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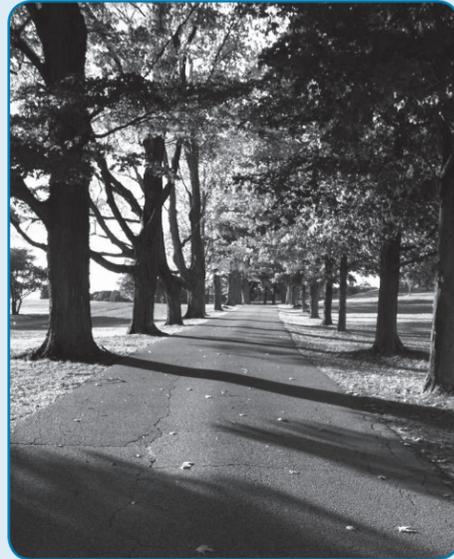


Explore the Watershed!

There are endless recreational opportunities in the Neponset River Watershed. This season, stay local—take a day or two to explore—and discover the treasures of our beautiful region!

A few of our favorite places include:

- **Ponkapoag Pond Loop Trail and Bog Boardwalk, Canton.** Park at the Ponkapoag Golf Course (behind our office) for easy access to the trail.
- **Museum of American Bird Art at Mass Audubon, Canton.** Located on a 121-acre wildlife sanctuary, the museum houses Mass Audubon's extensive art collection.



Walk down Maple Ave. in Canton (at the Ponkapoag Golf Course) to pick up the Ponkapoag Pond Trail.

- **Borderland State Park, Sharon.** Enjoy walking on woodland trails, or fishing and canoeing in the ponds. Tour the historical Ames Mansion. (Check their web site for tour dates and times.)
- **Blue Hills, Canton/Milton.** Hike along the Summit Trail for views of the Neponset Valley and city of Boston. Explore over 125 miles of scenic trails, with varied terrain.
- **Stony Brook Reservation, West Roxbury/Hyde Park.** Ten to twelve miles of hiking trails and bike paths meander thru quiet, forested areas.
- **Quincy RiverWalk, Quincy.** Begin at the Adams Inn and walk two miles to Squantum Point, or Marina Bay.

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**Neponset River
Watershed Association**

The Watershed Association is a member-supported conservation group founded in 1967 to protect and restore the Neponset River, its tributaries and surrounding watershed lands.

2173 Washington Street
Canton, MA 02021
p 781-575-0354
staff@neponset.org
www.neponset.org



Fall-Winter 2014

Neponset News

Protecting Our Water, Wildlife and Land

Giving Thanks for Those Who Get Things Done

As the sun began to rise, Mary Pat arrived at the spot where School Meadow Brook meanders through the woods and crosses underneath Pine Street. She unpacked her gear—four sample bottles, thermometer, depth-line, clip-board and the Watershed Association's special invention, the "bridge buddy"—and began gathering water samples that will tell us about the health of this neighborhood stream.



We depend on the energy and enthusiasm of our members and volunteers.

This scene was being replicated at sites across the watershed as dozens of other people took their own samples in much the same way.

By 7:30 Mary Pat delivered her samples to Judy—one of three local Drop-off Coordinators—at the Walpole Senior Center. By 7:45, Judy struck out for Watershed Association office in Canton, carrying thirty

samples from eight water-testers. In Canton, the samples from all four drop off centers—about 125 bottles in all—were checked and loaded into the trunk of Kate's car. At 8:45 am, Kate headed north on Route 93 to deliver her cargo to the lab in Winthrop for analysis.

Mary Pat, Judy and Kate are all volunteers. Like all 200 people who volunteered in all kinds of ways over the last year, they are having fun while making a tangible difference in their community.

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CWMN: Citizen Volunteers

Our annual Citizen Water Monitoring Network (CWMN) program wrapped up for the season on October 30. Volunteer samplers visited 41 different sites around the watershed and took water samples for us once a month during the warmer months of the year.

Samples are crucial to understanding how water quality is changing over time. We test for bacteria, nitrogen, phosphorus, chlorophyll, pH, dissolved oxygen, and temperature, and report our data to local, state, and federal agencies to guide decisions about projects in your neighborhood. The data are also published on our web site.

