

*Protecting natural resources in the Ossipee Watershed since 1997*



*Danforth Pond, Freedom, NH.*

## EPA approves \$100,000 grant to improve Danforth Pond water quality

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has approved a \$100,000 proposal submitted by GMCG and the Friends of the Danforth Ponds to follow through on recommended measures from the 2018 Ossipee Lake Watershed Management Plan. The two-year project will be conducted under the auspices of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. The project's official launch is anticipated to occur this summer, pending final funding appropriation and approval by the State of NH.

"GMCG looks forward to working with the Friends of the Danforth Ponds to achieve reductions in the nutrient loading that has, unfortunately, led to Danforth Pond ranking among New Hampshire's more impaired surface waters," noted GMCG Executive Director Matt Howe. "We could not have won EPA approval without their initiative and leadership moving this project forward."

The Friends of the Danforth Ponds is led by shorefront property owners Frank and Kathy Lalumiere and Bruce

Howlett. The Town of Freedom and Danforth Bay Campground have made substantial commitments of in-kind resources to help complete major BMP ("Best Management Practices") installations on Ossipee Lake Road and at Danforth Bay Campground. The grant also includes funding to install several small-scale BMPs on private properties that will help demonstrate the simple and affordable steps that all property owners can take to mitigate erosion.

"When a lake is in trouble, everyone with shorefront property should assess the ways that stormwater can be better managed and directed away from the lake," stated Howe.

The project also includes actions to enhance septic adequacy, maintenance and operational practices around the Danforth Ponds. The project team encourages all upper,

middle and lower Danforth Pond shorefront property owners to participate in the septic system inspection and pump out programs that will be made available to ensure that the systems are functioning correctly and to assist maintenance. In the event any systems are identified to be in a state of failure, the grant includes a provision for assistance with septic system replacement for eligible property owners.

"The combination of installations of BMPs on Town of Freedom, Danforth Bay Campground, and residential properties along with assistance to septic systems makes this an ambitious project," observed Bruce Howlett. "We welcome the involvement of everyone in the Danforth Pond community, and especially want to hear from those who would like to join the project team. The more volunteers we have, the more we can do to improve our water quality." To contact the Friends of the Danforth Ponds, write to [friendsofdanforth@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofdanforth@gmail.com).

# Groundwater protection need not be complicated

by **Matt Howe,**  
**Executive Director**

The Effingham Planning Board may vote on July 11 on whether to approve Meena LLC's application to operate a gas station on Route 25. No matter what the Board determines should happen at the site of the former Boyle's Market, GMCG looks forward to a continuing conversation with the people of Effingham - and beyond - about how groundwater protection and economic prosperity go hand in hand.

Taking a public stand against an entrepreneur's proposal to open a new business is not easy. It is not something GMCG takes lightly. We may be a nonprofit, but we are an enterprise too. We benefit from doing business in a prosperous community where jobs are being created, where residents have access to essential goods and services, and where businesses feel welcome. By taking a stand against a business plan, we know that some will cast us as "anti-growth."

It has been a contentious two-years since the Effingham ZBA granted a variance to Meena LLC, placing the decision on Meena's application in the

hands of the Planning Board. Over the course of this process we have done our best to assert our views and document the flaws in Meena's application with professionalism and respect, basing our arguments on science and the letter of Effingham's Groundwater Protection Ordinance approved by the voters in 2011.

We have asked the Planning Board to base its decision not solely on a checklist of required components to an application, but to factor in their role as a guardian of public health and safety. We further ask the Planning Board to acknowledge that *the ZBA's variance is not an approval* and to weigh heavily the depth and quality of information about this site and the reams of expert public comment and independent analysis from licensed engineers that was not available to the ZBA when it made its decision.

Let's also circle back to page 54 of Effingham's Zoning Ordinance, where Section 2207 delineates the uses that are prohibited in the Groundwater Protection District. Item #8 reads: "The development

or operation of a gasoline station." We also see on page 54 that gas stations were not being singled out. Section 2207 also prohibits golf courses, race tracks, junkyards, solid waste landfills, dry cleaning facilities, snow dumps (and more) in the Groundwater Protection District.

The authors of the ordinance and the voters who approved it were neither anti-growth nor anti-business. They were smart, informed, forward-looking people seeking to chart a future for Effingham in which economic activity was placed in balance with the need to protect the Town's sole source of drinking water.

The Planning Board's impending vote, be it on July 11 or a later date, will conclude a complicated time for our community. We know it is a hard decision for those whom we have elected and empowered to make it. We also know how it feels to make principled decisions that may be unpopular.

Protecting a town's groundwater is not easy, but it can be a little less difficult when a democratically approved zoning ordinance has already set the rules.

## Green Mountain Conservation Group

*The Watershed News* is a quarterly publication of Green Mountain Conservation Group, a nonprofit, 501 (c)(3) charitable organization established in 1997. The mission of GMCG is to promote an awareness of and appreciation for clean water and the wise use of shared natural resources across the Ossipee Watershed and advocate strategies to protect them.

