



October 2014

RiverWatch

THE NORTH AND SOUTH RIVERS WATERSHED ASSOCIATION, INC.
Protecting And Restoring The Rivers Since 1970



*Great River Race
2014 photos
by Lynn Wilson.*

24th Annual Great River Race one of the best ever! *Building Stewardship by Having Fun*

Drawing families into fun activities that build love and appreciation for our rivers is key to our strategy for expanding long term support for stewardship, and for our Association. The Great River Race (GRR) – this year’s was on August 9 – is a wonderful, family friendly community event. Great River Racers paddle with the incoming tide up the North River for 7 miles from the Union/Bridge St bridge

in Marshfield /Norwell to the Old Washington Stone bridge in Hanover/Pembroke. Along the way they see the only Scenic Protected River in the state!

This year’s participation was fantastic with 103 boats, the weather was sunny, the river like glass, and the enthusiasm and excitement were palpable. The event was fun for everyone! We list the winners in different categories on page 6. *continued, page 6*

THE NORTH AND SOUTH RIVERS WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

The mission of the North & South Rivers Watershed Association is to preserve, restore, maintain and conserve in their natural state, the waters and related natural resources within the watershed.

Our goals are to:

- Restore the water quality of the rivers by identifying and correcting adverse impacts;*
- Encourage stewardship of the watershed through public education, outreach and recreation programs; and*
- Promote responsible growth by working in partnerships to preserve open space, scenic vistas and sensitive natural resources.*

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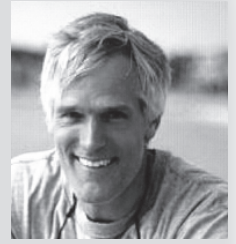
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Letter from the President



In my first year as president of the board I have had the chance to meet and interact with many thoughtful and dedicated individuals who are all drawn together by a single cause: that of keeping the rivers pristine and healthy for the years and decades to come. I have also had the chance during my time as president to fully appreciate how important it is for the NSRWA to maintain its financial health. I can attest to the fact that each year, the staff and board spend a great deal of time going over budgets, focusing on fundraising, and watching expenses closely as we pursue our mission.

Every year is a challenge, and there is little cushion or certainty that gives us the confidence we need to plan from year to year. And while we have an endowment, it is indeed modest and we have taken pains not to draw from it in its current adolescent state.

So this year, we have decided to focus on promoting the long-term financial health of the NSRWA by creating a North and South Rivers Legacy Circle. This Circle is made up of individuals who have committed to support the NSRWA with a gift in their will. My wife and I decided that we would commit. My parents – who have lived just up the lane from the river since 1964 - followed suit. And in discussing the concept, I discovered to my delight that other people I knew had also already included the NSRWA in their bequests.

It's a strong start. But as a community, I think we can do a lot more. So we are actively promoting this concept in the months to come. Those who join us in this Legacy Circle in 2014 or 2015 will be recognized as Founding Members. It would be comforting to know that, decades from now, the NSRWA is still actively safeguarding the rivers we enjoy and treasure. The Legacy Circle is a way to help make that happen. We look forward to hearing from those of you who can join us in the Circle.

Sincerely,
Peter Kelly-Detwiler
NSRWA Board President

Thank you to New or Renewing River Guardian Circle Members

River Guardian Circle members are our most generous, making donations of \$500 or more. Their generosity is the foundation for making the NSRWA a strong and effective voice. Below are those who joined or rejoined since mid-June 2014. Thank you!

Individuals

Dick Cullen
Kathleen & David Donahue
Peter & Julie Kelly-Detwiler
William Earley
Donna Burrell & Jane Eggerstedt
Peter & Roberta Fairbanks
John Grady
Valmai Hilton
Richard & Barbara Johnson
Sandra & Peter Moll
Karen & Bert O'Donnell

Martha & Dick Twigg
Susan & Michael Wolfe
Samantha Woods & Lanny Day

Organizations and Businesses

Billington Sea Kayak
Dancing Crow Yoga
Horsley Witten Group
L. Knife & Sons
Rice, Heard, & Bigelow
Rockland Federal Credit Union
Scituate Federal Savings

North and South Rivers Legacy Circle Created

*to Recognize Those
Who Provide for NSRWA
in their Estate Plans*

Legacy Circle Founding Members eligible through 2015

Conservation requires eternal vigilance.

We fight to make the North and South Rivers healthy, beautiful, and fun not only for ourselves, but for our children and grand children and those who will come after.

