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# ◆ The Watershed News ◆

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Volume XVI, Issue I II

Summer 2012

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

## Van de Poll to headline 14<sup>th</sup> Watershed Weekend

The Green Mountain Conservation Group invites you to the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Watershed Weekend on July 28 at Camp Calumet in Freedom. Join watershed neighbors for a fun day of activities that will culminate in a keynote address by Dr. Rick Van de Poll, *Healthy Waters, Healthy Communities—the Ecology of Our Water*. Rick will present a compelling narrative of watershed ecology that will inform and inspire.

“Good quality water is a fundamental right. Like clean air, wildlife, and national parks, it lies in the public domain. Yet in going from cloud to ground and ultimately rivers and lakes, water typically passes through private land. For most people in New Hampshire, this private land is where they derive their drinking water from,” said Dr. Van de Poll.

Rick’s company performs natural resource inventories throughout New

England, with an emphasis on biodiversity conservation. Since 1988, they have conducted land assessments and written management plans for over 150,000 acres for local and state land trusts, state and federal agencies, municipalities, and private individuals. Rick was also a professor at Antioch University and Plymouth State University, where for many years he taught field based natural resource courses and directed a field studies program.

Rick is well aware of the unique water resources in the Ossipee Watershed. Not only is he a resident of Sandwich, but he has participated in many natural resource inventories in the area and has been a strong partner with GMCG.

“Of the 1.3 million residents in this state, over 60% depend upon the quality of water they get from groundwater wells. Over 44% get

their water from on-site groundwater wells. Why is it then that in our state, over 330 groundwater contamination sites have been recorded, with at least one from nearly every New Hampshire community? What factors are contributing to this and what can we do to mitigate its ultimate impact on our clean drinking water supplies? Perhaps more importantly, what can we do to ensure that our surface and groundwater is safe for wildlife as well and thereby protect the very fabric of aquatic ecology?,” Van de Poll said.

Watershed ecology is Rick’s passion and he always delivers a fabulous presentation. Please invite your friends and families and join us for Watershed Weekend on the 28<sup>th</sup>! For more information visit [www.gmcg.org](http://www.gmcg.org) or call 539-1859.

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## Watershed Weekend to feature Wonders of the Ossipee Watershed - W.O.W.!

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The theme of this year’s Watershed Weekend is Wonders of the Ossipee Watershed (W.O.W.!), and the fun filled day will feature three new family friendly events from 1:00-5:00 pm at Camp Calumet on July 28. Americorp Volunteer, Stephanie Doyle has worked with youth to create art inspired by natural resources. This creative art “happening” is the Youth Coalition’s *W.H.Y. (Watershed Hope is YOUTH)* Project, and will be featured under the tent where visitors will find hourly presentations about the installed art. There will be poetry, dance and a short play, and attendees will also be invited to create their own paintings, drawings, gelatin prints, poems or books about the natural resources of the watershed. There will be face painting and juggling all afternoon.

Other family activities include:

- \* Guided hike up Mary’s Mountain with David Gagne, who will point out wildlife along the trail to the summit
- \* Pontoon boat excursions on Ossipee Lake with NH Fish & Game.
- \* Get wet and explore for BUGS with naturalist, Barbara Bald! Barbara has been applying her skills to help students conduct macroinvertebrate biological surveys of streams. This is a great event for kids (who are encouraged to dress up as their favorite bug!)

Youth will also present Handel’s *Water Music* before Dr. Van de Poll’s talk, *The Ecology of Our Water*. If you would like to contribute artwork to the Wonders of the Ossipee Watershed exhibit, call Stephanie Doyle at 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 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.

### Board of Directors

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### Staff

Executive Director, Blair Folts  
 Program Director, Eric Senecal  
 Youth Coordinator, Stephanie Doyle

## Help protect important Phillips Brook wetlands

This summer, GMCG has an exciting opportunity to purchase 102 acres of land in Effingham that is the Phillips Brook wetland system. Please join us on July 6 for the kickoff fundraising celebration to learn more about how you can help. There will be an Ice Cream Social at the Effingham Historical Society from 6:30-8 pm. Ellen Snyder, a wildlife biologist with Ibis Wildlife Consulting in Newmarket, will give a presentation on the diverse natural resources in this wetland.



