

The Watershed News

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A Quarterly Publication For the Ossipee Watershed Published by the Green Mountain Conservation Group

GMCG & OWC to host forum on water quality

On November 15, the Ossipee Watershed Coalition (OWC) and GMCG will co-host a public forum at Runnells Hall in Chocorua Village. Scientists from the University of New Hampshire (UNH) and Plymouth State University (PSU) will present analyses of over ten years of water quality data for tributaries of the Ossipee River watershed. Twenty years of Ossipee Lake water quality data will also be presented.

In 2002, GMCG volunteers began monitoring tributaries in the watershed with the intention of establishing a ten-year baseline of data from which to assess the state of water quality. The November forum marks an important milestone where university partners will distill and explain the most relevant data from the first ten years of sampling. Residents and stakeholders of the watershed interested in learning about water resources are encouraged to attend.

UNH limnologist Bob Craycraft and research scientist Michelle Daley will

explain observable trends in the data. They will also point out areas where data show consistently high quality water in order to clarify where planning may help to protect fragile resources.

In addition to historical data, PSU paleolimnologist Lisa Doner will present recent findings from the analysis of sediment cores collected from the major basins of the Ossipee Lake system this past June. The sediment analysis will begin to shed light on historical conditions in the lake and the impacts from land use changes that have occurred in the era following European settlement.

Steve Whitman of Jeffery Taylor and Associates will facilitate a discussion with attendees and invite questions about the state of the water quality. There will also be a discussion about next steps for the water quality monitoring program.

GMCG Program Director Eric Senecal will explain how watershed management planning can support growth and

development in ways that can limit degradation to water resources. He will share some recent examples of plans developed for the Lake Wentworth Watershed and the Upper Salmon Falls Headwater Lakes Watershed. Following the presentation GMCG, OWC, and Bob Craycraft will introduce a steering committee to work on watershed management planning in the coming years.

The forum will begin at 6:30 p.m. and is open to the public. Municipal board members, camp directors, lake association representatives, and anyone with an interest in the future development of the region are especially encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion following the presentations. For those unable to attend, the forum will be recorded and made available through GMCG's website. Anyone interested in joining the watershed management steering committee can contact Eric Senecal at 539-1859.

Students will present stream habitat data at Remick Museum

September marks the seventh year that GMCG has worked with watershed schools to survey local streams for macro invertebrate species. Certain macros are very sensitive to pollution while others are more tolerant. By observing which species are present scientists can get a picture of the health of a stream ecosystem.

By following a sampling protocol, students become scientists for the day and make informed determinations about the health of the stream. Not only does this program get kids interested in science and water resources but it provides GMCG with research that complements ongoing

water quality monitoring.

Five schools are scheduled to participate in the program this year; The Community School, Sandwich and Ossipee Central Schools, and Effingham and Freedom Elementary Schools.

All five schools will be able to come together to present their findings at a community presentation scheduled at the Remick Museum on December 6 at 6:00pm. GMCG would like to thank NH Fish & Game's Judy Tumosa for providing training this year to teachers, staff and volunteers. This program would

not be possible without the generous funding from the Pequawket Foundation, Captain Planet Foundation, Quimby Foundation and the Dorr Foundation.



Students from the Community School collect macros from the Bearcamp River.

The Watershed News

The Watershed News is a quarterly publication of the Green Mountain Conservation Group, a non-profit, 501(c) 3, charitable organization established in 1997 and dedicated to the preservation of the natural resources in the Ossipee Watershed. The towns of Effingham, Freedom, Madison, Ossipee, Sandwich and Tamworth make up the boundaries of the Ossipee Watershed. This watershed includes one of the largest and deepest stratified drift aquifers in New Hampshire.

GMCG's purpose is twofold:

1. To provide an organizational structure for a coalition of citizens and local officials interested in identifying sensitive areas within the Watershed in need of protection;
2. To offer public educational events about conservation issues and possible solutions regarding the preservation of unique natural resources.

Through research, education, advocacy and land conservation we strive to promote an awareness and appreciation of our watershed's natural resources and encourage a commitment to protect them.

