

◆ The Watershed News ◆

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Summer 2015

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Groundbreaking ceremony and fundraising event for GMCG's new home is July 18th

We have exciting news. In July, GMCG will break ground on our new home-to-be on the Ossipee River in Effingham. Fondly named Heron House, after a resident bird who has already blessed the site, this new home offers opportunities to expand our growing programs and further our water quality research.



Please join us on July 18 from 3-6 pm for a celebration and fundraising event to learn more about the project, meet the builders and talk with wetland scientist Rick Van de Poll about riparian habitat on this property. Local refreshments and Ossipee Mead will be served with music provided by Jane Wilcox Hively.

Volunteers and members who have visited GMCG's current office know how small and cramped it is. With summer staff, five people often share one small room and we are bursting at the seams. Our makeshift water quality lab, "also known as the Bat Cave," is not usable in the winter, which means sensitive equipment and chemicals for preserving water samples have needed to be stored in the bathroom for the winter.

Two years ago, long-time GMCG supporters Arthur Little and Jann Leeming from the Little Family Foundation (LFF) came forward with a pledge donation to help GMCG address space issues.

In 2014, the property next door to the

current office and directly on the Ossipee River became available through an auction. With generous funding from the LFF, GMCG was able to purchase it. Since last fall, GMCG focused on cleaning up the property and working with the building committee to design new space that will be more appropriate for expanding programs.

With building plans drafted, we received another major donation from our longest supporter, Patricia Watts. It was Patricia and her husband, the late Charlie Watts, who inspired executive director and co-founder Blair Folts to create Green Mountain Conservation Group. This donation, along with the LFF gift, will provide a solid foundation for this project.

"It was May 1, 1997," Folts recalled. "I attended a celebration for the Forest Society's recent acquisition of the High Watch Preserve on Green Mountain in Effingham. I met Charlie and Patricia Watts at that event. In listening to Charlie speak about his passion for Green Mountain, his understanding that land needs to be protected but also shared with everyone, I knew that I had to try to be more involved with local environmental issues. From that day on and with Charlie's words in my mind, I



Patricia and the late Charlie Watts with Executive Director Blair Folts in 2000



Jann Leeming and Arthur Little view the new property from Huntress Bridge.

began to slowly create an organization that would be for watershed residents."

Now, 18 years later, GMCG is a seven-town organization with a strong partnership with downstream neighbors in Maine. The site of this new property on the Ossipee River is also the area where water from the Ossipee Watershed exits into Maine. Over 300,000 people downstream take their drinking water directly from the river.

Please share in our excitement! This is an incredible opportunity for a growing grassroots organization to have a facility that will meet the needs for water sampling and research programs and also provide space for educational programs for young and old.

But we need your help!

As noted, while we have had two very generous lead gifts, we need to raise \$100,000 to meet our restoration plans. Please join us on July 18 to learn more about how you can play a part in this historic move for GMCG.

For more information or to make a donation please visit gmcg.org or call GMCG at 603 539-1859.

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 Eaton, 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 also partners across the Maine border into Parsonsfield and beyond. Water does not have any political boundaries.

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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Water Quality, Corey Lane
Education, Tyler Manville
Outreach, Noreen Downs

A message from the GMCG Board Chair

By Jerry Knirk

2015 looks to be an exciting year. Under the inspiring leadership of our Executive Director, Blair Folts, GMCG continues to protect our precious water resource on many fronts. Here in the Ossipee aquifer, we rely on our safe and clean surface and groundwater for our drinking water and our recreation. The surface and ground water within the watershed is shared by 14 towns with a population of over 12,000 residents; most significantly, the towns of Eaton, Effingham, Freedom, Madison, Ossipee, Tamworth and Sandwich.

Our diverse board leadership is drawn from these towns and we even have a representative from Maine. Most of us are drawn here by the abundant clean water, the diverse wildlife and the forests. Over the past few years we have often read about instances of water contamination around the country (or simply not enough water). GMCG's many programs work to prevent contamination and preserve the quality of our valuable shared water resource through research, education, advocacy and land conservation. We have recently completed our watershed management plan for the lower bays and are beginning our large project focussing on Ossipee Lake. Our ongoing monitoring of water quality provides research data to spot trends and inform good decision-making regarding best management practices. Our research and educational programs drive our non-confrontational advocacy on many fronts to protect our water and related resources. The public knows our commitment to conservation and entrusts us with conservation easements on many properties.

