir in Massachusetts. A remarkable partnership of non-profit organizations and regional, state and municipal agencies is offering private woodland owners a suite of NRCS tools for sound management and forestry conservation practices through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Permanent protection through easements under the Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) is also available. To accelerate the pace of conservation in SNEHF, the project serves as a "conservation pipeline" of forest and bird habitat plans, EQIP practices and HFRP easements on private forestlands.

Project update: Through efforts of The Last Green Valley (TLGV), the MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership (MassConn) and the Northern Rhode Island Conservation District (NRICD), the project has resulted in 7000 acres of forestland under contract for forest management plans with half of the FMPs completed! The purchase of conservation easements has been proceeding slowly and none have closed to date.

If you are a forest landowner within the Southern New England Heritage Forest and already have a forest management plan with a bird habitat assessment and are looking to improve your woodland habitat for important bird species, and manage your woods for wildlife and people, funding is available from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to help you take care of your woods.

- For Connecticut Projects – Bill Reid, 860-774-3300; bill@tlgv.org
- For Massachusetts Projects – Christopher Riely, 401-225-6135; christopher@sweetbirchconsulting.com

The forestry RCPP program has been extended until September 2023.

Landowners of large, forested acreage not selected for the project (10 landowners with a combined 800 acres of forested land) collaborated to apply for conservation easements through the Forest Legacy Program. That request was not funded this year. They will be reapplying later this month for over 1000 acres total now with 13 applicants. For more information, visit the TLGV website.

For more information about USDA NRCS RCPP opportunities, please visit the NRCS website at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farmbill/rcpp.

Partner Reports

The Last Green Valley

The window to submit events to be included in The Last Green Valley (TLGV) printed Walktober Guide has closed. Over 200 events will be featured in the printed Walktober Guide in 2022. Additional proposals will be accepted for inclusion on the web-based calendar. To submit a proposal, use this link. https://thelastgreenvalley.org/explore-the-last-green-valley/walktober/walktober-form/. Call 860-774-3300 or email fran@tlgv.org with any questions or to talk through any ideas.

Keeping The Last Green Valley Clean, Green and Invasive Free!
The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV) is making funding available to non-profits and municipalities that wish to organize a cleanup event, pollinator planting or invasive species eradication event. Recipients working in the heritage corridor will be reimbursed up to $500 for expenses such as publicity, cleanup supplies such as trash bags, work gloves, small gardening tools, native seeds and plantings, and food for your volunteers. TLGV will also help publicize your event and work with you to recruit more volunteers. This program is proudly sponsored by Bank Hometown. Click here for more information.

The Last Green Valley Board of Directors will vote on the final budget for the FY 2023 in September. At that time, it will be determined if there will be funding for continuing the TRBP Coordinator and the water quality monitoring program for the next fiscal year beginning October 1.

TLGV Water Quality Monitoring Program

Volunteers with the TLGV WQM program conducted a Quinebaug River assessment for recreational water quality. TLGV volunteers collected water samples from 11 locations in the Quinebaug River watershed. The Quinebaug River has been designated a National Recreation Trail by the NPS. A sampling site in Little River (Putnam) was added to provide current information on the status of Little River as part of the Little River WBP. Ten weeks of monitoring have been completed. The data summary is being processed.

Ten temperature data loggers (HOBOs) have been placed in northeastern CT. They have been field checked by a volunteer during the severe drought to assure they were still submerged. Three loggers were found out of water and removed, and the dried status of the stream reported to CT DEEP. The remaining loggers, plus two additional loggers in Sawmill Brook upstream and downstream of the East Brook Mall will be removed and read in September.

Harmful Algae Bloom monitoring – 11 cyanobacteria sampling kits have been distributed to volunteers that will collect samples to ship to the EPA lab in Chelmsford for assessment of

cyanotoxin levels. Roseland Lake and Witches Woods Lake (Woodstock), Avery Pond and Amos Lake (Preston) Webster Lake, two of the three ponds (Webster), Pachaug Pond, Doanville Pond and Glasco Pond (Griswold) Gardner Lake (Montville, Salem and Bozrah), West Thompson Lake (Thompson) were the targeted lakes this season. The three lakes in the Pachaug River season did not show signs of an algae bloom when assessed by volunteers in kayaks. Those three kits have been reassigned. The Webster Lake Association kits will also be reassigned to new locations. At this time, samples have been collected and submitted from West Thompson Lake, Roseland Lake and Avery Pond.

