



FARMINGTON RIVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE



2018 FRCC MEMBERS

Barkhamsted

Mario Santoro
Roger Behrens, alternate

Canton

Lans Perry

Colebrook

Tom Stanton (Treasurer)
Shayne Young, alternate

Hartland

Dan Bowler (Vice-Chair)
Bob Beeman, alternate

New Hartford

Alison Murdock (Chair)
Tony Mitchell, alternate

CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP)

Susan Peterson

Farmington River Anglers Association (FRAA)

Nick Masi

Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA)

David Sinish (Secretary)

Metropolitan District Commission (MDC)

Jim Randazzo

National Park Service (NPS)

Liz Lacy
Jamie Fosburgh, alternate



50 YEARS OF THE WILD & SCENIC RIVERS ACT

Greetings Neighbors and Friends of the Farmington River,

This year was the 50th Anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, and a busy year for the FRCC, filled with many accomplishments and challenges. We worked hard and had fun with our partners and stakeholders on a variety of solutions, initiatives and celebrations which furthered our mission to steward the River in accordance with the Upper Farmington River Management Plan.

FRCC includes volunteer representatives from the participating towns of Barkhamsted, Canton, Colebrook, Hartland and New Hartford, as well as representatives from CT DEEP, Farmington River Watershed Association, Metropolitan District Commission, National Park Service and the Farmington River Anglers Association. We collaborate with, and support the efforts of many other individuals and groups on a wide assortment of activities and interests. In turn, we enjoy and appreciate the help of many hardworking volunteers. Ongoing projects with these volunteers include: Identifying and working to eliminate Invasive Non-native Plants in the watershed; River and watershed cleanups; Preserving watershed lands; Water Quality Monitoring; Stream Crossing Surveys, and more.

We are continuing to work proactively with project partners and interested entities such as local Departments of Public Works and the State DOT, the city of Torrington, town of Winchester, Northwest CT Community College and Northwest Conservation District, to identify and address potential problems resulting from ongoing challenges to the health of the river and the watershed (such as events due to climate change, increase in the amount and intensity of recreational use, development pressures, the spread of invasive non-native species, and an economic and politically complicated time).

Our River Stewards continue to be a welcome presence in the community and participate in many local events, providing information, education and fun activities.

Next year is the 25th Anniversary of the Farmington River Wild & Scenic designation, and we are planning many fun events to celebrate. Looking forward to seeing you there!

This annual report has details about the above items; for even more information, ways you can get involved, interactive map, activities and fun facts, or to give us your feedback, visit farmingtonriver.org and/or farmingtonriversteward.org and other links provided there.

Love our River!

Alison Murdock
Chair, New Hartford Representative

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF WILD & SCENIC RIVERS ACT



Tom Cameron's photograph of the Farmington River—Fall Spirits

THE FARMINGTON RIVER CELEBRATION:

October 2, 2018, marked 50 years of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. In 1994 the 14 mile segment of the West Branch Farmington River from Hartland to the Canton/New Hartford line received its designation, so this year gave us an excellent reason to celebrate and increase our outreach and education efforts. Educational materials were developed and distributed to the public at many events. Earth Day festivals, local fairs, Paddle for Preservation, and more were attended by the River Stewards and FRCC members where they interacted with the public and educated people on the importance of Wild & Scenic Rivers Act and what it means for the Farmington River. FRCC hosted and sponsored events such as the Wild & Scenic Photo Exhibit, Tim Palmer Presentation, and Film Festival. These events gave us greater opportunity to connect to, and inspire river users to protect the Farmington and keep it clean and

healthy for all. The Farmington River Quilt, curated by FRCC Vice-Chair Dan Bowler, made many appearances further exposing the Farmington River. We were honored to have it showed at the State Capitol in Hartford and for Senators, Legislators and other policymakers be made aware of the issues surrounding our rivers.