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Director's Corner

Giving Thanks!

As my staff and I were deliberating on a theme for the fall newsletter, many ideas were tossed about, but the one recurring theme that kept coming up was how much we appreciate and depend on our members and volunteers. So we decided to dedicate this issue to those people and the extraordinary things that they do.

While our small staff can help coordinate efforts on a large scale, more often than not, the implementation of those efforts is only possible when members and volunteers heed the call to help. After all, the Neponset River Watershed takes up over 120 square miles, spread across fourteen communities, inhabited by 330,000 people. As energetic as the staff is, they can't possibly address all of the tasks that the Watershed Association would like to accomplish.

From river cleanups to water sampling, and outreach to advocacy, watershed residents have proven time and again that they care about what is happening in their communities, and can be counted on to volunteer in all kinds of ways.

Our members and volunteers are Watershed Association's secret weapon as we work to fulfill our mission to "protect and restore the Neponset River, its tributaries and surrounding watershed lands for the benefit of present and future generations."

Their generosity of spirit enriches everything we do at the Watershed Association, and for that, we say, "thank you."

Sincerely,

Ian Cooke
Executive Director

Getting Things Done

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Water testing is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the role that volunteers play around the watershed.

Mary, Terry, Taber and Martha came to downtown Boston a few weeks ago to press the Patrick Administration to speed the clean-up of PCB contaminated sediments.



Volunteers at the Annual Meeting

Les shares his passion for geology by leading nature walks. Erin, our volunteer college intern, is researching stormwater pollution and protecting fish habitats in Pine Tree Brook. David rallied 40 of his colleagues from the Pile Driver's Local 56 to clean years of accumulated junk from the river in Hyde Park. Anna comes in twice a week to help around the office. The list goes on and on.

The Watershed Association is extremely fortunate to have so many volunteers who care about the future of their communities, and we are extremely grateful for their time, energy and expertise. To learn more about how you can help as a volunteer, contact Ian Cooke (cooke@neponset.org) or Nancy Fyler (fyler@neponset.org).



Upcoming Events

Saturday, December 6 at 2 pm

Tour of Quincy RiverWalk

Begins at Squantum Point, Quincy

Join Watershed Association Advocacy Director, Steve Pearlman, Landscape Architect, Pete Jackson, DCR staff, and the Quincy Park Department's Environmental Treasures Program, for a walk along the new Quincy RiverWalk.

Meet at the parking lot at Squantum Point. Bring water and be prepared for a 4 mile (round trip) walk.

Wednesday, January 7 at 7 pm

Movie: "DamNation"

Discussion will be led by

Executive Director, Ian Cooke

Morrill Memorial Public Library, Norwood

Join the Watershed Association and Norwood's Together Yes, for a free screening of "DamNation". This powerful film goes across America to explore the sea change in national attitudes—from pride in big dams as engineering wonders to a growing awareness that our future is bound to the life and health of our rivers.

Please RSVP to both events by emailing Nancy Fyler at fyler@neponset.org or 781-575-0354 x307.

Original Photography for Sale

Recently, the Bean & Cream Cafe in Hyde Park was home to a remarkable photography exhibit by Martha McDonough, Jim LaFond-Lewis, Tom Palmer, and Lee Toma. "Meet the Neponset" was designed to bring community awareness to the Neponset River in Hyde Park – its history, its needs, and its beauty throughout the seasons.

The photos from the exhibit are now available for sale on our web site www.neponset.org. Proceeds from the sale will help to defray the cost of the exhibit and support future river clean-ups.

If you would like to purchase a photo, contact Kristina LaFrance at lafrance@neponset.org or 781-575-0354

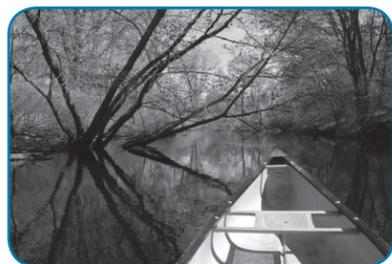


Photo by Tom Palmer

CWMN: Citizen Volunteers

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We would not be able to complete such a rigorous program without the contributions of our dedicated volunteers, who take water samples, measure dissolved oxygen at five to six sampling locations, manage sample drop-offs at four locations, help with sample check-in at the office, measure pH, and deliver water samples to the laboratory. We owe a tremendous deal of thanks to these folks for making the 2014 season such a great success!

