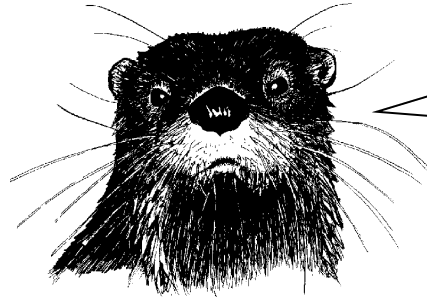




Farmington River News



Save paper, get FRWA newsletters online and see our photos in their full color glory! Go to www.frwa.org to sign up.

Issues and Activities in the Farmington River Watershed.



True grassroots organizing !

Local Group Finalizes a Wild and Scenic River Plan ...Just in Time for a National Call to Action

After three years of intensive study and community outreach, the Lower Farmington/Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Study Committee is putting the finishing touches on its advisory management plan for the lower river corridor. The plan contains detailed description of features that make the Farmington River and Salmon Brook eligible for federal Wild and Scenic River designation: remarkable geology, water quality, biological diversity, cultural history, and not least, recreational opportunities for anglers, paddlers, and users of riverside trails and greenways. The plan also shows that the waterways are relatively well protected by existing town regulations. The plan goes on to present recommendations for improving river stewardship in future. It is a blueprint (though a completely non-regulatory one) to guide collaborative river management when the lower Farmington corridor is designated a Partnership Wild and Scenic River.

Now that the plan is complete, and endorsed by the lower river towns, Representative Chris Murphy will introduce a bill to Congress this year proposing Wild and Scenic designation for the lower Farmington (the upper Farmington was designated in 1994). Coincidentally, this year the Obama administration released its report on the America's Great Outdoors Initiative—and it calls for exactly the kind of collaborative, locally-driven action that is typical of Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers. The AGO summary states, "The federal government should... expand support for community-based restoration and conservation of water resources. These locally supported restoration projects may result in enhanced fish passage, habitat restoration and connectivity, water-based recreation, flood control, traditional uses, and adjacent land-based recreation." One of its recommendations is to "enhance and restore local waterways and the surrounding land by partnering with state, local, and tribal government and the private sector to support community efforts." We couldn't have said it better! And others agree that the Wild and Scenic partnership works: in 2007, Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers were cited as one of the Top 50 Government Innovations by Harvard University's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation.

If designation and funding prove to be a long process in this political and fiscal climate, we former Committee members will not sit idle. Plenty of lower-cost action items in the management plan can be started right away by enterprising friends of the river. Given the motivated mix of town representatives, plus stakeholders such as the CT DEP, Stanley Black and Decker, and FRWA, you can expect to hear that we are moving forward!

For more information on the Plan and the AGO report, see page 3.



The Farmington River Watershed Association

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The Farmington River Watershed Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of the Farmington River and its Watershed through research, education and advocacy.

www.frwa.org

SPRINGTIME REVEL!
a Farmington River Watershed Association Benefit
ANNOUNCING! RENOWNED PERFORMANCE ARTISTS

MICHAEL MOSCHEN
"In Mr. Moschen's hands, juggling becomes a balletic art..."
- New York Times

BOB BERKY
"Berky squeezes laughter from people like juice from an orange."
- Express News

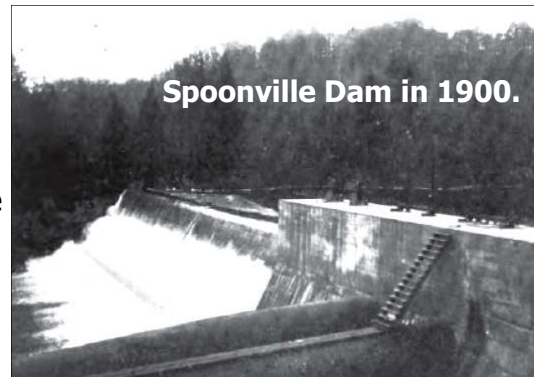
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intimate concerts & creative cuisine
Norfolk, Connecticut

Wed., April 20th @ 7:30 PM
www.InfinityHall.com or 1-866-666-6306
Tickets \$35 and \$50