The towns of Eaton, Effingham, Freedom, Madison, Ossipee, Sandwich, and Tamworth comprise the Ossipee Watershed. This watershed includes one of the largest and deepest stratified drift aquifers in New Hampshire. GMCG also serves the towns of Maine's Sacopee Valley. Water knows no boundaries!

### Board of Directors

#### Officers

Knute Ogren, Chair, Effingham  
Karen Vitek, Vice Chair, Tamworth  
Noreen Downs, Acting Treasurer, Madison  
Nancy Walser, Secretary, Sandwich

#### Board Members

Alice Custard, Freedom  
Todd Dickinson, Freedom  
Lorie Dunne, Effingham  
John Hedden, Eaton  
Bob Pustell, West Ossipee  
Dana Simpson, Ossipee  
Peaco Todd, Tamworth  
Peter Zack, Maine

### Staff

Matt Howe, Executive Director  
Tara Schroeder, Education Coordinator  
Moselle Spiller, Outreach Coordinator  
Jill Emerson, Water Quality Coordinator  
Ele Border, Bookkeeper

### AmeriCorps Members

Grace Kennedy, AmeriCorps Member  
Education & Outreach Assistant  
Hailey Williams, AmeriCorps Member  
Water Quality Resources Assistant  
Shaun Baughman, AmeriCorps  
Conservation Assistant  
Zach Berliner, AmeriCorps Member  
Conservation Assistant





# GMCG in action



Thank you to the 100+ folks who came from all across the watershed to show their support for protecting water at the Meena LLC gas station hearing in Effingham on June 6. Experts, town officials and residents raised important concerns about the risks of situating a gas station in a Groundwater Protection District.



AmeriCorps members Zach and Hailey collect water samples on White Pond, Ossipee.



Children explore a pizza herb garden with AmeriCorps member Hailey during a Children Unlimited program in Conway.



AmeriCorps member Grace helps students at Pine Tree Elementary in Conway release their trout fry into the Swift River as part of the Trout in the Classroom program.



Dr. Rick Van de Poll leads a vernal pool ecology field day at the Blue Heron House in Effingham.



GMCG volunteer Norm Sizemore views a sampling location at the Whittier bridge during the second week of GMCG's tributary monitoring program RIVERS.



GMCG AmeriCorps members install a new interpretive trail at Constitution Park in Ossipee.



Naturalist and GMCG volunteer Barbara Bald teaches about moose during story hour at Effingham Library.



# Caring about culverts: Protecting people and the watershed

by Nancy Walser

Who knew culverts were so interesting? They come in all shapes and sizes. They are made of concrete, metal and ancient stone. They perch, they scour, and they can “overtop” during heavy downpours with the rushing streams and rivers they are meant to contain.

It is now estimated that at least 498 culverts in the upper Saco River Watershed - which includes the Ossipee Watershed - pose some sort of threat to people, wildlife and the water quality of 32 towns in New Hampshire and Maine.

This was just one of the findings presented in April by representatives of several state agencies along with Matt Howe and Tara Schroeder of GMCG. Together, these groups have collaborated on an ambitious program to bring heightened attention to the risks posed by outdated structures that could affect daily life in decades to come.

One notable takeaway: Sixty-nine percent of the culverts assessed are at an elevated risk of overtopping (i.e. flooding). “That’s pretty alarming,” noted Ben Nugent of New Hampshire Fish and Game. Flooding not only poses dangers to people, but also sends run-off and debris into the watershed. Other findings reveal that the average stream crossing is undersized, and more than half pose at least some barrier to fish and other aquatic animals.

The roots of the Saco River Watershed Stream Crossings Assessment Program go back to a terrible flooding event in Alstead, N.H. In 2005, a storm bringing more than seven inches of rain in a 30-hour period wiped out a culvert and resulted in the death of four people. In total, seven people died in the area, more than 100 buildings were damaged or destroyed, and miles of roadway were out of commission for weeks. Subsequent flooding in 2005 and 2006 resulted in a federal flooding analysis of the state and triggered increased attention to the role of

culverts in preventing disasters and sustaining the environment.

Fast forward to 2023 when the results of the assessment program were made available on an interactive, online map. Scores assigned to each crossing make it possible to rank and prioritize culverts for repairs or replacement.