To help assure that NSRWA will be strong and effective into the future, a first group of benefactors is leaving bequests to our Association in their wills. These generous individuals will be recognized as the first group of our Legacy Circle Founding Members:

Herb and Pauline Emilson
Betsey and Robert Detwiler
Peter and Julie Kelly-Detwiler
Craig and Danny Hannafin
Richard and Jackie Leach

We encourage other members to consider leaving bequests to NSRWA, and those who do so through 2015 will forever be recognized as Legacy Society Founding Members. To join or find out more about the program please contact Samantha Woods at 781-659-8168.



Providing River Access

Promoting water-based education

Improving access to the rivers and promoting water-based education are high priorities. 2014 brought considerable achievement, but leaves challenges for this fall and next year:

- The Corn Hill Woodland trail system was extended down to the North River for a new river front trail loop, one of our goals for this year;
- Marshfield endorsed initial funding for our proposed canoe and kayak launch on the South River, and seeing this project through to completion will be a goal for 2015;
- The Town of Duxbury will definitely be joining our Water All Around You 5th grade education program, and we are hoping that Hanson will approve funding this fall for that town to join as well;
- Our Science Fridays in the Shed excursions, now in the program's second year, were again oversubscribed.

North and South Rivers Legacy Circle Profile

Bob and Betsey Detwiler have been members of the NSRWA since its inception and recently joined our Legacy Circle as Founding Members and hope others will consider doing the same. They wrote,

“The reason we decided to join the Legacy Circle is because we feel strongly about the preservation of natural resources. We have children and grandchildren who love the outdoors, and we want to continue the tradition of caring for and preserving the rivers. If everybody does a good job of taking care of their local natural resources, they will continue to be there for future generations.

We have a great respect for the people who put their heart and soul into preserving our natural world. To support them financially is both a duty and an honor.”



2014 Benchmarks of River Restoration Progress

First Herring Brook

New state funding authorized for reservoir and fish ladder improvements

The challenge in restoring fish passage to this tributary is that it's an integral part of Scituate's water supply system; both the Reservoir Dam and Old Oaken Bucket Pond Dam must stay in place. The solution has always been some combination of water conservation, raising reservoir levels, improving fish ladders, and managing water releases so that there is enough flow in the spring for herring to get up stream, and enough in fall to get back to the ocean.

We are very proud of the effective partnership we have forged over the past decade with state and federal agencies and the town of Scituate, bringing to bear our own science based monitoring, modeling, public education, and advocacy. Water use has dropped substantially. Flows have been better managed. Two years ago the first herring were counted above the Old Oaken Bucket Pond Dam in many decades. And last year structural improvements were begun.

Early this year, the state awarded a grant to fund detailed planning of next steps, which will include raising reservoir levels and the fish ladder exitway, and these studies were accomplished in the spring.

Looking ahead, the big challenge will be funding the implementation of these substantial structural changes. And we are extremely pleased that, through the efforts of Representative Cantwell, the recently passed state Environmental Bond Bill authorized \$1.3 million for the work, and free fish passage in the Brook took a large step closer.

But even with substantial momentum behind this program, much work remains for the next years. The funds are "authorized," but it will be up to the next governor to set priorities and allocate them. Much advocacy and education is before us.

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Above: Old Oaken Bucket Pond fish ladder with streamflow release on 9/12/14 to allow herring fry to return to ocean and to maintain stream habitat downstream of the dam.



Scituate Reservoir photo taken 9/12/14 with moderate drought conditions. If the spillway can be raised and the ladder modified this condition will be lessened providing more water supply capacity to the town to withstand droughts and the herring will be able to use the fish ladder in the fall to return to the ocean.

2014 Benchmarks of River Restoration Progress



Aerial photo of what remains of the Mill Pond impoundment on the Third Herring Brook upstream of the dam to be removed.



Measuring mussel spat.

Third Herring Brook

Mill Pond Dam coming down this fall!

Restoring free flows to Third Herring Brook has been a top priority for years, the goal being to remove the first three dams (at Tack Factory Pond, Mill Pond, and Petersons Pond) and provide fish ladder passage past the Jacobs Pond Dam.

Our newsletters have reported regular, step by step progress towards removal of the Tack factory Pond and Mill Pond dams, and this fall should mark a major milestone: a contractor is about to be selected to remove the YMCA Mill Pond Dam, and it is on track to be the first dam ever removed on the North or South Rivers.

