

The Watershed News

Volume XVI, Issue III

Summer 2013

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

GMCG hires consultant to assist with Watershed Management Plan

Thanks to funding from New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, GMCG is please to announce that *FB Environmental Associates* of Portland, Maine has been hired to assist with the Watershed Management Plan for Danforth Pond and the lower bays of Ossipee Lake. This Watershed Assistance Grant is through the Clean Water Act Section 319 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

FB Environmental Associates is a small consulting firm that specializes in directing environmental planning, assessment, monitoring, mapping, and restoration projects for a diverse array of clients. The firm's associates have more than 120 years of combined experience working on land and water resource projects in New England. Forrest Bell developed the firm in 2001 while helping the Maine Department of Environmental Protection conduct comprehensive lake assessments for 30 phosphorus impaired lakes. Since then the firm has grown and provides several types of water and land consulting services to agencies, nonprofit groups and communities including several in the ME/NH border region including the Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance, Province

Lake Association, Lake Wentworth Foundation, Upper Saco Valley Land Trust, and now the GMCG.



Why all the fuss about “watersheds?” Watersheds are one of the best ways to define and care for places and the people, plants and animals that live in them. A watershed is an area of land that drains to one body of water—whether a stream, river, lake or bay. Every place—every lawn, every street, every farm, every business, every house and every church—resides in a watershed. What we do in those places affects the health of the greater watershed and all who depend upon it.

FB Environmental will combine

information from historical GMCG water quality data, satellite and aerial photos, field data, survey data from residents, and current land use and zoning information into a scientific model of the water quality of the lakes in order to identify sources of unwanted nutrients and determine how much the lakes can absorb before water quality begins to degrade. The Management Plan will use the developed lake model to assist in evaluating various scenarios for growth and provide town officials with information that can guide decisions affecting future development. Sites will be identified throughout the watershed that may pose a threat to water quality and the consultants will develop proposed recommendations to improve or protect water quality.

There will be a public meeting on July 24th from 6-8 pm at the Freedom Town Hall to meet the consultants and learn more about the Watershed Management Plan. We hope you can join us! We all live downstream and are all part of the Watershed! If you would like to volunteer on this project, please contact GMCG at 539-1859.

GMCG is seeking new and renewing members

When was the last time you renewed your GMCG membership? If you have renewed in 2013, thank you. If you have not done so in a few years, we would love to have you **back**. Your membership makes a difference so please consider becoming a dues paying member today.

Traditionally, GMCG membership renewal has taken place in January with the Annual Meeting. This will change in 2014 when the Annual Meeting will move to April. Please save the date of April 5th for the 2014 Annual Meeting. Membership renewal today will continue through April 2014.

GMCG's motto is “Health Waters, Healthy Communities” and

we fulfill our mission through a four fold process that includes, research, education, advocacy and also land trust work. Funding comes from grants, donations and **your membership**. We run a tight ship with bare bone staffing and tons of in kind support from volunteers, stakeholders and

partners. We are the only organization dedicated to conserving and advocating for natural resources in the Ossipee Watershed. Please take a moment to visit page 7 of this newsletter and send in your membership donation today.

Thank you and hope to see you on the water this summer!

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.

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 GMCG Youth Water Literacy
 Coordinator, Lynn Clarke

Phillips Brook Wetland Preserved



View of Green Mountain looking across Phillips Brook Wetland

By Chris Young

In April, the Phillips Brook Wetland Preserve was officially recorded as the property of Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG). One more wetland is now conserved and will continue to function as a recharge to our aquifer. This unique wetland also filters water, provides food for wildlife, and reduces floods in heavy rains.

The conservation of this land was made possible by many volunteers and donors and especially Effingham resident Stephanie Barnes, who donated the property to GMCG. We send a heartfelt "Thank you!" to Stephanie Barnes for her generous gift and her vision to protect wetland properties.

Stephanie's interest in protecting wetlands, stems from her personal experiences. She had seen water quality on Mirror Lake in Tuftonboro decline due to an increase in phosphorus. Between that and a love for land that lingers from her childhood in Northern Vermont, Stephanie was inspired to protect water and land in our area when she moved to the Ossipee Watershed. She has already helped individuals protect their own land and also donated other lands to organizations such as

The Nature Conservancy. Now she adds GMCG to the list of her good works. Carroll County has a wealth of wetlands and lakes and GMCG strives to work with the communities to conserve our vital water resources. Every wetland and aquifer plays an integral role in water quality. When they are compromised, water quality in streams, lakes and aquifers is threatened. The recreational use of water in our area is very important to the economy too. The Ossipee Watershed is known for its many rivers, streams, lakes and mountain forests. Our natural resources provide a base for our economy and diverse efforts to protect them are crucial. Conserving lands and protecting natural resources can be done in ways that also allow for growth.

