

# The Watershed News

Volume XVII, Issue I

Winter 2014

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## Watershed Management Plan Data Analysis Underway

Volunteers have been busy gathering different types of data for the Watershed Management Plan. Some of these accomplishments include: seven trips out on Ossipee Lake and Bays for deep water sampling including spring ice out and fall turnover, septic data has been reviewed, all RIVERS data (GMCG volunteers have collected over 10,000 water quality data points since 2002), a GIS impervious surface map was created as well as the shoreline and windshield survey data.

As you may know, the Ossipee Lake system has had a trend of increasing total phosphorus levels over the years which is why the Watershed Management Plan is necessary. All information that is gathered is put into a modeling system that will analyze values and allow FB

Environmental to create a specialized management plan. With the calculations produced, GMCG will be able to prioritize areas of concern and work on reducing the levels of total phosphorus entering the lake system. This will be done in different ways depending on what the issue may be.

Most of us have probably noticed areas of erosion along the roads near our tributaries, Lakes and Bays. You may have even noticed this on your property. Best Management Practices (BMPs) are one way to help stop erosion in these areas that have a direct path to the water. Slowing water down helps it soak into the earth before it gets to our surface water. Installing a rain garden, such as Freedom Elementary's blueberry rain garden at Camp Huckins can do a wonderful job slowing down water. There are other



options as well such as erosion control mulch and infiltration trenches. If you would like more information on things you can do to make a difference please contact us at [info@gmccg.org](mailto:info@gmccg.org) Keep an eye out for the next public Watershed Management Plan meeting in April.

## 2014 Annual Meeting Moves to April

GMCG will celebrate its 16th Annual Meeting this year on Sunday, April 6, 2014. Loyal attendees should appreciate this move as we most likely will be past the "big snow" season that our past 15 years of January meetings have had to contend with! It will take place at Camp Calumet and include a family style dinner and presentation by Harry Vogel, Senior Biologist and Executive Director of the Loon Preservation Committee in Moultonboro, "State of The Loon -- The Natural History, Challenges, and Successes of Loons in New Hampshire."

Have you ever wondered why a loon's eyes are red? Why loon chicks ride on their parents' backs? What loons are saying with those eerie calls in the night? Join Vogel as he talks about this unique symbol of New Hampshire's wild lakes and its special place in the hearts of New Hampshire residents. Vogel will talk about loons, challenges facing loons, and the Loon Preservation Committee's work to safeguard New Hampshire's threatened loon population.



Vogel has been studying loons for over 20 years, as a researcher and then Project Biologist for the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey of Bird Studies Canada, then as Senior Biologist/Executive Director of the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC.)

The Loon Preservation Committee's mission is to restore and maintain a healthy population of loons throughout New Hampshire; to monitor the health and productivity of loon populations as sentinels of environmental quality; and to promote a greater understanding of loons and the natural world. Since its creation in 1975 in response to concerns about a dramatically declining loon population and the effects of human activities on loons. LPC was one of the first organizations to show that it was possible to reverse the decline of a threatened species even though the loon remains a threatened species in New Hampshire.

Please join us at for the 16th Annual Meeting! For more information and to reserve seats, please call GMCG 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.

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Madison, Marcia McKenna  
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Sandwich, Bob Butcher  
Maine, Peter Zack

### Staff

Executive Director, Blair Folts  
Water Quality, Corey Lane  
Land Trust, Chris Young

## Happy New Year

By Blair Folts

“As the days begin to lengthen, the cold begins to strengthen,” and many of our watershed friends head south to warmer climes while others bundle up and head to the mountains and woods. Dedicated water quality volunteers, don dry tops and waders and continue to help collect water samples on ice-filled rivers and I reflect on another busy year as the Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) enters its seventeenth year.

I am humbled by the commitment of so many residents, visitors, municipal officials and young children to help GMCG collect important data and also explain what this data means to and for all of us. At the December Water Quality Community presentation by Watershed fifth graders, I was again impressed with the ability of our youth to present scientific information and findings to a non-scientific audience. They were further able to field questions and make simple hypothesis as to some trend information. And the message was clear: we need to continue to collect data and track water quality trends over time.

In working with these students, I was reminded again of how important it is to continue to verbalize what it is that GMCG does. What is a “watershed organization,” and what is “my watershed?” If you are curious to find out what watershed you are a part of you can visit the EPA website at <http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/locate/index.cfm>.