Lake Watch kits were distributed to volunteers who will monitor lakes for water clarity using a secchi disk. Additional lakes with their own equipment will also be contributing data to DEEP. The following lakes/ponds are being monitored using a secchi disk for water clarity: Halls Pond (Eastford/Ashford) West Thompson Lake (Thompson) and Mansfield Hollow Lake (Mansfield). Additional lakes to be monitored include Amos Lake and Avery Pond (Preston), Ashford Lake (Ashford/Eastford), Witches Woods Lake (Woodstock), Gardner Lake (Montville, Salem and Bozrah).

The Salt Watch program was created to monitor the chloride level in streams during different parts of the winter. The CT DEEP requested TLGV to coordinate volunteers to also collect the data in summer because this information may be an indicator of the chloride concentration in our groundwater, which is the source of stream water when it isn't raining. All the HOBO sites were monitored in late May during deployment. It is a goal to monitor any future Riffle Bioassessment sites for Chloride as well. Volunteers are encouraged to propose additional monitoring sites they will be responsible for monitoring. Volunteers from Woodstock Conservation Commission have agreed to monitor Still River upstream and downstream of a location where groundwater levels greatly exceeded the safe drinking water levels for Chloride. Winter Salt Watch is sponsored by the Izaak Walton League of America and is open to anyone in any state. Information on how to participate is available at https://www.iwla.org/water/stream-monitoring/winter-salt-watch. Take a pledge and they will send you a FREE salt watch kit with instructions on how to monitor a local stream 4 times.

Crystal Pond (Woodstock/Eastford) has deployed their array of temperature sensors to monitor the depth of the thermocline for a second season with support from TLGV water quality monitoring program. In addition to measuring the stability of the lake thermal layers in summer, they are collecting additional data including secchi depth, water temperature, dissolved oxygen, Total Phosphorus, Total Nitrogen and Chlorophyll A.

Water Chestnut was reported in the Quinebaug River at a location upstream of Cargill Falls in Putnam by Alicea Charamut of the Rivers Alliance of Connecticut on a visit to Putnam. This information was shared with CT DEEP and the Putnam Inland Wetland Official, with advice that the IWO contact the three hydropower dam operators in Putnam to inform them of this aquatic invasive species and see if their staff could cooperatively address the water chestnut before the problems gets worse and potentially threatens their operations. No information if that led to any action.

Water Chestnut was reported at Mansfield Hollow Lake. Lindsay Beutler, a member of the ECCD staff, reported the siting to CT DEEP and the US Army Corp of Engineers after hand pulling all she saw while paddleboarding on her day off.

The Eastern Connecticut Conservation District (ECCD)

NOAA B-WET Grant, Project Oceanology Outdoor Learning Alliance

ECCD is partnering with Project Oceanology to implement projects with funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's B-WET Program. The funding is to install outdoor learning spaces at 6-9 schools in distressed communities in eastern CT. It is a 3-year project and ECCD will assist to design and develop the outdoor learning spaces, including roofed pavilions, creating and installing educational signs, community gardens, rain gardens, pollinator habitat and more, depending upon the specific needs of the schools. The project also involves teaching students about nonpoint source pollution and its impact to the environment. During the first year of the project, Project Oceanology and ECCD are working with the Thames River Magnet School in Groton and the Charles Barrows STEM Academy in Windham.

Project update: ECCD and Project O have outdoor white board kiosks for the outdoor classrooms at Barrows STEM Academy; with funding from Community Foundation of Eastern CT, ECCD is supplementing our work at Barrows by installing raised bed gardens, a compost bin and educational signs. At Thames River Magnet School, an outdoor classroom including a roofed cedar pavilion has been installed in which to conduct classes.