Help GMCG preserve the water quality in our area and keep lands open for future generations to use. If you are handy with a map and compass, our land stewardship program could use volunteers. Find out how you can help by visiting our website or calling us at (603) 539-1859.

*Chris Young is GMCG's Land Trust
 Coordinator*

Empowering Youth and Improving Water Literacy

Over 100 students across four school districts in the watershed have been active citizen scientists this school year by collecting macro-invertebrates and conducting stream assessments in the fall, raising Eastern brook trout in their classroom and testing their drinking water for six different parameters this spring. From the beginning of the school year the youth begin learning foundational skills that connect them to where our water comes from and how land use and humans impact water quality. The students learn the difference between a watershed and an aquifer and build an intimate connection with local

rivers investigating the diversified life they support. These youth recognize the significance healthy water plays in sustaining a healthy future as well as how to advocate on Water's behalf to municipal and community groups. By the end of the school year each student has a greater understanding of our human interconnection, becoming more empowered to make a difference.

VBAP (Volunteer Biological Assessment Program), Trout in the Classroom and G.E.T. W.E.T. (Groundwater Education Through Water Evaluation and Testing) all include scientific procedures and protocol that must be administered

and followed by the students. After data is collected and more research has been done, the students collaborate sharing a presentation of their findings with adult decision and policy makers.



Freedom students from Lori Palmers 5th grade class sharing GET WET data at the Selectman's meeting June 3rd.

VOICES: Volunteers Offering Involvement Celebrating Environmental Stewardship

Welcome to our newest water quality monitors for the 2013 season. We are excited to have over 20 new dedicated volunteers on our Water Quality Monitoring team. Many of our faithful volunteers also returned to share their fondness and expertise

with our newest recruits at the April training. Thank you so much!

Thank you to Kamal Nath, Noreen Downs, John Shipman, and Charlotte Fitzpatrick for supporting the GET WET! school programs.

Thank you to our newest business

volunteer, Ossipee Lake Marina, for providing a pontoon boat in April for our early water quality sampling on the lake.

If you are interested in volunteer opportunities please give us a call at 539-1859.

Beth Earle retires as devoted GMCG Bookkeeper



When an organization is as small as GMCG it is not easy to say goodbye to anyone. But when it is someone who has played as many roles as Beth Earle has over the past 12 years, it is especially hard.

For six years Beth has been in charge of keeping track of the GMCG books. Prior to her role as bookkeeper, Beth served on the GMCG Board as

Treasurer. She has been involved with the organization since its inception and has not only been a loyal volunteer but has been a dedicated advocate for natural resource conservation.

It has been a pleasure to work with her and we will all miss her expertise, flexibility and laughter. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Beth for her hard work and willingness to use the kitchen counter as her desk!

GMCG would also like to welcome our new bookkeeper, Kris Hinkledey. Welcome, Kris!

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

The Eaton Conservation Commission has decided that repair of the existing heavily eroded and, at times, dangerous access trail to the top of Foss Mountain will not be undertaken. Instead, a new trail will be developed from Foss Mountain Road along the existing Brooks Pasture path, heading westerly and later, southerly to the peak. This is a wider, more easily accessed and maintained trail that will be free from the constant erosion problems at the present trail. A new parking area will be established once the planned-for logging near Brooks Pasture is completed this summer. The new trail will pass by the old Brooks farmstead and cemetery, both of which will be highlighted in a future kiosk/information board at the site. A grant from the Davis Foundation will help cover the expected costs. The ECC is excited about this new public access project.

Effingham

Effingham Conservation Commission is donating a white cedar picnic table for the summit of Green Mountain just at the

base of the fire tower. The table was made by R & R Woodworkers in Jackson and will offer a nice picnic spot for hikers to the mountain this summer.

The Commission's Vice Chair, Jack Williams, built and installed an ADA compliant hexagonal picnic table at the Larry Leavitt Preserve on Rt. 153, just north of the Historical Society, a great place for bird watching and listening.

The Commission broke its trash roadside pickup record this spring--138 bags delivered to the transfer station. The last record was 102. We don't know if this is good or bad, but we thank everyone who helps pick up trash when they can.

KELF-Keep Effingham Litter Free.