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Conservation easements monitored annually

BY CHRIS YOUNG

A conservation easement is a contract that sells or conveys certain development rights to a trust or conservation group in order to preserve productive agricultural and silvicultural lands or to protect wetlands, wildlife habitat, or scenic areas for future generations. When the easement is created, a report is created documenting the physical state of the land and it is recorded in the registry. This report is called the baseline document. Along with the baseline document, property owners must have some sort of a management plan for the resource they are protecting. This establishes a use pattern for the resource which can also be monitored.

Every year, the conservation easement lands are walked and observed conditions are compared to the baseline document. Changes in the land are recorded as well as any observable cause. This process documents that the land is being used in accordance with the conservation easement and that the management plan is being followed.

GMCG currently holds twelve conservation easements totaling 2,079 acres. Each conservation easement is different as determined by the natural resources and the land owner's wishes. GMCG holds four easements that protect working farms, two that manage open spaces, four that manage

forests, and two that protect scenic viewpoints, hiking trails and forests. The largest easement protects a 1,100 acre property, and the smallest easement covers a 60 acre parcel.

GMCG also owns three properties (fee lands) totaling 198 acres. GMCG is responsible for developing and following the management plan on fee lands. The monitoring of fee lands ensures they are being managed in accordance with the previous owner's wishes. There is also baseline documentation that provides a guide as to the state of the property when it was acquired. Monitoring of these properties usually occurs as management plans are being carried out such as a forestry operations prescribed by a plan. Currently, GMCG is fundraising to purchase a fourth property, the Phillips Brook Wildlife Preserve in Effingham. (See page 5)

As a result of monitoring this summer, unmarked boundaries have been remarked, and lands have been inspected for any easement violations. In my monitoring walks this year, I have come across a moose, fresh bear scat, fields of wildflowers, and scenic views of mountains valleys like the one below from Mt. Katherine in Wonalancet.

Chris Young is GMCG's land coordinator.



The view from Mt. Katherine in Wonalancet, looking towards Birches Intervale Farm. GMCG holds conservation easements on both of these properties in Wonalancet. The Mt. Katherine property is managed for forestry values while the farm is managed for agricultural preservation.

GMCG and UNH T² offer erosion and sediment control training

On October 18, the University of New Hampshire's Technology Transfer (T²) Center will sponsor a day long workshop that will cover best management practices for limiting erosion from stormwater runoff and the transport of sediment into surface waters. David Eckman, P.E., of Eckman Engineering, LLC in Portsmouth will present the workshop.

Erosion control is an important issue for lake communities to understand and manage carefully. Sediment deposition into streams and lake water accelerates a dynamic process called eutrophication which reduces water clarity, promotes aquatic plant growth, and depletes dissolved oxygen which is vital for wildlife.

Erosion that carries sediment into surface waters increases the supply of fine silt that can be suspended in the water column for long periods, especially in windy conditions. This physical process is responsible for reductions in transparency (the depth to which sunlight reaches below the surface). However, phosphorous, which is present in organic matter and soils binds extremely well to sediments and is carried into surface waters through the process of erosion.

Phosphorus can impact water quality because it is relatively scarce in the surface water ecosystem. It is typically measured in the single parts per billion in high quality waters. The lack of phosphorus in surface waters places a limit on the biologic productivity of the ecosystem, meaning that it controls how much algae and plant matter can grow in the water. When phosphorous enters the system, things can change rapidly.

Above a threshold of approximately 8 parts per billion, biologic productivity increases and the amount of dissolved oxygen declines. Once this process takes hold, the process of eutrophication, or lake aging, speed up. Changes that would naturally occur over 10,000 years have been observed to occur over a couple of decades, and historically clean lakes can turn into murky waters in a surprisingly short period.

Sediment is not the only source of phosphorous that needs to be managed in order to protect surface waters, but it is often the largest, second only to wastewater from old, failing, or poorly maintained septic systems. Thankfully, areas of erosion and sedimentation are easy to identify and to remediate.

The workshop is for DPW and DOT directors and staff, road agents, town engineers, transportation planners, planning board members, conservation commissioners, and others interested in the impact of road drainage on water quality. While the workshop covers technical information, it will also be educational for municipal officials, developers, campus directors, and road associations.