Little River Agricultural Waste Storage and Management Project

With CWA §319 funding, ECCD, in collaboration with NRCS and Elm Farm in Woodstock, CT, has completed construction of an agricultural waste storage and management facility. The roofed facility, a free-stall barn with a manure pit, manure scrape alleys and manure pumping capacity, is complete. Elm Farm moved its herd back into the barn, so stop by and check it out while enjoying refreshments from the farm store. The facility will directly protect water quality in May Brook, along with downstream Roseland Lake and Little River. Little River provides drinking water to the Town of Putnam so this project will improve the quality of Putnam's drinking water and hopefully reduce water treatment costs for the residents of Putnam.

Green Schoolyards (CFEC)

With funding from Community Foundation of Eastern CT, ECCD is creating 2 green schoolyards in underserved communities in eastern CT, Putnam and Windham. At Barrows STEM Academy in Windham, ECCD is collaborated with teachers, students and volunteers to install cedar raised bed gardens for vegetable production, a composting system, a rainwater collection system and educational signage. At Putnam Middle School, ECCD staff, a Putnam Middle School Science teacher and students in an after-school environmental club prepared the courtyard at the middle school for the outdoor classroom, which now includes a white board kiosk, a rain garden, pollinator habitat, a sensory garden, rain barrel and blue bird houses. A trail camera was also purchased to track what creatures use the riparian zone of Little River when no one is around, and a macroinvertebrate net was provided to support their science program. The Quiet Corner Garden Club donated supplemental funds to purchase garden statuary and a book of Flower Fairy poems to be used for creative writing prompts.

Niantic River Watershed 4-Town Bio-Infiltration, Filtration & Water Collection Project
With CWA §319 funding, ECCD is implementing a suite of best management practices (BMPs) in the four towns of the Niantic River watershed, Waterford, East Lyme, Salem and Montville. This project has been completed.

Long Island Sound Futures Fund Awarded
Long Island Sound Futures Fund announced its awards for its 2021 grants. ECCD has received funding for two proposals: 1) *Quanaduck Cove Multi-Residential Low Impact Development Demonstration Site* and 2) *From Rain Gardens to Riparian Buffers: Pollinator Pathways for Healthy Watersheds.*

The Quanaduck Cove project involves developing a demonstration site for stormwater best management practices that can be installed at condominium complexes. At Quanaduck Cove, ECCD and the condominium association will install rain gardens, enhance the vegetated riparian buffer along a pond that drains into the cove, and downspout planters to intercept and filter roof drainage prior to discharging into the pond. Additionally, ECCD will develop a stormwater BMP guide for condominium associations which will be distributed throughout eastern CT.

The *Pollinator Pathways* involves installing rain gardens and riparian buffers that will double as pollinator pathways, providing important habitat for a variety of pollinators while treating contaminated stormwater. Several rain gardens have been installed under this funding source and more will follow now that the severe drought in the region seems to have broken.

Lower Natchaug River Stormwater BMPs Project
ECCD received an executed contract from CT DEEP for this EPA CWA §319 grant. Two demonstration rain gardens have been installed at Sunny Acres Park in Mansfield. The park is upslope of Conantville Brook, a stream not meeting Connecticut Water Quality Standards. Twelve storm drain filter inserts were installed in a neighborhood where the system outlets to Conantville Brook at the East Brook Mall. An enhanced streamside vegetative (riparian) buffer has also been planted the Eastbrook Mall. The Town of Mansfield has been a important partner in this project.

The Little River Watershed Based Plan Update, funded by a Sourcewater Grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Connecticut Soil and Water Council, with supplemental funding from a University of Connecticut Regional Conservation Partnership Project grant, is still in progress. ECCD staff are in working with the NRCS staff to assure that conservation practices that will be supported by the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 will be included in the final document.

Under a cooperative agreement with CT DEEP and USGS, ECCD will be managing a Clean Water Act section 604B grant from CT DEEP for water quality monitoring in West Thompson Lake and the Quinebaug River. USGS staff will be doing the monitoring to obtain data from which CT DEEP will develop a nutrient budget for West Thompson Lake. ECCD will be responsible for grant reporting and data management. The Quinebaug River upstream of West Thompson Lake receives wastewater discharge from 3 sewage treatment plants and the lake is

impounded by a flood control dam. This is a one season monitoring project. Prior to the early September rains, West Thompson Lake was experiencing historically low water levels as a result from Extreme Drought Conditions in August.