THE FARMINGTON RIVER IS A FILM STAR

River Connections by Kate Geis, Alex Rappoport, Shana Stewart Deeds, National Park Service, River Management Society, 2017, was a 2018 Official Selection of Wild & Scenic Film Festival. FRCC was a sponsor of the Farmington River Watershed Association's Wild & Scenic Film Festival in Collinsville on September 22, showing many pertinent and inspiring documentaries, including *River Connections*. The festival was a great way to connect and educate local communities for the benefit of the Farmington River and to promote river stewardship.

FARMINGTON RIVER QUILT



Pleasant Valley Bridge by MaryPat Leger, Winchester Center, CT Section 14

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, the Farmington River Quilt was exhibited at the State Capitol. The quilt has an immense impact as artwork and as an educational piece. The opening gave more publicity to the Farmington River and the subsequent film of the press conference can be found on our website www.farmingtonriver.org

EXHIBITS IN 2018 *March:* Stitches Quilt Show, Hartford, CT; *July:* Barney Library, Farmington, CT; *September:* Simsbury Library, and Four Corners Quilt Show, Torrington, CT; *October:* State Capitol (*see photos below*); *November:* NCCC Library, Winsted, CT; *December:* CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Hartford, CT.

UPCOMING EXHIBIT:

April: East Granby Library

More coming soon! Check our schedule at www.farmingtonriverquilt.org



RIVER STEWARD PROGRAM

The 2018 Assistant Steward program ran June 1 through August 26. The paid stewards spent most of their time on the river when it was busiest – Friday through Sunday. There were four paid stewards – Richard, Jonathan, Matthew and Linnea. However, Matthew was not able to start until the begin of July, so his first month's stipend went to Mickey, who volunteers many hours and has been with the program since year one. Linnea was paid through an internship.

Again our volunteers helped a great deal. Aside from her first month's stipend, Mickey continued to volunteer in July and August. She regularly helped keep Satan's Kingdom and some of New Hartford center clean of trash, often going out early on weekday mornings. Donna helped all summer with social media posts and photos, and volunteering at steward events. She cross-promoted these events with Barkhamsted Recreation. Nora and Jan of Riverton helped keep the area around Riverton and Hogback Road free of litter.

Through education and outreach the stewards put an emphasis on teaching others how to respect the environment. This is becoming more challenging as user counts increase. We continue to speak about how items brought on the water can inadvertently become trash. The most effective time to reach river users is before they actually get to the water (i.e. unloading from their car). No Glass, Pack out What You Pack In, and creating awareness of the steward program are other common topics for the stewards. The stewards are a source of information for how to help prevent the spread of didymo, fishing tips and regulations, and tick awareness. We continue to have terrific steward hires and volunteers. All did a great job this summer, and are good either working together in a group, or motivated enough to sometimes be on their own. The two senior stewards commented how they both thought this was our most productive year yet when comparing the number of different events attended and tasks accomplished. Visit www.farmingtonriversteward.org for more information.

River Users Engaged: estimated 1175 (compared to ~600 last summer)

Paid Steward Hours: 676

Volunteer Hours: 108 + Nora and Jan's Riverton volunteering

Trash collected: 92 bags + Mickey's unrecorded totals

RIVER USERS

Over the last few years there has been a very noticeable increase in river users. Tubers now not only float Satan's Kingdom, but have moved up to the stretch between Riverton and People's Forest. This is possibly due to the alcohol restrictions in Satan's, and the occasional Environmental Conservation Officer presence there. If still floating the lower section, the parking lot at Michael Angelo's seems to be the new 'hot spot' for independent tubers.

The number of fishermen on the river is also on the rise. Heavy promotion of the Farmington River on websites and social media, and some of the only cold water habitat for trout found in the summer in New England have increased their numbers. Many now stay until dark wearing headlamps, something one did not see that much of in years past.