This program is a UNH T² Center NH Roads Scholar training activity with 5 Environmental Hours. The NH Roads Scholar Program establishes educational and training requirements for municipal level highway practitioners and recognizes those who have successfully completed specified T² programs. The workshop is eligible for Professional Development Hours as well as Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

The workshop will be held at Ossipee Town Hall, from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm on October 18. Participants can register at www.t2.unh.edu/training-calendar or by contacting Beth Hamilton at (800) 423-0060 or [e.hamilton@unh.edu](mailto:b.hamilton@unh.edu). The cost is \$60 and includes instruction, materials, refreshments, and lunch.

Notes From Downstream

BY DENNIS FINN

As the seasons roll by, spring to summer and then to fall, and the water quality program completes another year it has become clearer than ever that the best way, maybe the only way, to maintain water quality is through partnerships. Not a new idea really. No one group or individual can do everything. Forming alliances in an effort to make certain that the work your group does is sustainable and effective is the best approach. The Saco River Corridor Commission (SRCC) has a strong relationship with the GMCG and recently we have expanded our alliance by working with The Nature

Conservancy (TNC) and the University of New England's estuary project on the Saco River in Biddeford.

After many meetings with like minded groups, the SRCC has embarked on a new program that will ultimately create an electronic sounding board where environmental groups in Maine and New Hampshire can participate by posting their missions and work programs. In this way, by going to the website, you can see what others are doing and perhaps tie in with groups that are doing similar work. This has the affect of keeping people from reinventing the wheel. We are all working toward common goals. By

having a means of sharing data, program information and methodology, environmental groups can make the most of the limited money and time that we find ourselves confronted with.

Dennis Finn is the Executive Director of the Saco River Corridor Commission, located in Cornish, ME. The commission regulates land and water uses, protects and conserves the region's unique and exceptional natural resources, and prevents detrimental impacts caused by incompatible development. To learn more about our downstream partners, visit www.srcc-maine.org

Watershed Conversations

Editor's Note: *Watershed Conversations is intended to provide a forum for the six towns of the Ossipee Watershed to share news of their conservation and planning activities and an opportunity to find creative solutions regarding watershed issues.*

Effingham

On August 19, Emelyn Albert and Jack Williams accompanied Kamal Nath, former Chair of Effingham Conservation Commission (ECC) and presently a volunteer Acoustic Transect Investigator with NH Fish & Game's Anabat program, on an acoustic transect to search for bats. This program requires volunteers to drive a prescribed route, about 30 miles long, with a listening device attached to the roof of the volunteer's vehicle and a recording device located inside the auto. The route started in Effingham, driving through Ossipee village down Rt. 25, through part of Freedom, and back to Effingham. What we could hear were different pulsating high node sonic signals from the bats.

There are eight different species of bats known to frequent NH, each emitting distinctly different sounds. The area where we heard the most signals was in the vicinity of the Heath Pond bog area on Rt. 25. We recorded over forty signals in this area with a total of 118 signals for the entire route. This is an amazing experience to hear the audible range out of bat's echolocations and we were pleased to hear so many bats along the route.

On another topic, during a River Runners workshop put on by the NH Rivers Council on July 9 at GMCG and in the Ossipee River, attendees sampled and confirmed the presence of variable milfoil in the vicinity of the boat ramp on the Ossipee River at Rt. 25. After installing a DES invasive aquatic plant warning sign at the ramp, ECC joined with Freedom Conservation

Commission to canoe part of the Ossipee River to check on the spread of variable milfoil. We found none on the Freedom side of the River, but there is considerable growth of this aquatic invasive along the Effingham side located above and below the boat ramp on Rt. 153. ECC has met with NE Milfoil and plans to remove the milfoil in mid October.

Ossipee

The Ossipee Conservation Commission (OCC) hosted *Get Wild at Sumner Brook* on August 25 to celebrate the completion of the town's Wildlife Action Plan, and the updating of the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) chapter of the Ossipee Master Plan.