We continue to be active in educating

the public on many fronts--in the schools, at the camps, with the town conservation committees and with the public at large. All year long we host educational programs covering topics as varied as raptors, bees, septic systems and the effect of air quality on water quality to name just a few over the past few months. Be sure to go to our website, GMCG.org to see the upcoming programs. We would love to see you there.

We have a small, very busy staff. Much of our work is done by volunteers. There are many ways that you can volunteer--committees, working on events, or assisting with gathering of water quality data. If you can not volunteer your time please continue to support our work with your membership, your donations and your attendance at our events.

Perhaps our most exciting issue in 2015 is the building of our new office and education center. Through the generosity of a donor, we were able to acquire a parcel of land which has frontage on the Ossipee River in Effingham and is adjacent to our current office. We will be renovating the house on the property to provide much needed space for our offices and laboratory. The riverfront location is a great site for our ongoing educational programs. On July 18, at our office, we will be kicking off our fundraising for this project. Please join us for refreshments and to hear more about the plans, tour the property and building and donate to the cause. If you can not make it to that event to commit your support, please consider a donation to the building project this summer.

Jerry Knirk lives in Freedom and is Chair of the Board of Directors of Green Mountain Conservation Group.

“Climber on a mission” featured speaker at 2015 Dinner Auction

Join GMCG for a thrilling event Saturday August 15, 2015, at the Province Lake Golf Club in Parsonsfield, Maine. This dinner event will feature guest speaker and alpinist, National Geographic writer and photographer, and local Madison resident, Freddie Wilkinson. Author of “One Mountain, Many Summits: The Untold Story of Tragedy and True Heroism on K2”, Mr. Wilkinson writes:

“It takes a certain mindset to run under a serac (*block or column of glacial ice*). You try to do most of the thinking beforehand. You figure what the safest route is, calculate the odds, estimate how long it will take. Then you make up your mind and commit. After that, it’s only a matter of putting one leg in front of the other. You try not to think about it anymore than you have to. Most of the time you are doing it because the risk seems worth it. Because there is no other place in the world you would rather be than deep in one of the earth’s untamed wildernesses, climbing a mountain, with nothing else to worry about than controlling the lactic acid in your legs and the pace of your breath.”

Freddie loves to climb. He has made significant alpine first ascents around the world, including new routes in



Alaska, Patagonia, Nepal, India, and Antarctica. He has received both the Robert Hicks Bates Award from the American Alpine Club (2007) and the Piolet d’Or from the Groupe de Haute Montagne (2012) for his achievements in the mountains. Freddie’s various jobs include writing books, blogs, and articles related to climbing, taking pictures and making movies of people climbing, giving slideshows and talks about climbing adventures he’s done, and — his favorite — working as a climbing instructor and guide in the White Mountains of New Hampshire and western Maine. Whether it’s hiking up the Lion’s Head in stiff winter conditions, scampering up one of the classic moderate multi-pitch rock climbs of Cathedral Ledge, or getting gnarly on advanced mixed terrain, Wilkinson finds perpetual inspiration safely shepherding

clients through new climbing experiences. Freddie believes that any adventure is only as good as the stories you bring home.

The August summer evening event will start at 4:30 pm with a social hour with hors d’oeuvres and cash bar on the patio. There will be a BBQ Kabobs dinner and live auction inside the dining room followed by Freddy Wilkinson’s interesting presentation.

The silent and live auction items include many tickets and gift certificates to local establishments, along with discounted adventuresome trips. Tom Troon, of Troon and Sons Auctioneers of Conway, has once again offered his time to lead a “lively” auction. Look for more auction item details on the website starting June 15th.

Tickets are \$50/pp. “Early purchase discounted” tickets (\$40/pp) will be on sale from June 15th to July 15th via the website, www.gmcg.org or by reserving your seats by calling 539-1859 and sending your check to GMCG, P. O. Box 95, Effingham, NH 03882. We look forward to seeing you and your family at this annual event!