Ossipee

The boating season is underway and summer visitors have begun to arrive on the lake. The OCC was awarded a Lake Host grant from the NH Lakes Association for 2013, and outreach got underway Memorial Day weekend. The OCC is planning a mailing to property owners on the lake to help raise awareness of milfoil. Ron Adams was voted to continue as Chairman with Lynn Clarke as Vice Chairman.

The second annual Get Wild at Summer Brook event is scheduled for August, 10th from 10-3. This year, the "Forever

Locked" display will be part of the celebration to share our local natural resources with the community. Anglers of all ages are welcome. Children under 15 will get their first fish free.

Tamworth

The Tamworth Conservation Commission welcomes new alternate members Shanon Maes, Eric Dube, and John Watkins, but has lost long-time member Margaret Rieser. Ned Beecher, who has led the Commission for many years, has stepped down but will remain an active member. Taking his place as Commission chair is Nelson O'Bryan.

Tamworth voters chose to eliminate the town's wetland ordinance in the March elections. While the Commission no longer deals with subjects which came within the scope of the town ordinance, it still comments on state wetland permit applications as necessary.

The Commission is currently working with the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests to obtain conservation easements on two parcels which abut conserved land.

Last year the Hikin' Heron's program was initiated to draw attention to the town's series of hiking trails. The program has been favorably received and will continue this year.

Notes from Downstream

By Dennis Finn

Over the last couple of years, the Saco River Corridor Commission (SRCC) has reviewed and attempted to incorporate the findings from a study performed by Nextera Energy and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries which identifies high priority stream segments representing prime or potentially prime fisheries habitat. Some of the more interesting findings to come out of the document indicated that many stream segments in the Maine portion of the Saco Watershed were impediments to fish passage due to blocked or otherwise inoperable culverts. This was particularly true for Brook Trout and Atlantic Salmon. Fish that use these streams and ultimately the culverts that connect stream segments rely on them for connectivity with both perennial and intermittent stream segments. We were surprised, not by the conclusions, but rather by how ubiquitous and important these culverts were. Of course, culverts are everywhere. They can be found on nearly every roadway connecting surface waters and yet they are overlooked in terms of maintenance. While the report and the accompanying atlas outline measures to locate and

correct the problems are specific to Maine, it was a sobering thought that the often overlooked culvert played such a key role in fisheries management.

Every spring the Saco River Corridor Commission begins our water quality monitoring program with renewed vigor and a fresh start. Not always an easy task when one considers the fluctuating and inconsistent economy, the specter of global warming and the seemingly never ending pressure on our region's natural resources. As we approach each new testing season, the one area that *has* been consistent and actually, quite refreshing, is the always upbeat, always focused Green Mountain Staff. Over the years, GMCG staff has always been wonderful to partner with. How can they not be! Blair Folts leads by example and directs her staff with the dedication necessary to get the job done with grace, persistence and cheerfulness. From the SRCC to GMCG we wish you a safe and productive sampling season and many thanks for all you do upstream.

Dennis Finn is the Executive Director of the Saco River Corridor Commission in Cornish, Maine. He may be reached at 207-625-8123

GMCG celebrates its 12th year of Water Quality Monitoring

Year round, volunteers for the Green Mountain Conservation Group are monitoring the water quality of our rivers, lakes, and streams within the Ossipee/Saco River Watershed. There are many different programs that take place throughout the year depending on the season but none would exist without our dedicated citizens who contribute an incredible amount of time and commitment.

Regional Interstate Volunteers for the Ecosystems and Rivers of Saco (RIVERS) is in its 12th year of data collection for long term water quality tracking. From May to October data is collected at 27 sites throughout the Ossipee Watershed in the towns of Eaton, Madison, Freedom, Tamworth, Effingham, Ossipee, Sandwich and Parsonsfield, Maine. This year, over 35 volunteers have adopted and test one or more sites on a bi-weekly basis. They are the eyes and ears of our watershed. Through this program, five different field parameters, including temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and conductivity, and 13 chemical parameters are sent to the lab. Water samples are filtered or acidified, then frozen until they are taken to the University of New Hampshire Water Resources Research Center and

Lakes Lay Monitoring Program laboratories in Durham for analysis.

GMCG is also in its 10th year of Volunteer Lakes Assessment Program (VLAP) with two sets of the earliest data collection yet. These trips were made possible by volunteers and Ossipee Lake Marina, which generously donated the use of their boat and gas. April 18th, GMCG volunteers bundled up to test five deep spots of Ossipee Lake. Ice out was only the week before and Mt. Washington was still fully cloaked in white. Data and samples were collected from the Big Lake, Berry, Leavitt and Broad Bay and as well as Lower Danforth Pond. As you can imagine, the weather was a little more desirable for the trip on May 16th. We are looking forward to three trips scheduled with the summer camps on Ossipee Lake and our sixth trip of the season is scheduled for September.