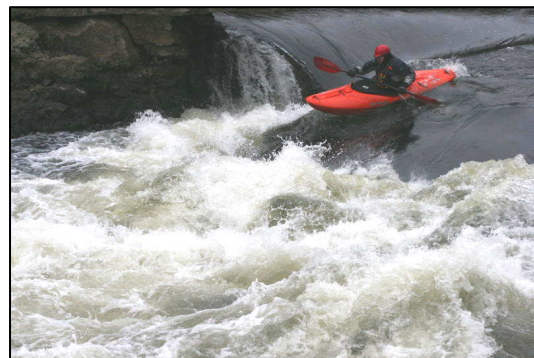


License Plates Make a (Dam) Difference

The Annual Farmington River Cleanup demonstrates that when we all work together, tons of cast-off items can be removed from the river. That concept even applies to a particularly large item, namely Spoonville Dam. No, concerned citizens did not literally haul the dam out— it's 2,000 cubic yards of solid concrete, and still very much in the river—but many of you did purchase Long Island Sound license plates. And in December, FRWA was awarded a grant from the Long Island Sound License Plate Fund, providing the first \$500,000 toward full removal of the dam.



Sited just below Tariffville Gorge, between the East Granby and Bloomfield banks of the river, Spoonville Dam was one of the very first hydropower dams anywhere to supply electricity to a city (Hartford) from a remote location. Its life as a hydro dam ended when the flood of 1955 tore out one end of the dam and destroyed the generating facility. Since then, the river has poured through the dam's breach in a powerful cascade, delighting whitewater kayakers but keeping most migratory fish from swimming upstream past this point. The dam's present owner, Connecticut Light and Power, a subsidiary of Northeast Utilities, has no plan to re-build the dam and supports removal.



Shooting the breach in the dam, 2010.

According to the engineering designs, removing the dam will not jeopardize the whitewater kayaking run in Tariffville Gorge, though kayakers will lose the dramatic chute through the dam itself. By eliminating this very narrow bottleneck in the river, dam removal will reduce water velocity enough so that blueback herring, alewives, and shad can finally resume their historic routes upstream to about 50 additional miles of breeding area. Removal will also improve safety for boaters, anglers, and swimmers.



DEP Fisheries Biologist **Steve Gephard**, DEP Long Island Sound Office Grants Coordinator **Kate Brown**, and FRWA Executive Director **Eileen Fielding** are wearing half-million-dollar grins!

Over the next year or more, we will continue to raise funds (another \$1 million) and obtain the permits for taking out Spoonville Dam. Meanwhile, we want to extend a huge THANK YOU to all of you who have Long Island Sound license plates! Along with FRWA, Connecticut DEP, and CL&P, YOU have helped move a big project one step closer to completion!

(Cont. from page 1)

For More Information...

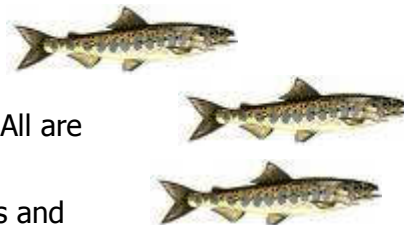
To see a recent draft of the **Farmington River / Salmon Brook Management Plan**, go to: <http://www.lowerfarmingtonriver.org/wp-content/uploads/draft-management-plan-1-6-111.pdf>.

Plan **maps and figures** are at: http://www.lowerfarmingtonriver.org/wp-content/uploads/final_draft_management_figures1110.htm

The **America's Great Outdoors Report** is at <http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov/>



Volunteers Invited to Release Salmon (Very, very small salmon...)



On March 15, FRWA will host an update on the Atlantic Salmon Restoration Project, and once again sign up volunteers to help stock salmon fry this spring. All are invited to attend the presentation, whether or not they wish to volunteer.

Wild Atlantic salmon have been locally extinct since the early 1800's due to dams and pollution. The Atlantic Salmon Restoration Project is a multi-year, multi-agency effort to restore salmon to their historic spawning areas. At the March 15 presentation, a DEP Fisheries biologist will give an overview of the project, and describe what is expected of volunteers.

The Salmon Stocking Workshop is on Tuesday March 15th from 7 - 9 pm at the Farmington Library, 6 Monteith Dr., Farmington. Please call FRWA at (860) 658-4442 ext 205 to register.

Catch a Cowabunga! Moment in the Gorge

The New England Whitewater Triple Crown Championships, a premier whitewater competition on the Farmington River in Tariffville Gorge, will be held on **April 9 and 10.**

The Triple Crown Championships bring two days of elite canoe and kayak paddling featuring a Downriver Wild Water Race, Whitewater Slalom and Freestyle. FRWA is one of many local sponsors of this event.

Tariffville Gorge is located between the Bloomfield and East Granby banks of the river. Spectators reach the riverbank via Spoonville Road and Tunxis Avenue in East Granby. Bring your camera!