Summer water quality programs off to a great start

As winter came to an abrupt halt, GMCG’s water quality volunteers were ready. With assistance from Ossipee Lake Marina and Ed Green from Totem Pole Park, the crew was able to make their first Lake and Bays deep water sampling trip on April 29th which was just one week after ice out. This program, known as VLAP, (Volunteer Lake Assessment Program) will continue once each month until fall turnover to better understand the health of the Lake.

After Dave Downs and Rich Dandeneau made it through a long winter of monitoring 10 tributary sites each month, including a spur of the moment heavy rain sampling in April, many other volunteers resumed testing 29 tributary testing sites the first week of May. They will continue every other

week until October.. With over 6,000 site visits combined, an analysis of the data has been completed by F.B Environmental. The 10 year water quality report as well as the Ossipee Watershed Management Plan is available at gmcg.org.

GMCG is also looking forward to working with the summer camps around the Lake and Bays. Campers will be participating in water quality research as well as assisting with erosion control projects to keep polluted runoff from reaching the water.

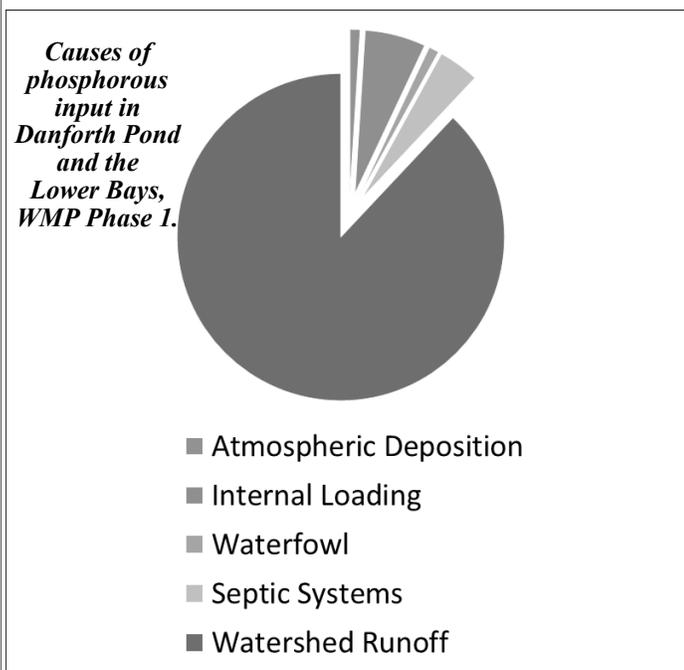
Contact GMCG if you would like more information on volunteering for research, education and/or land trust projects throughout the Ossipee Watershed.

GMCG “Kicks Off” Phase II of Watershed Management Plan

On June 6th, local residents and stakeholders gathered for the phase II “Kick-Off” meeting of the Ossipee Watershed Management Plan which was hosted by Totem Pole Park in Freedom. The purpose of this Plan is to improve the health and water quality trends of the Ossipee Lake system. Phase II focuses on the Ossipee Lake and the Lovell River Watershed.

GMCG has hired F.B. Environmental Consulting firm of Portland, Maine, to conduct research and surveys and analyze potential water quality threats. These threats include stormwater runoff and erosion which compromises overall health of the lake system.

Stormwater runoff (also known as polluted runoff) is responsible for approximately 90% of the phosphorous present in lakes. High levels of phosphorous and other nutrients can create an increase in aquatic plant growth and algae. High levels of algae can decrease oxygen available to aquatic life which can lead to decreased clarity and



massive fish kills. In addition, the decaying organic matter of this algae will then settle to the floor of the lake, which will decrease the depth of the lake and overtake lakebed ecosystems creating the accelerated aging of the lake.. The aging of freshwater lakes is something that occurs naturally over tens of thousands of years, however, under human influence, this process can occur in a much shorter timeframe.

With the information gathered through research and observations, a management plan with specific recommendations for improving the health of the lake system can be created and utilized far into the future. Best Management Practices (BMPs) are an effective way to deal with stormwater runoff. Not only is the property enhanced but also water quality in the lake is protected.