While it is nice to see users enjoying the river, the question has to be asked when do too many people affect the experience of all on the water. Towns and local businesses may enjoy the additional revenue, but careful attention has to be paid in the next couple years to not overburden this beautiful area. It is recommended for the summer of 2019 to continue to collect accurate user count data, and start thinking about planning guidelines to assure long term protection.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Water quality monitoring in the Upper Farmington River watershed is administered by FRWA Water Quality and Project Coordinator, Alisa Phillips-Griggs. Data from water samples, temperature, and macroinvertebrates are collected and analyzed.

Fifteen sites were monitored for bacteria, chemicals, nutrients and minerals from April to November. These sites have been monitored for long-term data. Analysis of the data is conducted in the MDC laboratory. Results are compiled and shown on the FRWA website. www.frwa.org

Eight sites were monitored with HOBO water temperature loggers. HOBOs record water temperatures hourly throughout the year in multiple locations in the Watershed to monitor ambient in-stream temperatures to identify and document cold water habitat to assess long term trends. FRWA's data is shared with the CT DEEP and uploaded to the regional SHEDS (Spatial-Hydro Ecological Decision System) Stream Temperature Database. FRWA deploys 8 HOBOs on different sites within the Upper Farmington River watershed. Three are located in the Farmington River and 1 each in Morgan Brook, Center Brook, Mad River, Still River, and Cherry Brook.



Interns analyzing water samples in a laboratory.

FRWA conducts macroinvertebrate sampling days in September and October to monitor streams of the watershed on a rotating basis. Volunteers are recruited and trained to do the sampling via the sampling method in "Riffle Bioassessment by Volunteers" program (RBV) developed by CT DEEP. Two sites and 10 volunteers assisted this year. Results are available on DEEP's website. www.ct.gov/deep

STREAM CROSSING SURVEYS



Interns in the field, assessing culverts.

FRWA's interns complete stream crossing surveys in the Upper Farmington River during the summer months. Data was collected from 65 sites, primarily in New Hartford. This assesses a local culvert's ability to handle storm events and connect aquatic habitats. The data is then uploaded to the NAACC's North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative database to help determine and prioritize conservation efforts when it comes time to reconstruct the culverts and bridges.

RIVER STEWARD TEAM REFLECTIONS

"It is truly an honor to work on the Farmington River, for this area is truly breathtaking. My goal is to make sure it stays that way for generations to come so others may marvel at this natural beauty just as I have. As a part of the river steward team, I take pride in educating others on just how important the Farmington is as a natural resource. As much as I love the river itself, there is nothing I enjoy more than seeing all the wildlife. There are so many unique, beautiful animals that we share this area with and I feel blessed each and every time I have the pleasure of seeing them." - *Jonathan Dolecki*

"Seeing the way people interact with the river can be troubling sometimes, so I wanted to get more involved and educate people on what happens when the river is trashed or poor etiquette is practiced. Some of the things I most enjoy about the stewardship is the interactions with people and nature. Being on the river all day certainly never gets old and almost everyone you reach out to appreciates our presence on the river. It's great to meet like minded people that want to help protect the river too." - *Matthew Borovy*

INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

Elizabeth Corrigan, field biologist with FRCC and noted invasive plant species expert, continued hosting volunteer based workshops on invasive plant species and how to remove them. Beyond the workshops, she continues control of invasive plants, surveys, comminations, planning and research, mapping and documentation, all of which benefits the ecosystems along the riverbanks and floodplain zones of the Upper Farmington River. This program is in its 9th year and involves approximately 80 control locations. Volunteers from FALPS, and the River Steward Team assisted in many workdays, especially on **JAPANESE BARBERRY** locations at Matthies grove.



SPOTTED KNAPWEED 20 sites: 3 eliminated, 9 significantly reduced. **JAPANESE STILTGRASS** 20 sites: 2 eliminated, remainder increased due to heavy rains and high heat over the summer. **PHRAGMITES** 4 sites: 1 significantly reduced. **AUTUMN OLIVE** 8 sites: colonies reduced. **LESSER CELANDINE** 2 sites: 1 significantly reduced. **JAPANESE KNOTWEED** 30+ sites: 1 reduced. **MUGWORT** 11 sites: 3 eliminated.