For more information, visit www.tvilletriplecrown.com



Yes, this photo is right side up! Jessie Stone, U.S. Freestyle Team member (and T'ville "local") flips in the Gorge. © Dan Burns, danburnsphotos.com

Springtime **Revel!**

On April 20, be amazed, laugh out loud, and personally meet two world-class performers in the intimate setting of Infinity Hall in Norfolk. It's a benefit, so you can indulge your spring fever and support river projects too! **And all FRWA members at the Revel can choose a free item that night from FRWA's shop!** Details on p. 2.

"There's Gold in Every River"

Please join us on **April 14 from 5-7:30 pm** at Selig Jewelers in Simsbury for an Farmington River Watershed Association fundraiser. Selig jewelers will be buying back gold, so bring your unwanted or seldom worn gold jewelry and exchange it for cash. There will be a chance to actually pan for gold right in the store. **Bill Selig will give a short talk on minerals and gems and how rivers influence them. Yes! There's gold right in our Farmington River.** Help us help FRWA and join us for a truly golden and fun filled evening! Refreshments will be served.

Rain Barrel Pickup Days

Save water from your roof to water your yard! Once again, FRWA is distributing barrels for the New England Rain Barrel Company. Rain barrels will be sold for a significant discount from the usual price of \$119.95, with part of the proceeds going to FRWA. They are distributed mostly on a pre-order basis, with a limited number available for purchase on the day of distribution. Stay tuned to frwa.org/events.html for more details!

To get your rain barrel you just need to do two things:

1. Pre-order one from the New England Rain Barrel Company by calling (877) 977-3135 or order from their online store at www.nerainbarrel.com, and mention that you are ordering for an FRWA pickup day.
2. Pick-up your pre-ordered rain barrel at the distribution site. This year's sites are:

June 4: Farmington Library, 6 Monteith Drive, Farmington

June 5: Collinsville Canoe and Kayak, 41 Bridge Street (Route 179) Collinsville, CT

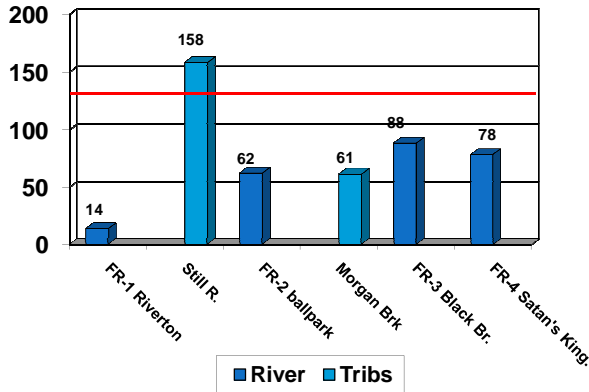




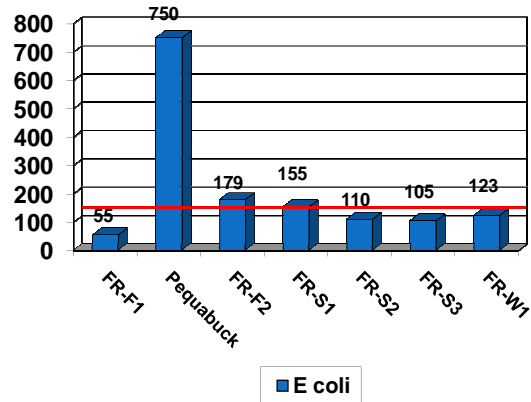
Water Quality Monitoring 2010

Last season FRWA regularly monitored water quality at 35 sites in the Watershed with help from our diligent volunteer water monitoring team. From April through November we monitored chemistry, metals and bacteria at 15 Upper River sites in the Farmington River from Riverton downstream to New Hartford and also in the Still River, Mad River and Morgan Brook Tributaries. Upper River samples were analyzed by the MDC water lab. Bacteria levels were monitored weekly for 20 sites in the Lower Farmington River and tributaries throughout June, July and August in our Idexx Colilert bacteria lab housed in the Simsbury Sewage Treatment plant.