Because stormwater runoff continues to be the greatest threat to surface water, GMCG is partnering with Soak Up the Rain, NH to provide land owners with technical assistance and labor to install BMPs. For example, if there is an eroded pathway that channels rain into the lake, putting in infiltration steps would be a wise choice. Or if water coming off a roof is eroding the ground and washing soils away, one could install a rain barrel, rain garden or dry well to redirect some of the water.

There are many possibilities to explore that could be put to use on Ossipee lake and in the surrounding watershed that would help protect the lake and slow the lake’s aging process by decreasing phosphorous and sediment input. This management plan will highlight areas that can benefit from BMPs. The Plan will also make recommendations to planning boards, residents, and lake associations on land use practices that can be implemented to improve water quality.

You can find the Ossipee Watershed Management Plan at <http://www.gmcg.org/research/watershed-management-plan/test-topic/>. GMCG is seeking steering committee members to assist with the process of working on the Plan as well as to gather local input and suggestions from community members.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact GMCG at info@gmcg.org or (603) 539-1859.

*Funded, in part, by
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Foundation, Little Family Foundation, and
Adelard and Valeda Lea Roy Foundation.*

Tyler Manville hired to create water literacy curriculum

GMCG is pleased to welcome Tyler Manville as the new Education and Outreach Coordinator. A resident of Center Harbor, Tyler recently graduated from Plymouth State University (PSU) with a degree in environmental science and policy. Tyler gained his knowledge of environmental issues and earth systems through his studies at PSU as well as through his background in sustainable farming at Picnic Rock Farms in Meredith.



His interest in education began at Gunstock Mountain Ski Resort where he has worked as a snowboard instructor. "I loved working with kids who were only 5 years old as well as retired folks in their late 70s. I am excited to work for GMCG both with school kids and municipal officials and hope to share the passion I feel about resource conservation and the environment," Tyler said his first day at GMCG. "I grew up here, I want to stay here and I hope to inspire young people today about all the reasons we are so fortunate to live here."

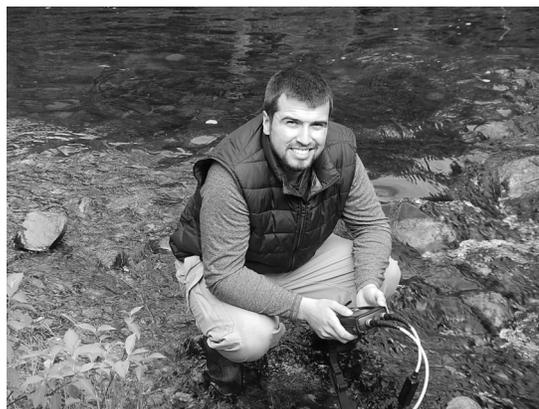
As the Education/Outreach Coordinator, Tyler will be directing GMCG's school programs through 2016. Thanks to funding from the Dorr Foundation, he will also create a water literacy curriculum to be used in elementary schools in the Ossipee watershed. This curriculum will encompass a basic understanding of how the water cycle works and will incorporate all of GMCG's current youth water programs. The inclusion of local water quality data will familiarize children with the watershed in which they live and point to reasons why it is so unique. Tyler is excited to take on this responsibility and help make a difference in the lives of local children as well as our local environment.

Matt Mazzone jumps in as GMCG's summer water quality intern

Matt Mazzone started his summer internship on GMCG's VLAP trip to collect water samples from the deep spots on Ossipee Lake. Matt, a resident of Wolfeboro, is a recent graduate from the University of New Hampshire's Natural Resource Department where he focused on Environmental Conservation. He will be continuing his educational path by pursuing a graduate degree in Environmental Science and Policy from Plymouth State University this Fall. His thesis will focus on water quality and community ecology. Matt hopes his water quality work with GMCG this summer will help him gain knowledge needed for his research work at PSU next year.