Ms. Snyder just completed a Wildlife Management Plan on the property. In her report she identifies some key elements that highlight the natural resource values of the property. Effingham lies within a 68,000 acre forest block identified by The Nature Conservancy as an important "matrix forest block." Such areas represent the best remaining areas across the state and region to protect large, intact areas of unfragmented forests and wetlands, critical for the protection of wide-ranging animals as well as forest interior species, such as some songbirds. A significant feature of this matrix forest -- the Pine River Forest Block -- is the size and extent of wetland complexes that occur within the area. These peatland ecosystems represent some of New Hampshire's largest and best condition wetland ecosystems. The Phillips Brook drainage is part of the

overall wetland diversity and the property is within the Pine River Forest Block.

In a recent wetlands inventory completed by Dr. Rick Van de Poll, the Phillips Brook drainage was listed as one of the eleven exemplary wetlands in Effingham. This brook flows north into Ossipee Lake at Leavitt Bay. Phillips Brook is also one of the nine water quality monitoring sites that GMCG samples all year.

Water quality monitoring partner,

Michelle Daley, at UNH Water Resources Center was excited to learn about efforts to conserve this property and said, "We have worked with GMCG on water quality monitoring for many years and support the efforts to protect this natural area so that future generations can enjoy clean water in Leavitt Bay." Not only will protecting this land help

protect water quality, but one of the greatest functional values of this wetland is flood water control flowing off the slopes of Green Mountain.

In addition to wetlands, one third of the property supports a mixed upland that includes productive hemlock, white pine and mixed hardwood. In New Hampshire Fish and 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.

Members of the Land Trust Committee will be on hand to answer questions and schedule guided walks for anyone interested. Contributions for this project may be made to GMCG and all gifts are fully tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

## Lake sediments should reveal interesting story

By Eric Senecal

Over a couple of days in late spring, Lisa Doner, a paleoecology research scientist with Plymouth State University's (PSU) Center for the Environment, went out on Ossipee Lake with volunteers to collect sediment cores from the long-undisturbed depths. We were trying to answer an elusive question: How much phosphorous was present in historic times? While there are many watershed groups and lake associations throughout New England that are monitoring surface water quality, few are fortunate enough to be able to answer this important question, which can help us understand the impact of landscape change on our natural resources.

GMCG teamed up with PSU following a recommendation by Jeffery H. Taylor & Associates, Inc. in their 2011 report that prioritized additional research for watershed planning. They recommended that sediment cores be obtained from the lake in order to determine the natural background levels of phosphorous (and other nutrients) over the last few hundred years. This added information will help determine the pre-development

nutrient input to the lake and the changes to the lake during the period of European and American settlement. Some examples include land clearing for pasture, the Ossipee River dam installation, and recent population growth and development. Sediment cores will also help establish a historic record from which to understand the river and lake water quality data that GMCG volunteers have gathered over the last decade.

The objective of coring is to collect an undisturbed vertical column of sediment that represents continuous accumulation over a long period of time. A simple apparatus consisting of a 50 cm long Plexiglas tube with a one-way valve, topped by a heavy brass weight, is used to penetrate the lake bottom and retrieve the sediment.

On the water, the team navigated to the deepest spot on each bay to collect sediments that most likely had not been disturbed or lost by erosion. The goal was to obtain samples of continuous sediment accumulation in order to capture the most complete historic record.

Once over the deep spot, the boat was anchored for stability and the exact depth determined. This allowed the coring tube to be momentarily suspended just above to the lake bottom where it was then released and allowed to freefall into the muck. As it was hauled back to the surface, the core stayed intact through the partial vacuum created by the one-way valve at the top of the tube. When it neared the surface, the bottom of the tube was capped underwater before the one-way valve broke the surface.

Back at the PSU lab, intact cores were then sub-sampled at 1 cm intervals and analyzed for total phosphorous, carbon content and particle size, among other characteristics. If enough sediment was obtained in the eight inch long cores we should soon know more about the history of the dynamic Ossipee Lake system and how the modern lake condition fits into longer term trends.

This sediment analysis overlaps with analysis of GMCG's first ten years of surface water quality data. Together they will help us identify watershed protection planning and priorities and research questions that need further investigation (see article on page 5). We anticipate being able to present preliminary findings to watershed communities by late fall. Stay tuned!