Upper Farmington River CT Geo mean *E. coli* 2010



Lower Farmington River, Pequabuck River Geo mean *E. coli* 2010

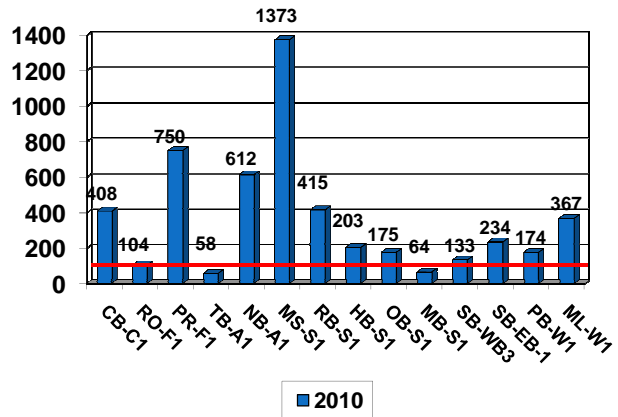


As shown in the graphs above, the Still River in the Upper Watershed and the Pequabuck River in the Lower Watershed continue to add significant levels of bacteria to the Farmington River.

Results for the tributaries (at right) show that Minister Brook (MS-S1), a low flow stream, has increasing levels of bacteria that may be related to increased development upstream.

FRWA will continue to monitor water quality this coming season; we plunge into the Upper River soon after the ice goes out and start sampling in the Lower River the first week of June. Please contact us if you have any water quality concerns in the Farmington River Watershed.

Lower Farmington River Tributaries Geo mean *E. coli* June - August 2010



News from the Invertebrates: RBV Biomonitoring in 2010

Last Fall FRWA conducted two "Rapid Bioassessment for Volunteers" (RBV) workshops, sampling nine Farmington Watershed streams. RBV is a method for collecting macroinvertebrate community data that can quickly reveal either very good or very poor water quality. The protocol classifies stream macroinvertebrates as:

- most wanted** (types of species typically found in streams with outstanding water quality);
- moderately wanted** (types found in outstanding to good water quality); or
- least wanted** (types found in all types of water quality, including poor).

Locations with 4 or more of the "most wanted" types are considered by the CT DEP to fully support the State water quality standard for aquatic life.

(Continued on next page)

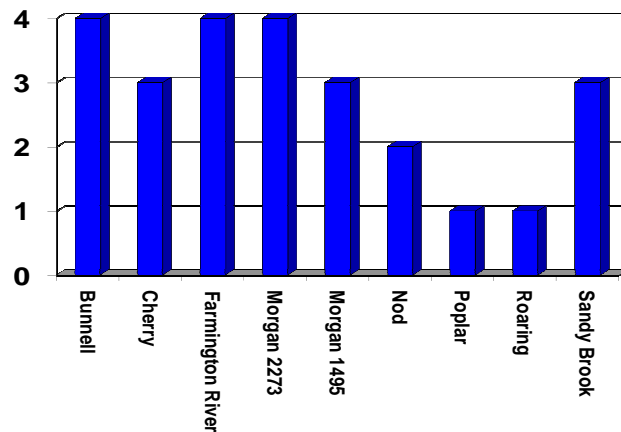
(Continued from p. 5)

Biomonitoring in 2010

Of the nine sites sampled, Bunnell Brook (upstream of Route 179), Morgan Brook (upstream of Route 318) and the Farmington River (upstream of Town Bridge in Collinsville) yielded 4 or more “most-wanted” macroinvertebrates. Sites with 3 or fewer “most wanted” are not definitively degraded but may be reviewed further.

Thanks to Mike Beauchene of the CT DEP, Winding Trails and the Farmington River Coordinating Committee for hosting the RBV workshops, and especially to all the volunteers who make this program a success!!

Number “most-wanted” 2010



Updates from Upstream

One of FRWA’s tasks is to find river stewardship projects that are going undone, and find a way to do them. That brought us to the Farmington’s headwaters in Massachusetts in 2010, to assess stream crossings and aquatic organisms.

A stream crossing survey examines whether road crossings over streams obstruct the movements of aquatic animals. Road crossing construction sometimes results in a raised streambed under the road. The raised section may sit too high above the natural streambed to allow aquatic organisms travel up or downstream as needed. This can result in reduced and inbred populations, or local extinctions.

With hundreds of crossings to choose from, we needed to set priorities. Project leader Mike Jastremski chose to survey drainage areas close to important habitats, as identified by the Massachusetts Living Waters program. This season, we gathered data on 57 crossings; identifying the most critical barriers will come later on in this 3-year study, after surveying 100 or more crossings.



Karen Stainbrook, WAA scientist, checks water quality.

A second priority in Massachusetts is to keep up with surveys of benthic (bottom-dwelling) macroinvertebrates, mostly insect larvae, that are important indicators of water quality. Because of state cutbacks in benthic sampling, some Farmington watershed sample sites in Massachusetts were slated to be skipped. FRWA enlisted Watershed Assessment Associates, based in Schenectady, NY, to consult with the MA DEP and arrange to sample sites that would otherwise be missed. WAA sampled two locations on the Clam River, two on the West Branch of the Farmington, and single sites on Hubbard Brook, Sandy Brook, Fall River, and Valley Brook.