Each town has maps created using spatial data and models of habitat created by NH Fish & Game biologists. It is possible to predict habitat locations based on soil types, elevation, climate, landforms, and broad vegetative classes. By using this data and additional land assessment surveys towns can look at land use and implement best management practices when considering future planning. Ossipee is fortunate to have diverse land cover areas with exemplary habitat not found elsewhere in the state.

The event at Sumner Brook included a visit from Squam Lake Natural Science Center with educational hands on learning activities featuring a saw-whet owl, broad winged hawk and blanding's turtle. Lynn Clarke, newest OCC board member and NH Fish & Game Wildlife Docent shared pelts from furbearer species found in the state including animal facts, tracks and habitat range. Local habitat information was provided listing species to be found there and land use recommendations for property owners. Little anglers got to feed and fish for trout at the fish farm, getting their first fish free.

Sandwich

Sandwich Conservation Commission's two-year project to restore the Sandwich

Notch Park was completed in August. Donated in 1932 by Susan Bacon Keith, the park includes Beede Falls, Cow Cave, and the beginning of the Bearcamp River Trail. Work involved re-routing the trail which was located too close to the river, replacing a temporary bridge with a permanent one located down-stream, and constructing a log crib in order to stabilize the badly eroded right bank.

The project was made possible by many hours of dedicated volunteer work and grants from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and the Alfred Quimby Fund. In addition the town voted to amend a 1995 warrant so that conservation moneys could be used not only for land acquisition, but also for maintenance and stewardship of existing public areas.

Tamworth

The Town of Tamworth recently accepted a conservation easement on a 19-acre lot between the Bearcamp River and Route 25 at the western edge of Town. The lot is known as the Eastern Field of the Bearcamp Valley Farm. It is adjacent to the 26.5-acre lot known as the Western Field which was protected last year through efforts of the Commission and is now owned by the Lakes Region Conservation Trust. The two lots together provide a critical link in the important Whites-to-Ossipees wildlife connectivity area of eastern Sandwich and western Tamworth, providing an essential wildlife crossing area along Route 25. The easement was purchased from the landowner entirely with private contributions. The property will remain on the tax rolls, and the landowner will continue to harvest hay from it. The easement will be monitored by the Tamworth Conservation Commission (the TCC). For more information on this and other projects of the TCC, go to: tamworthconservationcommission.org

We need your help to conserve Phillips Brook

GMCG would like to extend thanks to over 50 friends who have contributed to the Phillips Brook Wetland Preserve in Effingham. To date \$18,000 has been raised. There is still a long way to go to meet the goal of \$50,000 by the closing at the end of December. If you have not had a chance to contribute yet, please consider making a donation today.

The Phillips Brook Wetland Preserve will conserve 102 acres of exemplary wetlands in Effingham including the headwaters to Phillips Brook that feeds into Leavitt Bay in Ossipee Lake. In addition to wetlands, one third of the property supports a mixed upland forest that includes productive hemlock, white pine and mixed hardwood. In New Hampshire Fish & Game's Wildlife Action Plan, a portion of the Phillips Brook area is ranked as highest value for wildlife habitat in the state. There is abundant food, shelter, water and open space needed for sustaining wildlife. The property is also located over the primary recharge area of NH's largest stratified drift aquifer, an important ground water resource for Effingham, Ossipee Lake, Ossipee River and neighbors downstream in Maine.

The Phillips Brook Wetland Preserve parcel is one parcel away from nearly

11,000 contiguous protected acres that are part of the Green Mountain Forest Block. This includes 11 parcels in NH (2,530 acres) and one large parcel in Maine (8,300 acres.) This protected area includes easement and fee lands held by Society for the Protection of NH Forests, NH Audubon, The Nature Conservancy, GMCG, Town of

Freedom, State of NH and the State of Maine (in partnership with TNC Maine.)

Adding the Phillips Brook Wetland Preserve will help link this exemplary wetland system on Ossipee Lake to the larger forested blocks on Green Mountain and across the border into Maine.