Since GMCG's inception, we have been committed to provide sound science through research partnerships to back up our education and advocacy programs and ultimately inform our land trust decisions. While many of you know us for our water quality,

others may know us for our work protecting farm lands. Our mission of “healthy waters, healthy communities” incorporates a braid of tools that includes research, education, advocacy and also land trust work (R.E.A.L.) This simple but clear mode of working evolved as the strongest way to engage many different populations to work together across political boundaries. R.E.A.L. guides the conservation work that GMCG does to protect not only our shared natural resources but also our shared and extensive aquifer that stretches from Saco Lake in Crawford Notch to the Atlantic Ocean in Saco and Biddeford, Maine.

Working with fifth graders from Sandwich to Ossipee to Freedom, I learned of the value of this cross border community. If you take away political and economic divides you have a chance to come together to work on protecting the shared resources that are critical to our lives. As we enter 2014, I hope we can continue to partner with more and more stakeholders and break the divides that separate our awareness so that we can continue to advocate together for clean water and conserved natural resources in the Ossipee Watershed.

I hope that everyone who wants to receive this quarterly newsletter is still on the mailing list and others who want to receive it digitally are finding the new and improved website, [www.gmcg.org](http://www.gmcg.org), friendlier to use.

Please feel free to contact me at the GMCG office if you have any questions or suggestions. Wishing you all a very happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

*Blair Folts is the president and executive director of GMCG and a co-founder.*

## Water Quality Monitoring Continues through Rain, Sleet and Snow

When fall came to a screeching halt hitting us with all kinds of undesirable weather, Dave Downs and Rich Dandeneau continued on their mission of collecting water



*Dave Downs collecting samples*

quality data at GMCG's 9 year round testing sites. They head out once a month and as you can imagine, this is not an easy task. The snow pack, frozen tributaries and cold meters make this a full day of testing with many obstacles around the watershed.

Collecting data through the winter is important in understanding the fluctuations that happen through the changing of the seasons and GMCG is very lucky to have Rick and Dave

committed to this mission!

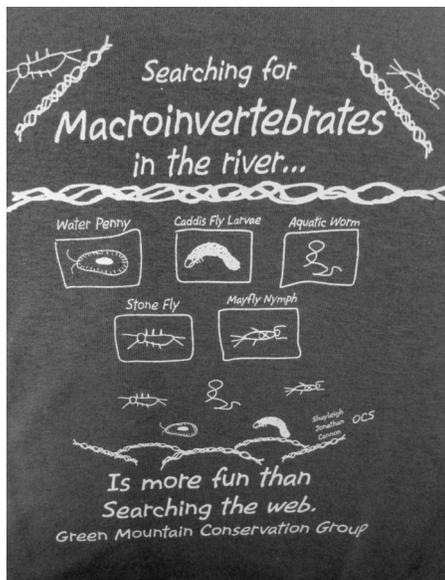


*Rich Dandeneau recording data on Ossipee Lake.*

## Students Give Water Quality Presentation to Full House at Remick Museum

This year, 100 students and over 15 volunteers participated in the Volunteer Biological Assessment Program (VBAP) for the eighth year. As part of GMCG's water quality program, 4 sites in the Ossipee Watershed were assessed for their macroinvertebrate communities. Macroinvertebrates are organisms that lack a backbone yet are visible to the naked eye.

With assistance from naturalist Barbara Bald, Ossipee Central School, Freedom and Effingham Elementary and Sandwich Central School collected, sorted and identified these aquatic creatures to get a sense of water quality conditions. Some of the critters identified are sensitive to pollution while others are more tolerant. After the students gather data, they worked together to create an educational presentation about water quality and their 2013 findings to the community.



*Ossipee Central School designed this year's shirt.*



*The students gather to answer questions after their water quality presentation at the Remick Museum.*

The Remick Museum was filled on December 4th with citizens from near and far interested in learning about the Ossipee Watershed from these skilled citizen scientists.

A special thanks to Ossipee Central School students Shayleigh, Cannon and Jonathan, who were the winners of the 2013 VBAP t-shirt design which is available to anyone interested (pictured). Please call the GMCG office if you would like to order one at 539-1859.

GMCG would like to thank all of the students who participated in the event this year, the schools for their enthusiasm and support and the many volunteers who helped collect and sort the samples. Special thanks to our funders, the Quimby, Pequawket and Roy Foundations.

## Downstream neighbors come together to protect water resources

By Dr. Walter H. Baily

Everyone knows the following statement: Never underestimate the power of a small group of citizens to restrain or stop a company from control of one or more aspects of their town. Here is the corollary: Never underestimate the power of a single corporation, small or large, to control one or more segments of a town. What can be more frightening than “fracking” for natural gas, or a major groundwater extraction?