For more information, contact Eric Senecal at 539-1859

*GMCG would like to thank Jim and Charlotte Fitzpatrick of Ossipee, and Kevin Price of the Ossipee Lake Marina for generously providing use of their boats to enable the team to get out on the lake. Thank also to Ed Green for his great piloting on the water.*



*Lisa Doner holds a retrieved core while it is capped. Most cores measured 8 inches - did we get enough? Inset shows a core of gravelly sand atop clay from the Leavitt deep spot which is adjacent to the channel - it likely represents a scour basin with recent storm sediments (Irene?) over eroded glacial sediments.*

## 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.*

### Freedom

The Freedom Conservation Commission has two subcommittees; the Forest Advisory Committee and the Freedom Aquatic Invasive Species Committee (FAISC). Their roles are to address funding, policy, and professional and volunteer projects in the town-owned tracts of land and on water bodies in town. I

The FAISC (a.k.a. The Weed Corps) deals with milfoil management. The plan for 2012 includes new maps provided by NHDES recommending treatment on 10 acres during 2012. The town was awarded a state grant for 2012 of up to \$3,387 for herbicide and up to \$5,463 for diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH). The committee will continue NHDES/volunteer surveys of local water bodies, and continue communications efforts with the community. The Danforth Bay follow-up treatment (DASH/hand pulling) will occur on 10 acres max.

FAISC is pushing for DASH/hand pulling as the primary strategy for 2012. FAISC results for 2011 include: 16 acres of Danforth Ponds treated with 2,4-D herbicide; 6 days of DASH (mostly on Danforth plus Broad Bay); survey of Danforth which reported no plant re-growth; and a NHDES survey on which showed re-growth. Some areas are still weed free, but other areas reduced to 90% effectiveness. There were three new finds of milfoil in Ossipee and Freedom reported by abutters and verified by FAISC. FAISC also provided volunteer support to Effingham and Ossipee for their milfoil efforts and participated in the Rt. 25 boat ramp hearing to push for boat inspections.

### Ossipee

The Ossipee Conservation Commission is moving along on the signage for the Windows Kiosk. Elizabeth Gillette has stepped down to alternate status and Evan Gaj will be our new Managing Lake Host person. He has hired Lynn Clarke and her son to be paid Lake Hosts. They will be covering both the Rt. 25 and Pequawket ramps. A dead loon was found off of Totem Pole on May 20 with a puncture wound to the lower abdomen. The Loon Center was notified and they and picked it up. It

was a magnificent bird. The Loon Center said that sometimes other males, when staking out their territory, will kill another one, coming up from underneath and stabbing with their bill. Georgia and John MacDonald from Totem Pole found him. They have been very dedicated volunteers on the Working Group and managing the Ossipee Lake Natural Area.

### Effingham

On Saturday, April 28, Effingham Conservation Commission (ECC) held its annual spring roadside cleanup and barbeque. Though the turnout was low, and our *Keep Effingham Litter Free* partners were able to collect 94 bags of trash. A big thanks to all who participated. ECC also held our annual Effingham Elementary School Earth Day Poster Contest. This year's theme was "Be A Friend To All Of The Earth". One poster was selected from each grade and awarded a prize (see photo below). On Tuesday, June 8, the Master Plan Committee hosted an alternative energy forum at the Elementary School to learn about various alternative energy sources that could help the town, homeowners, and the environment.

## SRCC Downstream Notes

Dennis Finn, executive director of the Saco River Corridor Commission, was unable to submit an update for this issue due to a serious injury he sustained during routine water quality monitoring. This was a valuable reminder to all GMCG staff and volunteer monitors about potential risks of working in the field alongside moving water. Ironically, the high water forced Dennis to take measurements at a shallower spot which made the difference between him falling into the river with a debilitating injury and him being able to walk away. Thankfully he is OK. We look forward to an update from SRCC in the Fall and wish Dennis a speedy recovery.



*Effingham K-6 students displaying their award winning School Earth Day Poster Contest posters. The theme was "Be A Friend To All of the Earth"*

## Watershed protection planning - Where do we go from here?

By Eric Senecal

This summer, GMCG will be assessing its water quality database in preparation for a statistical analysis of the first ten years of water quality data, in partnership with UNH's Water Resource Research Center. This is a particularly exciting time as we near the 2002 goal of obtaining ten years of reliable data in order to establish a baseline from which to assess water quality within the Ossipee River watershed. While ten years may sound like a long time, the NH Department of Environmental Services and EPA have long established that ten years of data is the standard from which to begin meaningful analysis of trends in water quality. Thanks to hundreds of dedicated volunteers, we are almost there.

Through deep water sampling by the Ossipee Lake Alliance, GMCG, and the summer Camps on the lake, we already know that Ossipee Lake has little remaining capacity to assimilate phosphorous and maintain its high quality water designation. Phosphorous concentrations are presently near or

above eight parts per billion, a critical threshold in freshwater systems, but where is it coming from? What about chloride and nitrogen? What about dissolved oxygen? What areas of the watershed are more vulnerable to land use change? Where should communities prioritize watershed protection planning? And what is the "natural" condition of the lake? These questions we hope to begin to address through analysis of the data and other supplementary research like the sediment coring carried out this spring (see page 3) so communities can identify watershed planning priorities.