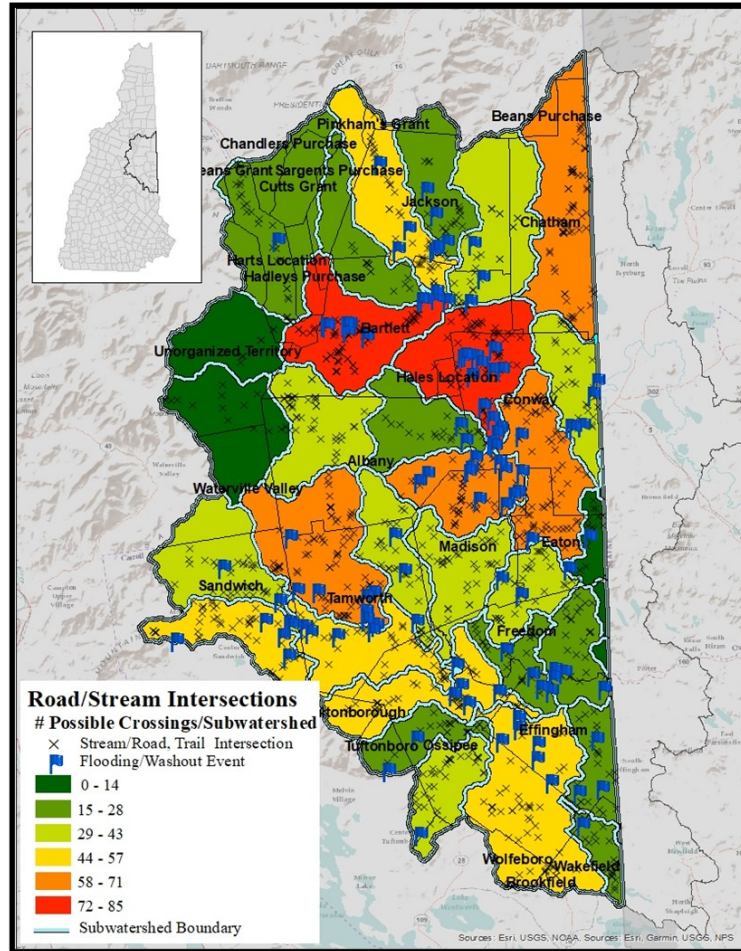
At an estimated \$500 per square foot for repair, fixing culverts is expensive. But so is fixing the damage they can cause. While more investigation is necessary, at least \$127 million is needed in total to modernize the most problematic culverts in the watershed, Nugent said.

The data contained on the map is intended to help empower regional and local leaders to apply for funding for culvert repairs. In

addition, N.H. Fish and Game, Saco Headwaters Alliance, and GMCG, have applied for a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to devise a financial plan for modernizing all culverts “in need” in 13 towns. If successful, they will begin working with town stakeholders this winter.

In the meantime, I invite you to watch the April 19, 2023 Saco River Watershed Stream Crossings Assessment presentation on the GMCG.org YouTube channel. Be sure and play around on the online New Hampshire Aquatic ARM Mapper, too.

After watching the presentation, I am looking at culverts through a different lens. There are some quaint, but pesky ones near me. What about near you?



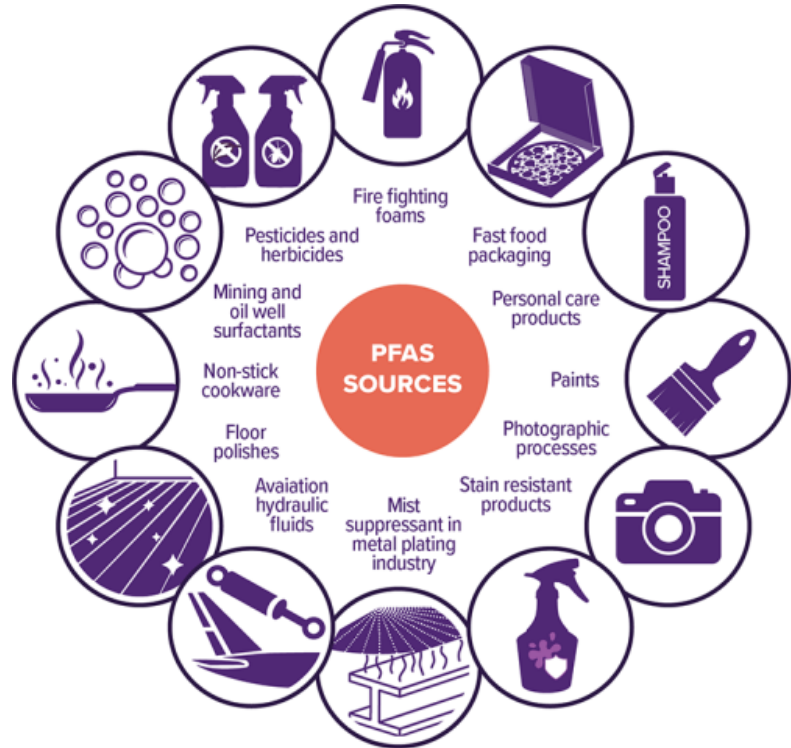
GMCG and partner organizations plan to work with 13 towns in the upper Saco River Watershed to address crossings in need, such as the ones identified by blue flags in the map above where flooding and washout events have occurred. (Map by Ben Nugent, NH Fish & Game).

# NHDES and EPA take steps to address PFAS contamination

by Tara Schroeder

You may be familiar with one of the most problematic emerging contaminants in recent history called PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances. PFAS contamination of wells in Merrimack and Portsmouth have been in the news for many years, with high profile lawsuits and mitigation involving Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics and Pease Tradeport. My hometown of Stratham had PFAS contamination in wells surrounding the fire station where they used firefighting foam containing the chemicals. Our neighbors' wells were all impacted, however no one knew until recently. In the upper Saco River Watershed, elevated levels of PFAS were detected in a public water supply well in Fryeburg in 2022 and in monitoring wells near landfills in Tamworth and Effingham in 2019. In November of 2021, a "do not eat" advisory was issued for deer harvested in Fairfield, Maine and surrounding communities after several animals tested positive for elevated levels of PFAS. Maine is also spending millions of dollars to detect and remediate more than 50 farms around the state that have been found to be contaminated with PFAS, which is showing up in beef, milk and crops.