Groundwater extraction by bottled water companies or the transfer of water from one state to another, including the shipment of groundwater to other countries, has become a major concern for communities. The list of national and international bottling companies that engage in major water collection and transfer includes at least Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Dasani, Fiji and Nestle Waters, North America. This does not include other international companies that remove and ship water by huge ships or pipes; they also build, own and/or operate both public and private water systems. A few of them are not yet in America. The key word in that sentence is *yet*. Aqua Maine is a private corporation that operates about 20 water systems in Maine. Shaw’s and Hannaford (My Essentials brand) are among the retail companies that sell bottled water. Read the table of contents of some of the smaller companies’ products, and many of those bottles contain water from some of the same locations as those listed by Poland Spring and Dasani.

Once town residents have decided to be alert to any type of corporate presence that may be considered disruptive to the balance and well-being of a town, then one or several persons should read every small or large news article (also check radio and websites), including *rumors*, for any items related to citizen concerns. Citizens then may be able to act quickly to plan strategies and engage the newcomer.

Citizens in Shapleigh, Maine had no preparation of any kind in their attempt to restrict or stop Nestle Waters. Here’s what happened:

One afternoon I read a brief article in a small, local paper that Nestle Waters (Poland Spring) had had a conversation

with the Shapleigh Selectmen to discuss water extraction. Surely several people read that article. Two local residents paid special attention to it. One of them talked with a friend, but apparently took no further action. A second acted within four hours and called a friend who was equally concerned about water extraction. Fifteen hours later three persons discussed next steps. From those three persons a group of almost 15 local residents was formed to learn more about the conversation between Nestle officials and what the implications might be for this very small, rural community. The group named itself POWWR, short for Protecting Our Water and Wildlife and Wildlife Resources. Members became concerned with the entire ecosystem, not solely groundwater.

The group believed that there was time to slow down Nestle’s activities until more could be learned about their initial offer. The short article in the paper stated that the town could receive income. Money always talks in small towns. Nestle would examine Shapleigh’s ground water before it would make a serious offer to purchase water. Members believed they should go ahead slowly with offers of some restrictions to extraction; two members sent recently constructed ordinances from adjoining towns to the Shapleigh Selectmen, who now expressed initial support for extraction. Selectmen announced that “the people” would finally decide about any water extraction. POWWR members viewed this as a positive indicator, but members had much to learn.

Just to be on the “cautious side,” the group proposed a legal moratorium, so that the process of approving extraction could be briefly delayed and citizens then would have more time to consider the offer. The Selectmen immediately rejected the proposal. The group’s attorney told the officials they had no choice; the moratorium had to be discussed. Members now knew they had a real fight on their hands, between one small group with a single \$1,200 grant and one international corporation worth close to \$150 billion dollars.

A couple of months after starting, one group member accidentally discovered

that Nestle had already installed a couple of wells (bore holes) in a state-maintained and operated public land reserve less than 100 feet from the Shapleigh border. Of special note here is that the state permitted wells in a designated “forested wetland,” while citizens are fined for the misuse or destruction of a wetland area. Nestle wanted to purchase water from the state, which is a “caretaker” for this wildlife reserve; the latter is funded by local, state and federal funds. The state rejected the offer; the extractor offered less than a penny per gallon of water.

The consequence of these findings is clear. Nestle knew the characteristics of Shapleigh’s water possibly long before they ever expressed an interest in it; the water in this aquifer that flowed toward Shapleigh was essentially the same as the water from the reserve area about 100 feet away. A month later we learned that not a couple of wells, but 23 bore holes were removed. It seemed this corporation had superb skills in acquiring vital and valuable data. One lesson learned here is that citizens must be creative and suspicious and consider every conceivable way that a company may take steps to exploit, manipulate or control one’s town -- including the precious natural resources, such as water.

The citizen group continued to work vigorously, producing all types of data about the company, their refusal to listen to citizens’ concerns, and the larger issues of how precious water is for people, industries, farms, and ecosystems. Town residents voted consistently and in large pluralities against Nestle. In a little over a year’s time, Nestle withdrew from all efforts to extract water. Within a few months, three other nearby towns rejected Nestle. Currently, there is a 16-town, increasingly strong firewall in New Hampshire and Maine that rejects Nestle Waters. This effort showed that residents can educate themselves and protect natural resources for the long term.

Nestle now has a few things to think about.