To view the 2012 VLAP report go to http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/vlap/annual_reports/2012/lake-reports.htm.

GMCG begins second year as part of NH Lotic Volunteer Network

Last year, GMCG entered into a partnership with Plymouth State University's Center for the Environment and NH LoVo Tecs Network in a five year study to better understand the impacts of climate change on water resources in New Hampshire. This project is funded by the National Science Foundation through a cooperative agreement to the New Hampshire Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive research (EPSCoR) program.

One Hundred sensors have been placed across the state to collect river data. Temperature, conductivity and flow readings are collected every 3 -5 minutes during warmer months and every 15 minutes during the winter. This allows the collection of incredible amounts of beneficial data that will also be used by GMCG in the Watershed Management Plan.

LoVo Tecs has over 30 volunteers that maintain sensors in 50 independent river and stream systems across the state. The majority of the sensors were installed in 2012 and include GMCG's two stations, Pine River and Ossipee River in Effingham. The statewide network has been designed to include varies watershed sizes and geographical attributes. More data loggers will be added to this network and as it grows there is potential to cross state lines. A broader view of New Hampshire's water quality patterns will be analyzed.

This summer, with the help of volunteer Rick Klausner of Brownfield, Maine, GMCG has completed two of the three statewide samplings at our sites. Statewide samples are collected on the same day between 7:00-11:00 in the morning. These samples are filtered, frozen and sent to Plymouth State University for analysis which will provide insight into the conditions of our rivers, lakes and streams. The common thread of all of these important programs is the volunteers that make them possible.

To learn more about this program online go to <https://www.plymouth.edu/center-for-the-environment/projects/ecosystems-and-society-nh-epscor/> or contact:

Errin Volitis, Plymouth State University
ebvolitis@plymouth.edu 603-960-4413

Corey Lane, Green Mountain Conservation Group
clane@gmccg.org 603-539-1859

If you come across any of these meters please admire but do not touch them and report any possible problems to Errin or Corey. Thanks!

Geocaching in the Watershed is fun and educational

By
Susan Lee

Geocaching is one of the fastest growing activities in the world today, with more than 4 million geocachers in 130 countries all over the globe and over 2 million active geocaches. New Hampshire is a terrific place to geocache and just within the Saco River Watershed are hidden approximately 400 caches waiting for you to find them.

Started in 2000, geocaching is a high tech treasure hunt using a handheld GPSr (Global Positioning Satellite receiver), or smartphone, and latitude and longitude coordinates found on the geocaching.com website. You will need a computer with internet access. The basic membership is free.

Geocaches come in all shapes and sizes, although for some caches called “virtual caches” or “earth caches” there is no physical cache to find at all. Most caches have a paper log inside where each finder signs in with a “trail name”. Once you find a cache, you report back on the website, which keeps track of all your “finds” (complete with smiley face) and your DNFs (did not finds).

Once you have picked your “trail name”, and have signed up for the free membership on the geocaching.com website, you are ready to go caching, although it helps to go out with a more experienced cacher the first few times, especially if you are new to using a GPSr. The website has several excellent videos and instructional sections, so make sure you check those out. Under the Play tab on the geocaching home page, is a tab for Hide and Seek a Cache. Just type in a town or

address where you would like to go caching. Typing in “Huntress Bridge Road, Effingham, NH” pulled up 50 caches within 5 miles! Each cache has its own descriptive page providing the all-important latitude and longitude coordinates. Most newer model GPSrs come with a USB cable so you can automatically download the coordinates from the computer. You can also input them manually. The cache page will also give you a cache rating for Difficulty and Terrain, each on a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being the easiest. Difficulty describes how “tricky” or hard the cache is to find. A 5 Difficulty can take many hours of searching over several visits to what cachers call “Ground Zero” or GZ. A cache which is handicapped accessible gets a Terrain rating of 1. If you need to climb halfway up Mt. Washington, the terrain rating is probably a 4.5.

The description may have an encoded hint, or additional information regarding a place to park, whether dogs are allowed, the presence of ticks or poison ivy, and if the caching site is suitable for children. This is a family friendly activity, but a cache near a busy highway or along a steep banking of a swift river may not be safe for small children.