Exposure to PFAS is a public health concern as they can interfere with the body's hormones, ability to fight infection, the growth and development of children, and increase the risk of high cholesterol, thyroid disorders and certain types of cancer. PFAS are synthetic chemicals called "forever chemicals" that resist decomposition in the environment and the human body. There are thousands of different PFAS chemicals that have been in use since the 1940s in homes, businesses and industry in fire fighting foam, wastewater treatment facilities, biosolids spread on agricultural fields, and a host of consumer products that end up in landfills from carpets to candy wrappers. PFAS have been



detected in soil, water, air, wildlife and humans.

New Hampshire is way ahead of other states with research, monitoring and standard setting when it comes to PFAS, says Brandon Kernan of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). Thousands of wells have been tested, and, in 2020, New Hampshire established some of the strictest standards for PFAS in the country. Acceptable limits for PFOA were set at 12 parts per trillion; PFOS at 15 parts per trillion; PFNA at 11 parts per trillion; and PFHxS at 18 parts per trillion. There is also a rebate program for up to \$5,000 for PFAS contaminated wells where point of entry treatment systems are needed. Indeed, the state is experiencing a surge of funding to deal with the problem, and much of the \$500,000,000 available for drinking water infrastructure in the state is earmarked for PFAS and other emerging contaminants, though Kernan says the need is closer to \$3 billion.

The EPA is also setting more stringent standards, proposed in March 2023, for six PFAS. For PFOA

the recommendation is 0.004 part per trillion (ppt) and for PFOS, 0.02 ppt and hazardous substance designation and part of the EPA Superfund program. These levels are dramatically more stringent than the 70 ppt that the EPA recommended in 2016 for the two compounds. In addition, the EPA has rolled out the first-ever health advisory levels for two PFAS associated with Chemours's GenX process for manufacturing fluoropolymers. They are hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA) and ammonium salt. The recommended limit for each of these chemicals is 10 ppt, the EPA says. The new standards will take two years to implement if passed and will impact hundreds of public water systems and thousands of private wells in the state.

Zach Schafer, senior advisor for the EPA Office of Water, provided an overview of the work of the EPA's Council on PFAS that was established in April 2021. He described the Council's efforts as providing a timeline for concrete actions that support state efforts with more federal leadership and,

*Continued on page 6...*



## Meet the new GMCG AmeriCorps members

working upstream of the problem, holding polluters accountable and integrating scientific research to increase understanding of toxicity and impacts to the environment and human health. A progress report of the group's work was released in November 2022 and can be found at [www.epa.gov/pfas](http://www.epa.gov/pfas). The public comment period just wrapped up on May 30.

Despite all of these efforts, it is clear that we have to be diligent about what we buy, test our drinking water and prevent these toxic chemicals from getting into the environment and our bodies in the first place. "We cannot test or treat our way out of this problem; we have to stop PFAS at the front of the pipe," Kernan says. Bottom line: we need to stop producing the chemicals in the first place.

### Sources:

PFAS illustration via University of Northern Iowa, Iowa Waste Reduction Center.

Hogue, C. (2022, June 15). US EPA sets health advisory limits for 6 PFAS. *Chemical and Engineering News*. Retrieved June 9, 2023, from <https://cen.acs.org/environment/persistent-pollutants/US-EPA-sets-health-advisory-6-PFAS/100/i22>

Miller, K. (2023, February 1). More than 50 Maine farms impacted by PFAS, but state officials see 'glimmer of hope'. *Maine Public*. Retrieved June 9, 2023, from <https://www.mainepublic.org/environment-and-outdoors/2023-02-01/more-than-50-maine-farms-impacted-by-pfas-but-state-officials-see-glimmer-of-hope>

PFAS in New Hampshire Fact Sheet. (2023, February 1). *New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services*. Retrieved June 9, 2023, from <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt476/files/documents/2021-11/pfas-in-nh-fact-sheet-20210805.pdf>

**For more resources and to learn how can you reduce your family's PFAS exposure visit**  
<https://gmcg.org/advocacy/pfas>

### Shaun Baughmam, AmeriCorps Member Conservation Assistant

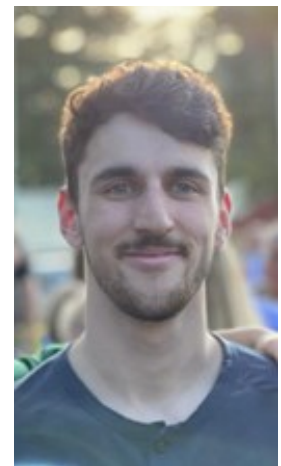
"Hey guys! My name is Shaun and I'm from Garden City, Kansas. I'm currently finishing up my last semester at Kansas State University and will soon have my B.S. in Biology this May 2023. During my time in college I worked as a freshwater ecology lab technician and completed research projects on the nitrogen cycle of *Acropora spp.* coral and investigating marine debris and its effects on a small coastal village in Hopkins, Belize.