*Walter Baily is a member of GMCG and author of From Groundwater to Grassroots—Two Small Towns, One Large Corporation.*

## Notes from Downstream

By Dennis Finn

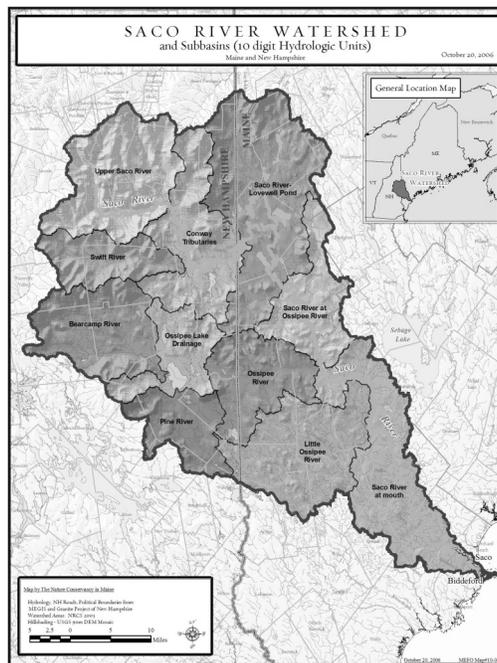
### GMCG and SRCC work on a new shared Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for 2014

After more than a decade of water quality monitoring, the Saco River Corridor Commission (SRCC) and the Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) are preparing to submit a revised, revisited and reinvigorated QAPP to the oversight environmental agencies at the Federal and State level. The QAPP is a contract, really, designed to ensure that the information collected is legitimate and the monitoring procedures are methodical and as precise as the scientific method and our volunteers can make it. Our QAPP is special because we are looking at watershed wide issues that transcend the political boundaries between Maine and New Hampshire.

Water doesn't recognize the lines drawn on a map or the signs placed as boundary markers indicating the water is now leaving the great state of New Hampshire and entering the wonderful state of Maine as it flows in its' course from the mountains to the ocean. We are fortunate to have found each other and to have shaped and kneaded our different approaches at protecting our precious resources into one. We are lucky to have also convinced Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to agree with our mission and to help in their

oversight. The expertise of these groups and the hard work of our volunteers make this plan dynamic and successful. This QAPP is actually the gold standard for water quality monitoring. When we examine the monitoring program, there is little doubt that the waters in our region are protected in a thoughtful and credible way. Our staff ensures this; our volunteers

parameters to the 20 towns that lie within the Saco River Corridor. LeMarr Clannon of the Nonpoint Source Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) and the SRCC will host work shops exploring the use of pervious materials in place of asphalt and concrete and also the use of rain gardens and other vegetated and pervious methods of capturing storm water in developments.



*The Ossipee Watershed is a subwatershed of the greater Saco Watershed.*

ensure it and future generations demand it – because the water we protect is not just for us today, but for all the generations yet to come.

### Grants lead to new initiatives

The Saco River Corridor Commission (SRCC) applied for two grants recently and were rewarded some funds to look at new initiatives. The first grant, through the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund was awarded to present the concept of Low Impact Development (LID)

The second grant was awarded from Brookfield White Pine Hydro as part of their obligations under their Fish Passage Agreement and license under the Federal Energy Management Commission (FERC). This grant will be used to create an electronic sounding and bulletin board for environmental agencies and groups in the Saco River Watershed. As envisioned, the “board” would be a place for groups to meet in the ether to discuss ideas, post new information and to share ways of handling old or emerging developments in the

environmental field. It is hoped that this medium will prevent people from having to figure out solutions to various problems from scratch. A sort of proactive way of not having to reinvent the wheel every time a new issue appears. The SRCC is excited about both of these projects and an update and schedule for the programs and progress will be shared as we move forward.

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

## 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.*

### Effingham

The Saga of the Green Mountain Picnic Table continues. If you read the spring Effingham Conservation Commission (ECC) section, you know we were waiting for the pick-up of the picnic table for Green Mountain summit. The table was picked up and was to be delivered to the summit. Time passed and sometime in early August, Kamal Nath and Al Levesque climbed Green Mountain and came back to report that there were two new tables at the summit, but none of them were ECC's. Come to find out an Eagle Scout group contacted the proper contacts, got permission and volunteered to carry the tables disassembled to the fire tower and assembled them before the ECC tables could make the trip. ECC was surprised, but glad to know that there are tables for hikers to enjoy. Where was the ECC table? After some inquiry, the table was located in Bob Boyd's backyard for safekeeping. It was returned to Effingham and finally installed at the Route 153 boat ramp. From one side of the table, there is a great view of the Ossipee River; from the other side a nice vista of Green Mountain. One can also put a canoe or kayak in the River at the boat ramp for a beautiful paddle.

### Freedom

The Freedom Conservation Commission (FCC) has two sub committees. They are the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) and the Freedom Aquatic Invasive Species Committee (FAISC). Their roles are to address important topics such as funding, policy, and professional and volunteer projects in the town's many valuable assets: the water bodies and town-owned tracts of land.