FRCC sponsored the FRWA team to attend the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group Symposium at UCONN in October to gather the newest available data on plant species and control methods. Invasive plant education efforts at FRWA broaden the scope of the work and distribution of information to the public on controlling invasive plant species.

ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL LAND TRUSTS

FRCC will support the New Hartford Land Trust (NHLT) in protection of the 8.1 acre conservation easement for the Butler Farm and Riverfront Trail Preservation project. FRCC has supported NHLT in this endeavor as well as funding Aranow property acquisition expenses.

PAT KEENER AND NANCY JOHNSON SCHOLARSHIPS

It was FRCC's pleasure to award scholarships to Timothy Strzepa of New Hartford and Gabriel Ortiz of Canton. The Pat Keener and Nancy Johnson Scholarships (\$1,000 each) are awarded every year to a high school or college student from one of the five riverfront towns (Barkhamsted, Canton, Colebrook, Hartland and New Hartford) going on to college to study environmental science.

RIVER STEWARD TEAM REFLECTIONS

"It wasn't until I was 15 when I completely fell in love with the Wild & Scenic section while learning to fly fish. I became a river steward because I wanted to help conserve and protect my home waters. Recreating on this river as a young kid taught me how to respect and appreciate the natural beauty just a couple miles from my home. With my passion for fly fishing, I already knew where to reach out to the public and frequent trash spots to clean up. Being able to clean up trash at my favorite fishing spots not only greatly benefits the river but allows for the public to fully enjoy the beauty of the river." - *Richard Nicoletti*

"The Farmington River has become a second home for me over the summer, and educating the public on the importance of preserving this Wild & Scenic River has become who I am on and off the river. Seeing people from all over the country recreating on the river and seeing the beautiful wildlife on the river has made the Farmington River one of my new favorite places to be, and the Steward Program is a great way for the community and conservationists to communicate and have fun together." - *Linnea Skoglund*

FARMINGTON RIVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE

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Visit us on Facebook!

www.farmingtonriver.org

The Farmington River Coordinating Committee is integral to the implementation of the Upper Farmington River Management Plan. The Committee is comprised of appointed representatives from the five riverfront towns, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), National Park Service (NPS), Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA), and Farmington River Anglers Association (FRAA). Monthly meetings are typically held at the Committee's office at Squire's Tavern, just inside Peoples State Forest in Pleasant Valley.

The Upper Farmington Wild & Scenic River designation extends from just below Goodwin (Hogback) Dam in Hartland to the New Hartford/Canton town line, spanning 14 miles.

FRCC'S MISSION IS TO PROMOTE LONG-TERM PROTECTION OF THE UPPER FARMINGTON RIVER BY:

- BRINGING INTERESTED PARTIES TOGETHER ON A REGULAR BASIS:
- STIMULATING COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AMONG THE PARTIES:
- PROVIDING A FORUM TO DISCUSS AND RESOLVE ISSUES: AND.
- COORDINATING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UPPER FARMINGTON RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN.

ANNUAL REPORT 2018—OVERVIEW OF EXPENDITURES

RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

- INVASIVE PLANT PROGRAM
- WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM
- LAND PROTECTION ASSISTANCE
- STREAM CROSSING SURVEYS

SUBTOTAL \$30,975.04

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

- PUBLICATIONS AND WEBSITE
- KIOSKS.
- SCHOLARSHIPS
- RIVER STEWARD PROGRAM
- WILD & SCENIC 50TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING AND EVENTS
- FARMINGTON RIVER QUILT PROJECT

SUBTOTAL \$30,557.24

OPERATIONS

- OPERATIONAL EXPENSES
- INTERNS

SUBTOTAL \$18,997.77

FISCAL YEAR 2018 TOTAL \$80,530.05