I've developed a love for aquatic ecology, and I hope to develop this passion even further as a member of the LRCC AmeriCorps program while serving with the Green Mountain Conservation Group. I look forward to learning more about the effects of microplastics, water quality, and promoting water and resource conservation programs! In my free time I enjoy hiking, running, reading, painting, being out on the water, and caring for my plants."



### Zach Berliner AmeriCorps Member Conservation Assistant

"Hi, my name is Zach, I am from Hopkinton, New Hampshire, and I studied environmental policy and planning at the University of Maine at Farmington. I am very outdoorsy, mainly because I grew up ski racing, but also because I really enjoy camping and hiking during the warmer months. I look forward to being a part of the LRCC AmeriCorps program and working with GMCG to conduct vital surveys on water quality and doing research on testing for E. coli and microplastics, as well as doing educational outreach promote the protection of aquatic resources of the Ossipee Watershed for current and future generations to enjoy."



*GMCG is proud to be partnering with the Lakes Region Conservation Corps as an AmeriCorps host site, currently hosting two full term members and two half term members. AmeriCorps is a voluntary civil society program supported by the U.S. federal government, foundations, corporations, and other donors engaging adults in public service work with a goal of "helping others and meeting critical needs in the community."*

*Members commit to full-time or part-time positions offered by a network of nonprofit community organizations and public agencies, to fulfill assignments in the fields of education, public safety, health care, and environmental protection. The program is often seen as a domestic Peace Corps. It employs more than 75,000 Americans in intensive service each year. AmeriCorps is an initiative of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). It was created under President Bill Clinton by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993.*

# Bird migration: Where are you from? Where are you going?

by Barbara Bald

Are you a snowbird or do you stay put through the seasons? We might ask the same questions of the birds in New Hampshire... and we'd be talking about more than dark-eyed juncos. We'd be asking about migration, about which birds stay, which birds leave, why they go, how they know when to leave, come back, where they go and how they get there.

Migration is defined by seasonal movement of animals from one region to another. It is usually predictable and involves a return trip. Birds do not leave or arrive because summer concerts stop or skiing begins. But you already knew that! They leave, according to Pam Hunt, senior biologist of NH Audubon, because the earth tilts. They skedaddle because that tilting changes the light, climate, weather and their food supply.

How do they migrate? Seems they use maps to navigate and internal compasses to orient. They navigate using landmarks such as rivers, ridgelines with updrafts, oceans, deserts and more. In some birds there is a genetic component. Others learn from their parents.

Orientation is accomplished by a built-in sense of direction and solar clues such as the North Star. They can sense polarized light, and five years ago scientists discovered they have a protein in the eye that allows them to see the earth's curvature and sense its magnetic fields. And you thought you were smart!

Most birds use one of the four major flyways in North America: The Atlantic, Central, Mississippi and the Pacific Flyways. There are also apparently rule-breaker migrators. While some birds like the American robin are short distance migrators, others, like the black poll warbler, may fly 2000 miles non-stop in three days for a total of 12,400 miles round trip. Some birds stopover to feed and rest. Others, like the ruby-throated hummingbird can fly 500 miles nonstop to get where they are going.

To prepare for these rigors, even with an efficient metabolism, they



*Photo of a Baltimore oriole in the snow by Bob Moore*

must eat and eat to store up fat. They also must use their efficient lungs which can take in five to six times more oxygen than we can.

Many birds travel during the day, but because it's safer, less windy and cooler at night, some opt to migrate in the dark and feed during the day. All take advantage of north-west winds in the fall and south-west winds in the spring. Weather can certainly affect their journey and it seems heavy and poor light can even cause collisions.

Birds are mighty picky about their routes. Some, like broad-wing hawks, refuse to fly over the ocean. They follow ridge lines and ride thermals, make their way from North America to Central America, then on to South America. Hummingbirds, on the other hand, willingly fly over the ocean and Arctic terns, who make a 24,000 mile round trip, actually stopover on it to rest and feed.

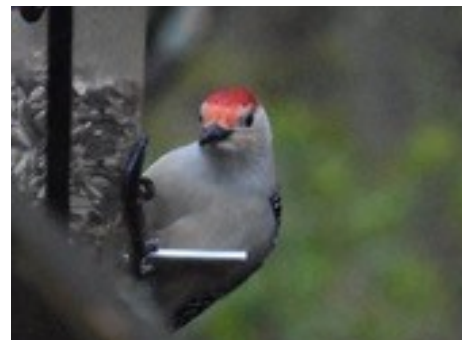
Many current challenges face our migrators. Buildings and towers are now interfering with their ways of orienting. Birds are now "bottle-necking" (congregating in high concentrations) during migration making them vulnerable to numerous threats. There is an

ongoing degradation of their winter habitats and stopover habitats, when their need to feed is the highest.