Phillips Brook wetlands. Photo by Ellen Snyder, Ibis Wildlife Consulting

GMCG awarded funding from Pequawket Foundation

The Pequawket Foundation has graciously approved GMCG's request for \$2,000 to partially fund expanded water quality programs in the form of youth education and field research in Madison, Freedom and Eaton in 2013.

Though GMCG has monitored over 45 tributary and lake sites throughout the watershed over the last 11 years, only one monitoring site is located within the Danforth Pond subwatershed, an 18 square mile upland area north of Danforth Pond including parts on Eaton, Madison,

and Freedom. Water quality data from upstream will enhance our understanding of how wetland systems impact Ossipee Lake.

With Pequawket funding GMCG will also expand the youth macro invertebrate sampling to Madison and Freedom schools.

GMCG would like to thank The Pequawket Foundation for their continued support, for helping to educate youth about our unique shared water resources, and for supporting water quality research.



Richard Brunelle presented Stephanie Doyle with a check on behalf of the Pequawket Foundation

GMCG and PSU partner on water quality research

This past June, GMCG teamed up with researchers from Plymouth State University to deploy two pieces of water quality monitoring equipment in the Pine and Ossipee Rivers that will log data every three minutes for the next five years. These devices, called sondes, are two of 100 that have been deployed in rivers throughout New Hampshire as part of a long-term data collection project designed to support competitive research on the impact of land use, population growth and climate change on New Hampshire's ecosystems.

The project is funded by the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), established by the National Science Foundation in 1979 to strengthen science and engineering infrastructure in states that historically have received less in federal research grants. There are now 28 states and three territories that have EPSCoR status. Since NH became an EPSCoR state in 2004, \$93 million in federal grants have been awarded to build research capacity in the state.

The current project is part of a five year \$20 million grant combining aquatic and terrestrial field sensors, remote sensing, citizen-science

engagement and laboratory analysis that will provide significant advancements in understanding the impact of changes in land use, snow cover and ecosystem function.

The sondes record temperature, conductivity and pressure data. Once the flow volume is determined at different water levels the pressure can be calibrated to determine the volume of water being discharged from the Ossipee system during any given period. This will help determine how in-lake dynamics effect the availability of nutrients, like phosphorus, in Ossipee Lake. It will also help our downstream partners, the Saco River Corridor Commission, to better understand the Ossipee River's influence on water quality in the lower Saco River.

In addition to the two sondes meters, water quality monitoring volunteers will also collect a sample of water to be analyzed for deuterium isotope fractions. By looking at the ratio of deuterium isotopes PSU scientists will be able to tell what fraction of the water sample's source is groundwater and what fraction was rainfall. This will show the relative contribution of stormwater runoff to the water supply in tributaries to the

lake, and the relative vulnerability of surface waters to runoff throughout the watershed and across the seasons.

While not funded by EPSCoR, PSU paleolimnology research is also underway to analyze the composition of sediments collected from the bottom of the five basins of Ossipee Lake. This research will show how land use changes affected nutrient loading into the lake from historic times through the present. It will also quantify the potential for internal phosphorus loading, a complex process that is a function of available nutrients and oxygen levels at the bottom of the lake.

All three of these research projects were recommended as important next steps for informed watershed planning in a report completed in August 2011 by a team of environmental consultants. The progress that GMCG is making in understanding these important research questions is a direct result of a continued focus on building successful partnerships with the state's public university research programs and on the continued generosity and commitment of the volunteers who help make sampling possible.

After school programs promote environmental literacy

This year GMCG will once again be working with Ossipee Central School's after school program, "School's Out!" to bring environmental education to the youth of Ossipee. Youth Coordinator and Americorps member Stephanie Doyle will be working closely with School's Out! staff on a program called *Wilderness Explorers*. Last year activities included storm drain stenciling, animal tracking, gardening activities, and recycled art projects.

The age of the students involved ranged from first to fourth grade and all were very interested to learn about nature and animals. Students sampled well-water using the GET WET! program and were introduced to the *Trout in the Classroom* program as well. In the upcoming school year more activities will be included such as animal pelt identification, rain barrel activities, and lessons to teach students about the Ossipee River Watershed.



Ossipee Central School students examining pelts of native New Hampshire mammals.