From his education, past field experiences and collecting and analyzing data, Matt is looking forward to jumping right in and putting his skills to work. As the 2015 water quality intern, Matt's responsibilities include coordinating all of GMCG's Water Quality Monitoring programs, such as RIVERS (the bi-monthly tributary monitoring program), VLAP, (monthly deep water sampling on Ossipee Lake) and the well sampling program with Dr. Robert Newton from Smith College. Matt will be in charge of overseeing volunteers, data collection and

quality control, weekly database entries, and maintenance of the equipment. When you see Matt out on the RIVER battling mosquitoes, please give him a warm welcome to the Watershed!



"I am very excited to be part of such a great group. I think this internship is a great fit for me because I can learn so many different aspects about conserving our water resources. This opportunity will help me out tremendously with my Masters because I have little experience with water quality"

Conservation Conversations

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

Eaton

Eaton is close to finalizing it's latest version of the Master Plan and expects the draft to be available for public review and comment in July. This new document will feature "modern" technology, being available both via CD and in paper form. The CD format will allow previous Master Plans, maps, photographs and historical documents to be included as reference material. The Planning Board is excited to be delivering such a complete document, with it's focus on preserving the rural nature of our community and the excellent water quality of our beloved Crystal Lake. "



Effingham

Effingham Conservation Commission continues to maintain Town assets like the Larry Leavitt Preserve (LLP) and the boat ramp property on Route 153. Volunteers Emelyn Albert and Jack Williams cleared winter debris in early May at the LLP, which was loaded and hauled away by Harry Libby. Emelyn, Jack, and Kamal Nath planted tree seedlings at the boat ramp and LLP later in the month. Seedlings were obtained from the NH State Nursery. Appropriate species were selected for hardiness in the sites where they were planted.

Hikers who visit Effingham to climb Green Mountain and visit the fire tower will be happy to know that the state has appropriated funds to repair the tower. The project was slated to begin in May and end in late summer. It would halt deterioration of the tower and ranger cabin and restore the structure for the future needs of fire observers and the ongoing enjoyment of visitors.

The roadside litter cleanup brought out 34 volunteers, who netted total of 205 bags of litter. Not sure if this is good news or bad news, but it eclipsed the previous record of 138 bags. The haul included about a dozen bags collected by the Effingham Masons on Route 153.

The high proportion of Bud Light cans in the collection prompted ECC volunteer Sis Levesque to contact Anheuser Busch to see if they offer any sort of support to organizations cleaning up after their customers. Apparently, they do. Communication continues, to determine what we get from whom, and how we get it. I guess when you shovel up after

Clydesdales, cleaning up after slobby drunk drivers is a logical extension.

UNH Extension hosted a Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) public input session on Wednesday, May 12, at the AMC facility in Crawford Notch. Emelyn, Jack and Kamal attended. The WAP will be updated in the fall.

ECC is researching a possible trail on conservation properties on the shore of Province Lake, to add to resources already available to residents and visitors. Members plan to examine the site to determine if it will support an access point and trail.

Freedom

2015 marks the 10th anniversary of the Freedom Town Forest. While some residents visit the forest often, there are many who have yet to enjoy the many trails, ponds, and unique habitat that are found in the 2,000+ acre forest.

To celebrate this anniversary, the town of Freedom will be including activities in the forest during Old Home Week, the first week in August. Hay rides touring the forest on maintained trails will be a highlight. There will also be hikes guided by members of the Freedom Conservation Commission. In the past ten years, the forest stewardship plan has been the blueprint for transforming the forest into a place that can be enjoyed by all. We look forward to what the next decade will bring.

Notes from Down Stream—Saco River Trash Clean up is July 25

By Dennis Finn

Join volunteers for a day of fun on the Saco River on July 25 when the Saco River Corridor Commission (SRCC) will partner with local Boy Scouts and host a clean up of the River.

Local Boy Scout troops will pool their efforts to collect as much trash as possible from Skelton Dam To Cataract Dam from 8:00-5:00. Other partners include the Maine Warden and Forest Services, the

Saco and Biddeford Fire & Rescue Depts, and the Biddeford Public Works Dept.

For more information or to learn how you can help volunteer on this day, please call [\(603\) 915-0651](tel:6039150651). To register as a volunteer you may also email info@sacosalmon.com Hope to see you there!

Dennis Finn is the Executive Director of the Saco River Corridor Commission and may be reached at 207-625-8123.