A first look at macroinvertebrates in the field gave a broad-brush picture of water quality in the upper Farmington— as expected, generally good. Precise analysis, to detect more subtle clues to water quality, is ongoing over the winter. Examining these hundreds of tiny creatures will provide one more piece in the puzzle we call “the state of the watershed.”

Funded by the Massachusetts Environmental Trust, from purchases of MA environmental license plates.



New Members: Won't You Join Us?

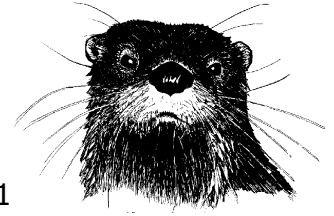
If you are not a member of FRWA and are reading this now, think about this: **What does the Farmington River Mean to You?** Does it make you think about heading out for some hiking, fishing or kayaking? Or do you drink the water coming from your tap that had its origins in the Barkhamsted Reservoir? Membership with FRWA has lots of benefits, including protecting this area's local treasure. See below for great member benefits.

You can show your membership card at these participating businesses for special discounts. [If you don't see your favorite retailer listed here, consider asking them if they will provide our members benefits. Call to give us the contact details or have them call us.]

- Discounts on FRWA events & 20% discount on FRWA merchandise
- **NEW!** Third night free when you stay two nights, Maplewood Lodging, Otis, MA 413.269.7351 www.maplewoodlodging.com
- EMS in West Hartford & Avon - 10% discount excluding bikes & boats 860.651.8031
- 10% off any service at Tunxis Medical Massage, LLC 860.761.4081
- 10% discount on in-stock accessories at Collinsville Canoe & Kayak Store 860.693.6977
- \$5 off canoe rentals at Huck Finn Adventures, Canton 860.693.0385
- 10% off purchases over \$50 at Vincent Sports Shop, Inc., Simsbury 860.658.5419
- 10% off framing of FRWA posters - Artful Framer, Avon 860.678.1321
- 10% discount at Blue Sky Foods, excluding catering 860.379.0000
- 10% discount at Joe's Bait & Tackle, Windsor Locks 860.623.7980

Our Newest FRWA Member!

Aimee Petras, our Education & Outreach Coordinator welcomed a baby girl, Tessa Roqia, 6 lbs 9 oz on February 8th, 2011. Welcome to the FRWA community Tessa! We can't wait to take you out on the river.



Please cut out the form below and mail it back to us, or go online to www.frwa.org and click on "Donate Now!"

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Check one: **I want to renew my membership now:**
 \$40 (Individual) **\$60 (Family)** **\$120** **\$250** **\$500** **\$_____ other**
 New Member
 \$10 **\$25** **\$40** **\$60** **\$120** **\$150** **\$250**
 Gift Membership to _____
 In Memory donation to _____
 Other Donation Amount, please specify: \$ _____

Please send acknowledgment to (if different from above):
Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
____ I have enclosed my check payable to FRWA, or please charge my ____ MasterCard or ____ Visa.
Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Amount \$ _____
Name on Card: _____ Signature _____

Please send to: Farmington River Watershed Association, 749 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070
Credit card donations may be phoned in to Aimee Petras at (860) 658-4442 x. 201 or submitted online at www.frwa.org via our secure online contributions server.

FRWA Spring 2011 Calendar of Events

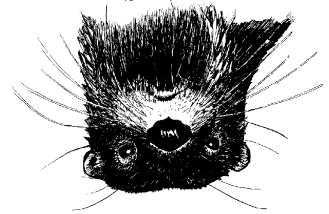
<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
March 15	Salmon Stocking Workshop	Farmington Library
April 14	Gold Event at Selig Jewelers in Simsbury, 5 - 7:30 pm	Bill Selig Jewelers, Simsbury
April 20	Springtime Revel with Michael Moschen & Bob Berky	Infinity Hall, Norfolk, CT
June 4	Rain Barrel Pickup Day, Farmington	Farmington Library (Main)
June 5	Rain Barrel Pickup Day, Collinsville	Collinsville Canoe & Kayak
June/July	Stay tuned for canoe trips TBA!	

Please RSVP to (860) 658-4442 ext. "0" to ensure we have adequate food and supplies for all events. Check the Events page at www.frwa.org for more information on our events.



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