CT DEEP Watersheds Program Summer 2022 update report to TRBP:

CTDEEP will be posting the **FY2023 Clean Water Act Section 319 Nonpoint Source grant** RFP by early October with a projected mid-December submission deadline. The CT DEEP Watersheds program webpage will be updated and the RFP will be posted on the DEEP WQ Listserv.

Current Nonpoint Source grant-funded contract projects within the greater Thames River and southeast coastal watersheds include:

ECCD grantee -for medium dairy farm agricultural waste management project in Woodstock (nearly completed at the July meeting)

ECCD grantee – for urban stormwater management and multiple best management practices (BMPs) for Lower Natchaug River watershed, southeast Mansfield.

ECCD grantee – for urban stormwater management and multiple best management practices (BMPs) for Niantic 4-town watershed, East Lyme, Montville, Salem and Waterford

CT MS4 General Permit: CT DEEP is working with our project partner UConn CLEAR to continue to provide assistance to municipalities regulated under the "MS4" stormwater general permit, which has technically expired. DEEP and CLEAR will soon be announcing interim next steps while a new general permit is finalized. It is likely CT DEEP will extend the current MS4 general permit for a one year period that maintains current permit conditions. At this same time CT DEEP will issue a public notice (with a public information session and comment period) for an updated permit version. CLEAR staff indicate that CT DEEP advises MS4 permittees to continue to implement their permit actions in the interim.

CT DEEP is still working to finalize the 2022 *State of Connecticut Integrated Water Quality Report (IWQR).* https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Water/Water-Quality/Water-Quality-305b-Report-to-Congress. The final document will be submitted to the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) for approval following the Department's consideration of comments received.

Still pending: CT DEEP is reviewing the comprehensive Natchaug River Watershed Protection Plan and will be releasing the document for public review and comment soon before finalizing and submitting the final document for EPA approval. ECCD completed the implementation portion of this document in 2020.

Still pending: CT DEEP is reviewing the revised Roseland Lake Nutrient Management Plan submitted by ECCD following the need for revised modeling calculations and modified plan recommendations.

CT DEEP is reviewing the Bolton Lakes Watershed Management Plan for 9-element Watershed-Based Plan consistency. The Plan was recently submitted by a local coalition of towns and stakeholder interests for this set of three impounded headwaters of the Hop River/Willimantic River watershed.

CT DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program announced the 25th grant round of the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program (OSWA). Applications and appraisals were due by September 30, 2022. For more information, visit their webpage https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Open-Space/Open-Space-and-Watershed-Land-Acquisition-Grant-Program.

Due to changes in the way retirement benefits are formulated after July 1, 2022, approximately 30 – 35% of the CT DEEP workforce has retired during the previous 4 months.

UCONN Center for Landuse Education and Research (CLEAR)

CLEAR is looking for a few towns to participate in the Stormwater Corps program this fall. Through this program, UConn undergraduates are trained by CLEAR to conduct **LID retrofit assessments** and develop **town-wide plans for disconnecting impervious cover** from the stormwater system. Participating towns will receive a report with 10-15 recommendations for LID retrofits around town. The recommendations are geared toward relatively low cost options on municipally controlled facilities like town hall, schools, community centers, parks, etc. Click here to see examples of the type of work the students have done for 19 towns already. Many towns have used these reports to solicit funds for or otherwise kickstart stormwater retrofit projects. If you are interested in your town participating, please contact David.dickson@uconn.edu.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service New London County office reported that they were expecting to fill all engineering vacancies soon. At the time of our meeting, NRCS was involved with installation of a manure storage structure in Lebanon and were under contract for two additional manure storage projects, one in North Stonington and the other in Franklin. They anticipated two additional contracts to be ready to work on this season.

The USDA NRCS has initiated an urban initiative in New Haven and Hartford Counties that includes an expanded practice list, some of which would also benefit farms in eastern Connecticut as well.

CT Sea Grant

The CT Sea Grant Climate Adaptation Academy is offering a free webinar, “Managed Retreat in the Age of Climate Change,” from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Nov. 13. The workshop is designed for municipal and state officials, land use professionals and members of the interested public. Register for the workshop here http://bit.ly/CAA_register.