By November of this year, preliminary results of water quality data analysis will be ready for presentation to watershed communities, and GMCG will be working with planners and researchers to facilitate an understanding of the data at a community forum on the topic, "Where do we go from here?" We will keep you informed, as we hope to see you all there.

## What is a conservation easement and why is annual monitoring so important?

By Chris Young

Every time I walk a large piece of land, see a great expanse of forest, or drive past farm fields, I think about how important open space is to our quality of life. Not only is land valuable now, but for generations to come. Agricultural lands provide food, and forests provide fuel and building material. Something we often overlook is that open space is also relaxing and pleasant to look at. While these are perhaps the easiest scenes to observe and evaluate, another valuable land is the wetland. Wetlands are important for maintaining wildlife habitat, but most important is a wetland's ability to clean water, regenerate aquifers, and slow the waters from the onslaught of torrential downpours.

An important tool for land conservation is a conservation easement. When a conservation easement is placed on a property, the land retains its natural resource values while allowing the property owner to continue to live on and use the land as defined in the conservation easement.

When you buy a piece of land, you acquire rights to that land which may include the right to build a house, harvest timber, and farm the fields. A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement that allows a landowner to permanently limit the type and amount of development rights on that property while retaining private ownership.

Suppose you have a farm that has been in your family for a few generations, and you want to ensure that it will not

subdivided or developed in the future. You could donate or sell a conservation easement to a land trust and extinguish the development rights on that parcel. Conservation easements are designed to fit each property and owner differently. A land owner may also consider creating an exemption area on the land not governed by the easement so that future heirs might build on it.

When an easement is created, the document is recorded at the registry and the holder of the easement records the physical state of the property. This "baseline document" serves as a guide for yearly monitoring on the property. Annual monitoring is required to confirm that terms of the easement have not been violated. While this may not be important during the time that the land is still owned by the easement grantor, it is important as land changes hands over the years.

Knowing that organizations exist to help conserve land and protect working forests and working farmlands is a great relief to me and I find it rewarding to be a part of that process.

*Chris Young is GMCG's Land Trust Coordinator and a former Antioch Intern.*

## Hundreds of eastern brook trout released in Tamworth's Swift River

By Stephanie Doyle

On May 30 and 31 students from Ossipee and Moultonborough released over 300 juvenile Eastern Brook Trout into the Swift River. Three very dedicated 6<sup>th</sup> grade girls, Issie, Hannah, and Leanna from Ossipee Central School took time after school to release the fish from their classroom tank. Parents and the girls' teacher, Carolyn Hemingway, transported the tiny young fish from school to the Swift River in Tamworth where the fish will now call home. The following day 35 Moultonborough Central School 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from Maud Anderson's class released fish from their classroom into the Swift River as well, with the help of parents and Tamworth residents. Students enjoyed spending the day outdoors and felt good knowing that the eastern brook trout (EBT) they had been raising since early February were going to a good home. The Swift River meets the habitat requirements for the EBT, which include cool temperatures, shade and cover, well oxygenated water and a consistent source of food. Students were confident in their decision to release the fish at this location because of the water quality testing they performed last fall with Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) through the Volunteer Biological Monitoring Program (VBAP).

The trout were raised in these classrooms through a program facilitated by Trout Unlimited and NH Fish and Game called *Trout in the Classroom*. Through this program each school that participates is given 200 EBT eggs to raise in their classroom. This year with the help of GMCG, Moultonborough and Ossipee Central Schools received eggs in early February from the Powder Mill Hatchery in New Durham. Students took time daily to check for and remove dead eggs, as well as to test the water to make sure

it was a healthy environment for the eggs to be raised in. A blog was created so the students from Ossipee and Moultonborough could communicate with one another, give updates on their brookies, and share advice on how to trouble shoot problems. Both students and teachers enjoyed participating in the program and plan to be involved next year. "We were very happy we had so many healthy, happy trout to release into the healthy waters of the Swift River, where they will have the chance to grow even more", said Ossipee Central teacher Carolyn Hemingway. Thank you, to all the students at Ossipee and Moultonborough Central Schools who took care of the eggs and fry, and whose constant attention to water quality allowed the fish to flourish.