And in another step forward, the Norwell and Hanover Conservation Commissions will begin review of removal of the Tack Factory Pond Dam over the next few weeks. When these two dams are gone, unimpeded fish passage will be restored from the ocean all the way to the Hanover Mall.

South River

Dam removal funding authorized

2014 is proving to be a big year for the South River! We persuaded the state's Division of Ecological Restoration to designate the river a "Priority Restoration Project" this spring, and \$40,000 has been allocated for a feasibility study of removing the Chandler Pond Dam, the largest impediment on the river. Beginning this fall we will be working with the private owner of the dam and the Town of Duxbury to plan next steps.

Adding additional momentum to South River restoration, the same bond bill that helps to fund 1st Herring Brook restoration also authorized \$650,000 for removal of the Temple Street and Chandler Pond Dams, and clearing cranberry bog sluiceways further upstream.

Mussel Enhancement Project Begins in North & South Rivers

The blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) beds in the North and South Rivers have anecdotally declined substantially since the 1980's. This decline has been primarily attributed to a limited commercial harvest, although in recent years other causes like invasive green crab predation have possibly played a role in reducing the abundance of mussels in the rivers. The NSRWA and Mass. Bays are working with Marshfield and Scituate to enhance the blue mussel population, which would have positive impacts on water quality and the ecology of the estuary, as well as provide an additional local shellfish resource.

This summer we began an effort to raise mussels using two separate approaches, with an end goal of being able to re-establish mussels on hard-bottom areas that are currently lacking mussels by protecting them from predation while they are still growing large enough to survive. We collected 300 ~25mm (1 inch) mussels from a dock in the South River and transplanted them into culture socks to grow up in the North River. We also deployed spat collectors (essentially mesh pompoms meant to replicate algae) in the North River to provide a surface for mussels' planktonic larvae to settle upon. We pulled 300 mussel spat (average length 2.5mm, or about 1/10 of the size of their larger relatives in the culture socks) off the collectors at the end of July and placed them in mesh bags to grow. As of the end of August they had grown to an average size of 5.4mm. We will try to provide you regular updates on the growth of our "babies"!

Great River Race 2014, continued from page 1

In addition to our traditional anything you can paddle race, our own Watershed Ecologist generously donated her time and talents to raise money for the Association by swimming the entire 7 mile race! This was the second time Sara has swum the river to raise funds and awareness regarding the issue of stormwater pollution and water quality in our rivers. What better way to share with people both the need for swimmable water and the concern that after large rain events our rivers typically are not safe to swim in due to high bacteria (see our water quality results for this summer on page 7.) Thank you Sara and to your donors for raising over \$3,000 for the NSRWA!

The immediate motive for the GRR and many other events organized by our Association is to share a great day on the river with friends and neighbors. But we also fully expect that when kids and families are introduced to the beauty, the wildlife, and the clean water of the North and South Rivers, they will want to come back, experience the rivers again, and learn more about them.

Our hope and further expectation is that participants in these events will become supporters of further river conservation measures, and will want their own kids and grand-kids to be able to enjoy the rivers generations from now.



Sara Grady getting ready to swim 7 miles from Union Street Bridge to Old Washington Street Bridge! Photo credit: Selfie