Fall Calendar

Thursday, October 4th - Edible Wild Mushrooms, Tamworth Lyceum, 6:00pm. Learn the basics of hunting edible wild mushrooms. Call GMCG for more information 539-1859.

Saturday, October 7th - Mushroom Walk, GMCG Offices, 196 Huntress Bridge Rd., Effingham, 10:00am - 1:00pm. Join walk leader and Sandwich resident Rick van de Poll on a hike in search of mushrooms. Learn to find, identify and enjoy all mushrooms have to offer. Call GMCG for more information 539-1859.

Thursday, October 18th - Introduction to Erosion and Sediment Control workshop, Ossipee Town Hall, 8:00am - 2:00pm. This UNH technical workshop will present best management practices for controlling erosion from stormwater and minimizing sediment input into surface waters. Five CE units available through the NH Roads Scholar Program. Register at www.t2.unh.edu/training-calendar or by contacting Beth at (800) 423-0060. The cost is \$60 and includes instruction, materials, refreshments, and lunch.

Saturday, October 27th - Tree Identification Workshop, GMCG Offices, 196 Huntress Bridge Rd., Effingham, 10:00am - 1:00pm. Join Carroll County forester Wendy Scribner for an Effingham hike to learn about forestry and how to use specific features to identify trees. Call GMCG for more information 539-1859.

Sunday, October 28th - Jagolinzer Preserve Hike, Limington, ME 1:00pm. Hike this 20 acre parcel along the Saco River in Limington on which the Francis Small Heritage Trust holds an easement. For details call Peter Zack (207) 625-3605

Thursday, November 15th - State of the Watershed Forum, Runnells Hall, 25 Deer Hill Rd., Chocorua Village, 6:30 - 8:30pm. Scientists and researchers from UNH and PSU will present their interpretation of data on river and lake water quality in the Ossipee Watershed. A facilitated discussion on next steps in watershed planning will follow. Call GMCG at 539-1859.

Thursday, December 6th - Student Macroinvertebrate Presentation, Remick Museum, Tamworth, 6:00pm. Students from schools around the watershed will present their findings from stream surveys for macro invertebrates. Call 539-1859.

SPECIAL - SAVE THE DATE!!! - Saturday January 19th 2013 - GMCG Annual Meeting, Lakeview Neurological Rehabilitation Center, Effingham, 4:00 - 8:00pm. Come help celebrate GMCG's 15th birthday beginning with a 9am breakfast and morning tracking field trip to the South River Marsh. Dinner and a presentation will be held at Lakeview beginning at 4pm. Please call to reserve your place. Limited seats for both events.

***Your Membership Makes a Difference.
PLEASE renew your 2012 membership today!
Every drop counts! Thank you!***

(Please make checks payable to Green Mountain Conservation Group P.O. Box 95, Effingham, NH 03882)

You may also renew your membership online at www.gmcg.org/we-need-your-help/

Vernal Pool __\$25 Stream __\$50 River __\$75 Pond __\$100 Bay __\$250 Lake __\$500 Aquifer __\$1000 Other __

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Are you interested in being a GMCG Volunteer?

YES

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY and encourage your family, friends and neighbors to join GMCG.

THANK YOU!

GMCG is a non-profit 501 (C)3 tax-exempt organization. We are funded by grants, memberships, and donations.

Creating a future gift

One of the most meaningful ways to ensure your legacy of caring about clean water and the protection of our natural resources in the Ossipee Watershed, is by including GMCG in your estate planning. By including GMCG in your will, you can assure your legacy of participating in the ongoing work of GMCG to protect clean water and all the natural resources of this region for future generations. Please contact our executive director to discuss the details of your support of GMCG in this way.

We accept donations of real property, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, life insurance policies and gift annuities. Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. **Our Federal Tax Identification number is: 02-0498020.**



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The Watershed News

Save the Date...
***GMCG 15th Birthday
Celebration***
January 19, 2013
ALL DAY EVENTS!
RESERVE TODAY!

**Deadline for
Winter Newsletter
submissions is December**

EVERY PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND EACH PERSON SHOULD TRY.