*Moultonborough 5th graders release trout into the Swift River in Tamworth.*

## Summer water quality monitoring

Exciting water quality monitoring getting underway this summer-Call if interested  
**Lake Assessment:** in partnership with Ossipee Lake Alliance and camps Huckins, Cody, Marist, Robin Hood, and Danforth Bay Resort. We'll test the deep spots in June, July and August and report findings at a community forum in November.

**Summer Tributary Monitoring:** We're looking for a few volunteers to monitor stream quality four times this summer. Every summer we monitor eight additional streams that flow directly into Ossipee Lake. You'll get to use sophisticated meters, spend a few quiet mornings outdoors, and learn about your stream.

**Well Water Testing:** Bring a sample of your well water on August 22 for free testing. This helps us evaluate groundwater quality and provides you with valuable information about your drinking water...for free.

**Volunteer Biological Stream Assessments:** Join us to help students conduct macroinvertebrate surveys of our streams in September. Come be outside with kids and learn from trained naturalists how to characterize the health of a stream.

### A CONSERVATION PIECE

In quiet woods I do find peace,  
 A subtle loosening of the leash  
 That tethers me to fleeting life.  
 That selfsame leash with age brings strife.  
 I own these woods by man made law  
 That seems to me a fatal flaw.  
 I gave these woods to bird and bear,  
 To squirrel and vole and snow shoe hare.  
 I walk these woods no longer mine  
 Through stately beech and oak and pine.  
 Mankind brings little peace to me;  
 I find it with the stately tree.

Stephanie Barnes  
 February 12, 2012

## Summer Calendar

**Friday, June 29 - New Hampshire Bats & White Nose Syndrome, Effingham Public Library, 12:30-2pm** Join GMCG and Speaking for Wildlife volunteer, Kamal Nath, for a look into NH bats, white nose syndrome, and what you can do to help.

**Friday, July 6 - Phillips Brook Wetlands Preserve - Ice Cream Social and Presentation, Effingham Historical Society, 6:30-8pm** Join the GMCG Land Trust Committee and learn more about how you can help conserve Phillips Brook as GMCG begins a summer fundraising campaign to purchase 102 acres of exemplary wetland in Effingham. Ellen Snyder, wildlife biologist who recently wrote the Wildlife Management Plan for the property will give a presentation about the important natural resources found on the property.

**Monday, July 9 - River Runners Workshop, GMCG Offices, 10:00am-2pm - REGISTRATION REQUIRED**  
GMCG will host the NH Rivers Council for an invasive species identification workshop on the Ossipee River. Space is limited to 15 participants. You must provide your own canoe or kayak—GMCG can help if you don't have one. To register contact Beth Flagler at (603) 228-6472 or [BFlagler@NHRivers.org](mailto:BFlagler@NHRivers.org)

**Saturday, July 28 - Watershed Weekend, Camp Calumet, events from 1:00pm-5:00pm, dinner (\$12) at 5:30pm, and Keynote Address by Dr. Van de Poll at 7:00pm**

Watershed Weekend will feature outdoor family events, a youth art installation and art creation opportunities. Events from 1:00-5pm, optional dinner at Calumet (\$12), followed by an engaging presentation on the Ecology of Our Water.

**Thursday, August 4 - Household Hazardous Waste Day, Ossipee & Moultonborough Hwy garages, 8:30am-Noon**  
Dispose of up to 10 gallons or 50 pounds of hazardous household waste safely—Info: [www.lakesrpc.org/services\\_hhw.asp](http://www.lakesrpc.org/services_hhw.asp)

**Wednesday, August 22 - Free Well Water Testing, GMCG Office, Huntress Bridge Rd, Effingham 2:00-4pm**  
Pick up a bottle and instructions from The Other Store, Freedom Village Store, Freedom Town Hall, GMCG Office, Sumner Brook Fish Farm, or at Hazardous Waste collection day. Bring your bottle on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and test your water for pH, hardness, iron, chloride, nitrates, and conductivity.

***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/](http://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

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

### 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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Organization  
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GMCG  
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(603) 539-1859  
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# The Watershed News

**Save the Date...**  
**14<sup>th</sup>**  
**Watershed Weekend**  
**July 28<sup>th</sup>**  
**WONDERS OF THE**  
**OSSIPEE WATERSHED**

**Deadline for  
Fall Newsletter  
submissions is September 10th**

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



**THANK YOU!.....to the following businesses for supporting our 2012 Community Garden:**  
**In Ossipee: Windy Fields Farm, Clarks Grain Store, Indian Mound Hardware, Deer Cap Greenhouse**  
**In Tamworth: The Behr Farm**