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES)

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) requests the public to be on the lookout for Spotted Lantern Flies and, if noted, to please report them. For more information about Spotted Lantern Flies and how to report them, use this link https://portal.ct.gov/CAES-SLF.

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The EPA has announced that the results of the 2017 National Lakes Assessment are now available online. The National Lakes Assessment (NLA) is conducted as part of the larger National Aquatic Resource Surveys (NARS), a collaborative program between EPA, states and tribes designed to assess the quality of the nation's waters using a statistical survey design. Please see the below email from EPA for additional details.

CT DEEP monitored 10 lakes as part of the NLA program during 2017 including:

* Billings Lake (North Stonington)
* Bissonette Pond (Willington)
* Deep Lake (Salisbury)
* Grays Pond (Stamford)
* Halls Pond (Eastford)
* Halls Pond (Willington)
* Lake Zoar (Monroe/Newtown/Oxford/Southbury)
* Morris Reservoir (Morris)
* Riga Lake (Salisbury)
* West Hill Lake (New Hartford)

Data from these surveys are available on the NARS Data page. Scroll down and select "Lakes 2017" under the 'Filter data by survey' option. You will need to download each data type individually and then filter out the CT data that you are interested in.

News from Municipalities

The Town of Groton hired a Resilience and Sustainability Manager, Megan Granato. She began her position as part of their municipal planning staff at the end of August 2022.

Several northeastern Connecticut municipalities and other organizations are joining forces and sharing ideas using a Regional Pollinator Pathway Initiative approach. The group meets several times a year to share ideas and support for each other, including the sharing of pollinator plant

seedlings donated to ongoing projects. Representatives from the following list of participants in this effort include:
Joshua Trust, Coventry, Mansfield, Mansfield Parks and Natural Resources Committee, North Windham, Institute for Sustainable Energy, a Willington Girl Scout Troop Leader, Chaplin Inland Wetland & Conservation Commission, Woodstock Conservation Commission, Garden Gate Club – Mansfield, Garden Club of Windham, Stafford Garden Club, Town of Mansfield and Eastern Connecticut Conservation District.

Land Trust Updates

The Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) developed a new grant program, designed to support transaction-related project costs. The goal of this program, the Transaction Assistance Grant (TAG) Program is designed to help land trusts initiate new conservation projects and provide critical funding needed to bring projects to completion. The first round of requests for this funding assistance closed on July 15, 2022. See more at https://ctconservation.org/transaction-assistance-grant-tag-program-request-for-proposals/

The Groton Open Space Association, Inc. has revised their website. You can visit their new website at this link https://www.gosaonline.org/.

The walkable properties owned and managed by the Wyndham Land Trust are now all included in on the AllTrails website. https://www.alltrails.com/lists/wyndham-land-trust-walkable-properties-4fc8ed9

New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF) and Partners [Applied] for Game-Changing USDA Grant. Cutting carbon from our electricity and transportation sectors gets lots of attention but protecting and growing natural carbon storage must play just as big a role in America's climate plans. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has prioritized this approach, and its Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities program has created a $1 billion grant process to help forest landowners, farmers and ranchers implement carbon-storing practices. NEFF has conducted research and modeling that shows applying Exemplary Forestry across much of New England and building with mass timber would achieve 30 Percent of the region's 2050 carbon reduction goals while improving wildlife habitat, protecting air and water quality, and supporting forest recreation. The USDA program felt like a perfect fit for NEFF's climate work, and so earlier this year, NEFF convened and coordinated a large group of impressive and interested partners, and together, submitted a $38 million proposal to USDA. Hopefully this highly beneficial project will be funded.

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 TRBP 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 meets quarterly on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Next meeting will be on October 18, 2022 at 9:30 AM Eastern Time, via Zoom.

If you are not already on the e-distribution list for this publication, sign on to our TRBP Distribution list http://thamesriverbasinpartnership.org/subscribe, or you can download previous versions of this quarterly publication from the TRBP website http://thamesriverbasinpartnership.org/newsletters.

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 22 for TRBP Coordinator time has been provided by The Last Green Valley. Additional 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.