Another fun aspect of geocaching is trading “swag” or trackables. Swag is small items of little value placed in a cache and intended to be taken by cachers in exchange for something else. Toy animals, stickers, crayons, pens, balls, marbles, erasers, etc. are great to trade. You may keep these items. Trackables on the other hand are designed to move from cache to

cache and should never be kept. Trackables come in the form of geocoins and “travel bugs”. Both of these have unique trackable numbers engraved on them. When you find a trackable, you report on the geocaching website where you found the item and that you either “discovered it” (and left it there), or that you “retrieved it” and will place it in another cache as soon as possible. Every time a trackable is logged on the website, the owner of that trackable receives an email message showing where the item has travelled.

There are lots of caches along back roads, walking/biking paths, hiking trails and around the shores of our many ponds and rivers. Remember to respect private property, always replace the cache as you find it, and always SIGN THE LOG. While geocaching in the Watershed is not a dangerous sport, it does involve all the usual risks of being in the outdoors in the



woods and on the waters of New Hampshire and Maine. Enjoy, but use common sense. Always mark your car on your GPSr; and carry spare batteries. Most of all have fun.

Susan Lee is an avid birder and woodswoman who lives in Madison.

Summer Calendar

Wednesday July 17, 9:00am-Noon Hike up Green Mountain. Meet at the Dearborn Trail Head at Hobbs Road in Effingham, NH. Learn about GMCG’s land trust work and enjoy views of the entire watershed.

Saturday July 20, 1:00-5:00 pm. Well Water Screening. White Mountain Hypnosis Center, Madison, NH. Bring your well water sample and test for six different parameters. Take a walk in the labyrinth and hike the trails while you are there.

Wednesday July 24, 6:00-8:00 pm. Watershed Management Plan Kickoff meeting. Freedom Town Hall, Freedom Village. Come learn more about what a Watershed Management Plan is and how you can help out.

Thursday, July 25, 6:30-8:30 pm. Invasive Insects. GMCG Office, 196 Huntress Bridge Rd., Effingham, NH. Join us for an evening presentation by Wendy Scribner of UNH Cooperative Extension to learn about identification of and protection from invasive insect species.

Tuesday July 30 & Wednesday July 31, 9:00-4:00 pm. Water Topics for Teachers: a water literacy training opportunity for teachers. The Community School, Tamworth, NH. The American Ground Water Trust in cooperation with GMCG will conduct a two day training for teachers interested in WATER TOPICS. This program is a unique opportunity for teachers to explore aspects of water that are relevant to New Hampshire and the Ossipee Watershed. The program will also show that exciting and practical “water science” can be applied to many traditional subject areas. This workshop is FREE but space is limited so please sign up today by contacting Andrew Stone at American Ground Water Trust at <http://www.agwt.org/events>.

Saturday, August 3, 8:30 am-Noon Household Hazardous Waste Day. Ossipee Town Hall, Ossipee, NH. Drop off any household hazardous materials you have around your home and visit the GMCG table to pick up a well water sample bottle if you are interested in a home water test. To learn more about what materials will be accepted please visit: www.lakesrpc.org.

Saturday, August 10:00 am-3:00 pm. Get Wild at Sumner Brook, Ossipee NH. GMCG will partner with the Ossipee Conservation Commission to celebrate the natural resources in the Watershed—and come “fish the trout pond.”

Wednesday, August 21, 10:00 am-1:00 pm. Volunteer Biological Assessment Training (VBAP). The Community School, Tamworth, NH. This training is for educators, volunteers and community members who are interested in water quality. Learn how to collect and identify macro-invertebrates and follow protocol to assess stream conditions.

Thursday, August 22, 10:00am-1:00 pm. Well Water Screening. GMCG Office, 196 Huntress Bridge Rd., Effingham, NH. Bring your well water sample to our office and test for 6 different parameters.

August, TBD. There will be a Hike up Mount Katherine in Wonalancet. Please check GMCG website for more details.

Look for GMCG at watershed events and farmer’s markets to pick up a well water screening bottle all summer!

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

Your Membership Makes a Difference.
PLEASE renew your 2013 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/

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.

GMCG is a non-profit 501 (C)3 tax-exempt organization. We are funded by grants, memberships, and donations.

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 to include GMCG in your estate planning. Please contact us if you would like to discuss details and how you can support 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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The Watershed News

Save the Date
July 24
**Watershed Plan
Community Meeting**
6:00am-8:00 pm

**Deadline for
Autumn Newsletter
submissions is September 5th**

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