2014 Great River Race Winners (full results available online at nsrwa.org)					
First Name	Last Name	Partner(s)	Class	Time	Place
Scott	Weiss	Kerry & Lauren Weiss	Canoe Family	1:35:15	1st
Ed	Haplin (SR)	Pete Olson (SR)	Canoe Men	0:59:40	1st & 1st SR
Stephen	Herrmann	Sam Herrmann	Canoe Men	1:09:04	2nd
Andrew	Lalli	Dom Di Pietro	Canoe Men	1:15:43	3rd
Andrea	Shaw	Sean Shaw	Canoe Mixed	1:06:28	1st
Ty	Dell	Madison Dell	Canoe Mixed	1:07:24	2nd
Mark	Fenton	Lisa Halbower Fenton	Canoe Mixed	1:09:26	3rd
Lisa	Doherty	Christina White`	Canoe Women	1:27:06	1st
Delaney	Shaw	Madison Brown	Canoe Women	2:43:38	2nd
Neil	Oliwa	Tim Ayers	Kayak Double	0:59:32	1st
Alex	Russo	Brett Muirhead	Kayak Double	1:06:24	2nd
Scott	Mackeil	Amy White	Kayak Double	1:07:34	3rd
Ryan	Caffyn-Parsons		Kayak Single Men	0:56:37	1st
Bev	Barnard		Kayak Single Men	1:01:01	2nd
Shane	Perl		Kayak Single Men	1:01:34	3rd
Jack	Lamarre (SR)		Kayak Single Men	1:04:59	1st SR
Jeff	Goodale (SR)		Kayak Single Men	1:19:39	2nd SR
Dan	Leary (SR)		Kayak Single Men	1:23:05	3rd SR
Debra	McCarthy		Kayak Single Women	1:05:06	1st
Eileen	Murphy		Kayak Single Women	1:13:40	2nd
Nanci	Lamarre (SR)		Kayak Single Women	1:18:13	3rd & 1st SR
Mary L.	Hayes (SR)		Kayak Single Women	1:24:31	2nd SR
Joyce	MacLellan (SR)		Kayak Single Women	1:24:32	3rd SR
Kathryn	Robichau	Lisa Raad	Rowing Fixed Seat Double	2:02:59	1st
Craig	Wolfe	Chad Wolfe	Rowing Sliding Seat Double	0:52:53	1st/Fastest Time
Peter	Kelly-Detwiler		Rowing Sliding Seat Single	0:56:26	1st
Thomas	Maloney (SR)		Rowing Fixed Seat Single	2:51:08	1st & 1st SR
Prentis	Craig		Standup Paddle Board	1:38:22	1st 2nd & Best
Paul	Wilson		Standup Paddle Board	1:41:42	Decorated!
Erin	Duff		Standup Paddle Board	1:41:42	3rd

Great River Race Sponsors

Overall Race Sponsor
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L Knife & Sons
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Courtney Walsh
Samantha Woods

Upcoming Outdoor Events

Third Annual Run for the Rivers: South River 5k

Sponsored by Scituate Federal Savings Bank
Sunday October 12, 2014 at 9 am
Starts at Rexhame Beach, Marshfield

Get out your running shoes and join us for the third Run for the Rivers – South River 5k! Enjoy the beauty of the South River and help raise funds for the NSRWA to continue our mission to protect and restore our river resources. This 5k loop will traverse up and down the beautiful South River, going over two bridges and starting and ending at Rexhame Beach. Families and walkers also welcome! Registration is online at nsrwa.org The first 35 registrants get a NSRWA water bottle and all registrants receive a durable reusable shopping bag filled with goodies.



Shellfishing on the South River

Saturday November 1st at 11 am

Celebrate the shellfish beds opening November 1st! Limited space available on the boat please reserve your spot and sign up online.

NSRWA's 21st Annual New Year's Day Walk

Thursday January 1, 2014 at 1 pm
Iron Mine Brook Trails Hanover

Join the NSRWA for its 21st year of ringing in the New Year together by exploring conservation lands in our watershed. This year's walk will be located at Hanover's new Iron Mine Brook Trails – located next to the boat ramp at the Indian Head River these new trails were recently completed by the Hanover Open Space Committee. No registration needed this event is free and open to the public. More info will be available at nsrwa.org

North and South Rivers Water Quality – Clean Enough to Swim and Eat From?

The NSRWA has been sampling water quality at 10 sites along the North & South Rivers for 21 years to evaluate the health of the rivers. This volunteer-driven program monitors the rivers every other week during the summer. This year's results confirm the rivers' water quality is very good during dry weather and met the water quality standards the majority of the time. After a heavy rain, however, like we had on July 17, 2014, the rivers suffered from stormwater pollution as evidenced by higher bacterial counts. For the past summer our rivers designated shellfishing areas (near the mouth of the rivers) met the standard 77% of the time and the rivers met the fecal coliform swimming standards 93% of the time. To view the full results visit nsrwa.org.



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NSRWA 44th Annual Meeting

Friday, November 7, 2014 7 pm
South Shore Natural Science Center

Keynote speaker: Brad Chase, Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries
"The Health of Our River Herring Fishery"

- ❖ Wine, cheese and clam chowder 7 – 7:30 pm
- ❖ Business meeting: election of board directors and vote on changes to the NSRWA Bylaws – bylaw revisions available online at nsrwa.org
- ❖ Board Nomination Slate: New Members Tom Pratt and Edie Kirk
- ❖ Volunteer of the Year Award: Jencie Stewart
- ❖ Barbara Pearson Award: SSYMCA for removing the first dam in our watershed