Save the Date! 2015 Summer Calendar

Thursday June 18, 2-6pm “Bikers for Clean Water”, Windows to the Ossipees overlook Route 16, Ossipee. In celebration of Aquifer Appreciation Day, GMCG will be selling Hotdogs and Lemonade, and raffle tickets. A Harley-Davidson donated gift basket valued at \$250 is the top prize along with other local restaurant gift certificates. Proceeds to support GMCG youth water literacy projects in local elementary schools and summer camps. Co-hosted by the Ossipee Conservation Commission who will also have a display at the overlook.

Saturday July 18, 3-6pm Heron House Conservation Center Groundbreaking Ceremony 196 Huntress Bridge Road, Effingham. Learn how you can be part of the new office renovation project; take a tour of the property and meet the building committee. Light refreshments and music provided by Vocalist-Harpist Jane Wilcox-Hively. RSVP at 539-1859.

Saturday August 15 4-7:30pm Annual Fundraiser Dinner and Auction, Province Lake Golf Club. Featuring guest speaker Freddie Wilkinson, Madison resident, professional climber and guide, and the author of “One Mountain Thousand Summits: The Untold Story of Tragedy and True Heroism on K2.” (see article in this newsletter). Early purchase discounted tickets go on sale June 15th—July 15th. Call the office and check the website to learn more about the fantastic auction items, social hour and dinner menu.

Thursday August 20, 5 pm Volunteer Celebration 196 Huntress Bridge Road, Effingham. GMCG invites all Board, Committee, WQM, and special projects volunteers and GMCG supporters to the annual volunteerism party so GMCG can celebrate “A job well done... we couldn't have done it without you”. Bring yourselves and a chair. GMCG will provide the BBQ and plenty of conversation about the summer's successful projects. Please RSVP to Matt and Tyler at info@gmcg.org and let us know you are coming! Smores too! 603-539-1859

Saturday August 22, (rain date: Sunday August 23) Explore Green Mountain with Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. There will be two hikes. Join us for both or what fits your schedule. 9 am –11:30 will be an easy morning hike to learn about additional land conservation on adjacent property. Forest Society education land conservation staff will offer a guided tour of a 261-acre tract of scenic forest in Effingham that includes dry red-pine and pitch-pine and a unique forested wetland along scenic Leavitt brook.

Afternoon hike via High Watch Trail to summit of Green Mountain. Noon to 3:30 pm. The most popular hiking trail to the summit of Green Mountain is a 2.6-mile round-trip with 1,200 feet of elevation gain to the summit elevation of 1,883. The wooded trail on the mountain's north side is a great family hike, combining soft pine-needle covered trail with short steep, rocky sections for variety. Great trail leads to the picnic table and fire tower at the top. Along the way, we'll point out beech, hemlock, maple, oak and spruce. We'll talk about the wildlife habitat and water quality of the Ossipee River watershed. **Meet at High Watch Road. Please register to receive directions and details at 539-1859.**

Sunday September 20, 3-7pm Fall Music Festival “Loons, Tunes and Spoons”, Freedom. Family friendly event taking place on Ossipee Lake at the Calumet Conference Center. Hopefully a repeat of last year's wonderful weather, loons and sunset enjoyed right on the water. A selection of local music and local produce will be available. Bring your picnic, there are plenty of tables, and meet other watershed friends. A small donation of \$5/pp is requested to help defray expenses.



***Your Membership Makes a Difference.
Every drop counts! Thank you!***

*(Please make checks payable to Green Mountain Conservation Group 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** __

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Are you interested in being a GMCG Volunteer? YES



If you missed March Membership Renewal Month, PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY and encourage your family, friends and neighbors to join GMCG. GMCG is a non-profit 501 (C)3 tax-exempt organization funded by grants, memberships, and donations. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**



P.O. Box 95
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www.gmcg.org
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The Watershed News

Save the Dates

JULY 18th
Breaking Ground
Heron House

August 15th
Auction/Dinner

Fall Newsletter
submissions due September 10

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

NATURE SPEAKS TO THOSE WHO LISTEN...



Sign up for event updates with *Watershed Happenings* and stay in the flow! Sign-up at www.gmcg.org