Climate change poses even greater threats to our avian travelers; warmer temperatures alter the timing of migration, usher in more severe storms, and cause insects needed to sustain them on their journey to hatch before the birds arrive.

So whether you are a snowbird or resident, we challenge you to go online and start reading to find out some of the many things we can do to help our avian migrators. You might even check out bird-friendly coffee!

*Thank you to Dr. Pamela Hunt of N.H. Audubon for all these fun facts about migrators.*



*Photo of a Red-bellied woodpecker by Bob Moore*



# The legacy of Walter Baily

by AmeriCorps members

Grace Kennedy and Hailey Williams

This winter, Walter Baily, a longtime supporter of GMCG and the recipient of its High Watch Award in 2010, passed away at the age of 97. His legacy extends beyond his contributions to our organization and his passion and tenacity are memorialized in his children through the sound of a drumming pileated woodpecker, the tranquil bathing of turtles along pond banks, and the fluorescent call of Baltimore orioles. Walter loved the natural world and loved finding ways to protect and appreciate it. Throughout his life, Walter inspired a love for natural resource protection in those around him. He engaged in a variety of concrete endeavors: Writing and advocating for a Groundwater Protection Ordinance (GPO) in Parsonsfield, Maine; co-founding a grassroots organization to protect public groundwater from corporate water extraction; and sharing his wealth of knowledge as a social welfare professor and consultant at University of Southern Maine and Castleton State College in Vermont. Recently, we talked with two of Walter's children, Peter Baily, and Ingrid Baily about him.

*This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.*

**GMCG:** What is your favorite memory with your father?

**Peter:** There are so many favorite memories over the years. We spent a lot of time with Dad on the water and in the woods on our family forestland, building trails, creating water dams, pruning and marking trees and enjoying bird life. From childhood, I remember times spent catching turtles and frogs. In adulthood, we spent time with Dad in the woods engaged in various stewardship projects.

**Ingrid:** My favorite memories with Dad all involve the woods, fields,



*Walter Baily enjoys a walk in nature.*

streams and ponds. He loved the natural world and he loved finding ways to protect and appreciate it. I remember looking at salamanders with Dad when I was young and watching turtles basking in the sun and hearing birds in the woods. All of my memories are about being in the natural world and finding ways to take care of it.

**GMCG:** So, your Dad instilled that love and care for nature from a very young age?

**Ingrid/Peter:** Yes. It's a family trait shared with our aunts, uncles and cousins. One of our grandmothers was very engaged in spending time outdoors. She was a wonderful gardener and one of our grandfathers was an avid hunter and fisherman, so I think many of those traits came naturally.

**GMCG:** How would you describe your father - his main characteristics, values and mottos?

**Peter:** He was a very gentle, loving and kind person. He was very appreciative and attentive to others

and his career was in social welfare. The areas of child welfare and protection, community health, service to under-resourced populations and programs to better support human communities were all important aspects of his professional work. In later years, he was a university professor and taught students about the kinds of policies and practices that would support human populations in need.

**Ingrid:** He was optimistic and a very engaging person to talk with. He enjoyed hearing what other people were doing and he liked to encourage them. He would always ask someone what they were interested in, what they were reading, what they were spending their time and energy on. I think that's part of why people were interested in him—because he was focused on others and was not one to talk about himself. He was also incredibly self-motivated and productive and had many talents. Dad was always engaged in activities such as land stewardship, gardening and carpentry projects.

**GMCG:** What sparked his interest in environmental conservation and how did he use his experience in social work to aid in his efforts?

**Peter:** I think it was serendipitous. He always liked being outdoors; when on the water, he was always interested in whatever creature happened to be in sight. But when our family moved to Parsonsfield 50 years ago, he became immersed in the outdoors in a new way. Our parents bought an old farm with several hundred acres of land and that's when he became increasingly engaged with the natural world—because the natural world was literally surrounding him and he was responsible for it. That's when he began learning more about forestry and groundwater. From my earliest childhood we had a well, so that



was not new to him but it was something he became more acutely aware of, especially in terms of groundwater as a resource. In our family's forestland there are varied wetlands and he became interested in what takes place in those ecosystems. He was a part of a citizen science program where he would count frog eggs and report his findings. Over the decades, he worked with a forester to plan sustainable tree harvests, using at various times lightweight mechanical equipment, draft horses and oxen. Because of these experiences, he became more aware of local organizations such as GMCG, the Francis Small Heritage Trust, the Natural Resources Council of Maine, and The Nature Conservancy in Maine. Dad also loved to read and the publications that came from these organizations were of great interest to him.

**GMCG:** How did his engagement with GMCG come about?

**Ingrid/Peter:** I think it was his curiosity and a sense of admiration for what the organization was doing. He met a lot of people who were and are instrumental in the organization in its early years, and he enjoyed engaging with them; that stimulated his interest. He really admired the pioneering and founding work that Blair Folts did and the superb work of the other staff members. More recently, he was delighted to see Matt Howe's leadership as well. Because he had supervised staff in his career, he understood that mission-driven approach. The passion that GMCG has to protect shared natural resources reminded Dad of the commitment he and his coworkers had for the social welfare field.