The FAISC continued the ongoing battle with variable milfoil throughout the summer and fall of 2013. Work done included:

- 10 days of Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting (DASH) work completed on Danforth Ponds and at Ossipee Lake Marina.
- DASH work conducted by AB Aquatics – a licensed contractor.
- NHDES made recommendations for additional work
- Completed herbicide treatment (per state grant received) in September.
- Additional hand pulling for spots outside of herbicide treatment area to be conducted in 2014.
- Requested and received quotes from licensed suppliers for 2014 milfoil efforts.
- Attended Milfoil Control Funding Coalition meetings in Concord.
- Meetings called by Ossipee Lake Alliance (OLA). Target audience – lake groups in NH. Goal is to increase state funding for milfoil control.

The Conservation Commission received a grant for \$1000 to support the Lake Host Program and conduct boat inspections and provide education on aquatic invasives. Lake Hosts were at Ossipee Lake Marina through August.

### Tamworth

In 2010 the Tamworth Conservation Commission partnered with the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests to protect the 139 acre Gilman Forest with a conservation easement. The two groups are working together again to add additional blocks of woodlands to the original Gilman parcel: a 63 acre lot to the west and a 103 acre lot to the south. These additions are important because they are adjacent to other conserved properties which gives Tamworth a large, contiguous block of forest which will provide wildlife habitat and help to protect drainages into Mill Brook and the Bearcamp River.

A second conservation easement effort is on the Bearcamp Valley Farm south of Route 25. This farm consists of approximately 100 acres of pasture and woodlands. The easement will protect this parcel for agricultural and forestry purposes while preserving a scenic landscape.

Fund raising programs have begun for these projects with funding from a private foundation already pledged to cover the costs of the Bearcamp Valley Farm easement. Assuming success with the fund raising, these easements should be in place during the first quarter of 2014.

## Youth will assist with Water Quality Programs in 2014

GMCG is happy to report that both the Pequawket Foundation Advised Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and the Alfred Quimby Fund have awarded grants to support the Youth Water Quality Programs in 2014.

GMCG's Winter programs will include GET WET and *Trout in the Classroom* with Conway, Effingham, Madison and Moultonboro Elementary. GMCG will also be working with the classes that



Dick Brunell presents Corey Lane with award from Peaquawket Foundation

participated in collecting water quality data on the rivers this fall to prepare presentations to Town Meetings in March. These programs provide youth with valuable experiences as citizen scientist, help GMCG collect data and present important water quality information to adult audiences.

If you would like to learn more or help out as a volunteer please call GMCG at 539-1859 and speak with Corey Lane.

# Save the Dates! 2014 Calendar



## ♥ Thursday February 13 4-6 pm. Valentines for Volunteers! ♥

♥ Are you interested in becoming a volunteer? Join GMCG Staff and volunteers for a pre-Valentine's Day get together and learn more about ways you can make a difference. ♥

♥ Cookies and cards and "we might just have beer here!" ♥



**February TBD.** The Francis Small Heritage Trust and the Green Mountain Conservation Group will cosponsor a **February snowshoe tracking hike** in the Sawyer Mountain Highlands in Limington, ME. The hike will begin at the Rte. 117 trailhead in Limington. Please call GMCG for details at 539-1859.

**Thursday March 20 6:30-8 pm. Ossipee Public Library, Ossipee. Putting Water Where it Belongs—Septic Systems and Catch Basins**—a presentation with Russ Lanoie.



## ♥ Sunday April 6 4:30-7:30 Camp Calumet, Freedom. Celebrate GMCG's 16th Annual meeting. ♥

Take a look at the year in review, learn about ways you can volunteer, meet fellow watershed friends and enjoy a home cooked meal. A short business meeting and community awards will be followed by a presentation on Loon's by Harry Vogel, executive director of the Loon Preservation Committee, and Co-chair of the Northeast Loon Study Working Group. For more information please call GMCG 539-1859.



*Your Membership Makes a Difference.*  
**PLEASE renew your 2014 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\_\_\_\_  
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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**  
**Sunday April 6th**  
*16th Annual Meeting*  
  
*State of Loons in  
New Hampshire*

**Deadline for  
Spring Newsletter  
submissions is March 10th**

Thanks to everyone who  
helped with the  
Annual Appeal!  
We did it!  
Thanks to your **loyal  
and additional support**  
we met our 2013  
Budget!  
  
**THANK YOU!**

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



Sign up for event updates with *Watershed Happenings* and stay in the flow! Sign-up at [www.gmcg.org](http://www.gmcg.org)