Special thanks also goes to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Laboratory, which provides lab support for the program, as well as to the Boston Water and Sewer Commission, Milton Department of Public Works, and Westwood Department of Public Works, all of whom partner with us on this important work. Lastly, a considerable amount of thanks goes to our corporate and individual members, whose dues and donations provide critical financial support for our clean water programs.

CWMN Volunteers Needed for Next Year!

We are always looking for new volunteers for our sampling program. Becoming a water sampler or other volunteer with the CWMN program is a fun way to make a difference in the water quality in your neighborhood. To be eligible to volunteer you must be available between 6-7:30 am one morning a month, have your own transportation, and be interested in having some fun outdoors. Training and sampling equipment are provided by NepRWA.

To learn more about volunteering, or to find out if a sampling site near your house is available for next spring, contact Sarah Bounty at 781-575-0354 x 302 or bounty@neponset.org.

Volunteer Spotlight: Martha McDonough



The Neponset River in Hyde Park is a whole lot cleaner because of community organizer Martha McDonough and her legion of volunteers, who planned and helped execute the fourth Annual Neponset River Clean-up in Hyde Park

this past September. Other notable members of the planning team include Rita Walsh, Barbara Baxter, Lisa Consalvo, Tim McCarthy, Gerri McElmoyle, Stephen McGuire, and Elisa Birdseye.

Martha is a retired school teacher and long-time Hyde Park resident, who enjoys canoeing on the river and taking walks around Fowl Meadow. She is also an avid wildlife and landscape photographer, and helped to organize the photography exhibit, "Meet the Neponset", which was on display from July-October at the Bean and Cream Cafe in Hyde Park. Martha's goal for the exhibit was to show the community a different side of the Neponset, and encourage neighbors to keep it clean, and protect it for future generations.

Ever the teacher, Martha continues to educate us about conservation and teamwork, and we are thankful for her dedication toward improving the watershed.



Quincy RiverWalk Had Many Supporters



Advocacy Director, Steve Pearlman, began working for the Watershed Association in 2003, and one of his first assignments was to help create a 2 mile public walkway along the Neponset River Estuary in Quincy. Eleven years later

on September 30, 2014 the Quincy RiverWalk officially opened.

Nearly all of the Neponset's waterfront land in Quincy is privately owned, but a major turning point took place in 2003, when a residential riverside development, known as Neponset Landing, was proposed. As part of the project, the developer planned to limit public access to the waterfront, but with help from the Quincy Environmental Network's (QEN) Steve Perdios and Maura O'Gara and others, a group of 22 citizens came together to appeal the permit applications for the project.

After several years of hard-fought negotiations, the developer agreed to build an 8-10 foot wide walkway along the waterfront

on four separate parcels of land, as well as at the Neponset Landing Public Park. With those parcels agreed upon, there remained just one "missing link" in the RiverWalk, a connection from the pathway around Boston Scientific (which had been negotiated several years earlier by volunteer Tom Palmer) to the state's Squantum Point Park, at the mouth of the Neponset River. Fortunately, Steve Perdios from QEN sat on the Quincy Community Preservation Committee, a group which administers funds for such projects, and in 2013, with the help of the Committee's staff person, Lisa Aimola, and the approval of Quincy Mayor Thomas Koch, the Committee provided over \$100,000 to construct that missing link this past summer.

It took more than 10 years to complete the Quincy RiverWalk, and we are forever grateful to those who supported the project: Quincy City Councilors Margaret Laforest, Douglas Gutro, and Kevin McCoughlin; the Quincy Environmental Network; our friends from the Department of Conservation and Recreation; and many additional citizen advocates and volunteers from Quincy.

The Quincy RiverWalk is the latest addition to the DCR Neponset River Reservation.