**Ingrid:** I think he also found a welcoming community. As a social scientist, with doctoral training in research and analysis, he also responded to the science side of protecting aquifers and why it

matters, not only for today but for the long-term health of our environment. He read widely about water issues, in this country and around the world, so he saw the importance of the work that GMCG does and he appreciated its fervent advocacy.

**GMCG:** You mentioned he had to go through an extensive process of educating himself in order to develop the GPO. Could you go into more depth about how he rallied support or how he furthered that process?

**Peter:** One of the things he did was a lot of reading and for a man who was born in 1925 he was surprisingly adept at using technology. He read a lot on the computer and in print and he wrote a lot on the computer and spent a lot of time in the public library. He talked to a lot of people and was not hesitant to reach out to authors or to write to scientists to ask for support or clarification. He built a lot of connections that way.

**Ingrid:** He also was very engaged in communicating with state officials and elected representatives. He was adept at reaching out and connecting with people by phone and email. Another source of information for him was the Union of Concerned Scientists.

**GMCG:** How would you say your father's work involving natural resources impacted your own careers?

**Peter:** I don't work specifically in a field related to the environment. I've been a pre-collegiate educator at the K-12 level, for my entire career. Outside of my career, my primary interest has been to continue to steward our family land. As I approach my older age, along with my sister and brother, one of our family goals is to see that that land is preserved. Throughout my entire life, I've been a bird watcher, and it has been very satisfying to steward an environment that is home to a wide variety of wildlife.

**Ingrid:** Although my career has not included environmental conservation, it is certainly very important to me. I've always loved being in the natural world, particularly as a bird watcher, and I take part in citizen science bird projects. Dad introduced me to GMCG more than fifteen years ago. Since then, I've attended many events with him, volunteered as a RIVERS sampler, chaired the Marketing Committee, and am currently a member of the Development Committee. Our brother Kenneth's career has been in the ministry as a church pastor and one of his emphases is protecting the environment. Dad's favorite hat is from Ken's church and it says "Go Green for God."

**GMCG:** Are there any birds/wildlife in particular that you instantly connect with your father?

**Ingrid:** He particularly loved owls, woodpeckers, and Baltimore orioles.

**Peter:** The other thing I will say, and this is a family trait, is that Dad could not drive past a turtle trying to cross the road. He always stopped to help turtles crossing the road, and that is something we all learned from him and still do.



*Photo of a wood turtle on the Bearcamp River by Alicia Pasquerillo.*

by Tara Schroeder

Along with many New Hampshire organizations, businesses, individuals and towns, GMCG is once again participating in Plastic Free July and encourages all who live and work in the Ossipee Watershed to take up the challenge! Plastic Free July is a global movement organized by the Plastic Free Foundation to create solutions and raise awareness about plastic pollution. More than 177 countries from around the world participate in Plastic Free July by refusing to buy single-use plastics.

Since 2019, GMCG has been sampling for microplastics in lake water, rivers, streams, groundwater, soils and plankton using state of the art technology. In 2022, GMCG published the Less Plastic Guide, a free tool for educators with an array of activities, lessons, and information to learn about the issue of plastic pollution and what we can do to reduce our collective plastic footprint. Cynthia Walter of the New Hampshire Network Plastics Work Group says: "As somebody who has been working with schools and teachers for almost 40 years in the U.S., Central America and Southern Africa, your Guide has got to be one of the best guides I have seen literally in the world! It's fantastic. This Guide is useful beyond the classroom - in library programs or other events to help people of all ages learn about the plastic problem and solutions."

The towns of Dover, New London, Hopkinton and Center Harbor have made formal proclamations asking their business and residents to voluntarily reduce the use and distribution of single-use plastic during the month of July. In the interest of reducing microplastic pollution in soil, water, wildlife and air, GMCG encourages other towns to do the same. See the website below for templates of their proclamations to propose in your town and ideas for encouraging others to reduce plastic use, such as a library display.

Any town, business, organization or individual can participate in Plastic Free July by taking steps to reduce the use of

single-use plastic and spreading awareness of plastic pollution through social media and word of mouth. Individuals can also urge state legislators to pass Zero Waste laws that will hold companies responsible for the plastic waste that they create with their disposable packaging. These laws will require companies to redesign their packages to reduce waste and exclude toxic chemicals.

To learn more about Plastic Free July and how you can participate, visit <https://www.10towns.org>.

To receive a free copy of the Less Plastic Guide, write a request to [education@gmccg.org](mailto:education@gmccg.org)



## Conservation conversations

**Editor's Note:** *Conservation 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 Conservation Commission:

On two separate work days, ECC members and other volunteers cleaned up storm debris at the Larry Leavitt Preserve, mostly from the microburst in July, 2022, with some additional damage from winter storms.

Book prizes were presented on May 15 to the winners of the Earth Day poster contest at Effingham Elementary School.

The Earth Day roadside cleanup netted 107 bags of trash. This was achieved with only 12 recorded volunteers. Anya Bartoswicz collected 15 bags by herself,

covering more than a mile and a half of Green Mountain Road.

Summer and fall activities include milfoil harvesting from Leavitt Brook and arrangements to complete the final piece of trail in the Pine River Cherubini Preserve.

ECC has arranged with Squam Lakes Natural Science Center for a presentation "Animals with Bad Reputations," to be held on Saturday, August 12 in conjunction with the Effingham Preservation Society Street Fair, held in the Historical Society building at 1 p.m.

### Eaton Conservation Commission:

The ECC is fundraising for trail repair caused by this year's big rain events, and Foss Mt will be closed to visitors during trail reconstruction July 10-14. Check out [fossmountain.org](http://fossmountain.org) for updates in case of changes. Have a Cheese Louise sandwich in July and help support our trail fund! Thanks to them and the Pequawket Foundation for their support. Donations welcome with thanks!



# Save the date! 2023 summer calendar

To register for all programs below email [education@gmcg.org](mailto:education@gmcg.org) unless otherwise noted

**Wednesday, July 19 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. - Keeping a Nature Journal/Field Sketching with Environmental Educator Barbara Bald.** Join GMCG as we explore ways to set up a nature journal and learn new ways to do easy sketches of what you are seeing. No drawing experience is necessary. Materials needed: A sketch pad or journal, drawing pencil (4B if you have one), eraser, colored pencils (if you have them), gel pen. If none of these are available, not to worry, just bring a regular pencil. We will have some extra homemade journals available. To register please email Tara at [education@gmcg.org](mailto:education@gmcg.org) or call (603) 539-1859.

**Wednesdays, July 5, 12, 19 & 26 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Nature Story and Discovery Time.** Join us at Blue Heron House for Nature Story and Discovery Time! Each program is free and will include a story as well as songs, crafts, games and nature discovery round the day's theme, plus a treat! The themes this summer include: *Vernal Pool Exploration, Funky Frogs, Busy Beavers, and Bees, Butterflies & Bats! Oh My!* Activities are tailored for children ages 1-6 and their caregivers. Meet at the Blue Heron House located at 236 Huntress Bridge Road in Effingham.

**Now through Tuesday, August 1 - Submissions for the "Wonders of Water" 2023 Community Art Exhibition.** GMCG is calling all photographers to submit their best photo depicting water to the fourth annual "Wonders of Water" (WOW) community art exhibition! Submissions are being accepted now through Tuesday, August 1. Submissions must be made through email to [info@gmcg.org](mailto:info@gmcg.org). Find full instructions at [gmcg.org/event/wow](http://gmcg.org/event/wow). Selected photographers will be notified of their acceptance by August 11.

**Tuesday, July 25 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. - Annual Volunteer Celebration at The Preserve in Chocorua.** Join us on July 25th to celebrate GMCG's 26th year of Ossipee Watershed protection and honor the volunteers who make our work possible! Featuring: music by Shana Aisenberg; kids' activities & story time; updates from GMCG leadership; presentation of the annual High Watch Award for exemplary service; light buffet with beer and wine and an abundance of social time! This is a free event (on-site donations welcome). Please let us know you are attending by registering by Friday, July 21. Visit [gmcg.org/celebration](http://gmcg.org/celebration) to register.

**Wednesday, August 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - The Winter Road More Traveled – Intro to Winter Road Maintenance for Municipal Officials & Conservation Commissions** at GMCG's Blue Heron House. Learn the improved materials and practices that road agencies can employ to efficiently and effectively respond to snow and ice and clear your communities' roads with awareness and sensitivity to the environment. This workshop will prepare municipal administrators, elected officials and municipal conservation commissions to partner with and support their local highway team in improving winter operations programs. This course is open to municipal public workers, municipal elected and government officials including selectboard members, town administrators, local conservation commission members, and state DOT employees only. Light breakfast refreshments and coffee will be served. Registration is required. Visit [www.gmcg.org](http://www.gmcg.org) for more information.



**Please renew your support today.  
Every dollar makes a difference!**

Make checks payable to Green Mountain Conservation Group  
Box 95, Effingham, NH 03882

You may also donate online at [www.gmcg.org/donate](http://www.gmcg.org/donate)

My/our gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

GMCG is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

GMCG's Federal Tax Identification Number is: 02-0498020

**Thank you!**





PO Box 95  
236 Huntress Bridge Road  
Effingham, NH 03882  
(603) 539-1859  
info@gmcg.org

# THE WATERSHED NEWS

A Quarterly Publication for the Ossipee Watershed

## In This Issue:

- EPA Approves \$100,000 Grant to improve Danforth Pond water quality
- It is OK to say “NO” to a gas station
- Caring about culverts: Protecting people and the watershed
- NHDES and EPA take steps to address PFAS contamination
- Meet our new GMCG AmeriCorps members
- Bird migration: Where are you from? Where are you going?
- The legacy of Walter Baily
- GMCG participates in Plastic Free July

## Contributors:

Jill Emerson, Matt Howe, Nancy Walser, Tara Schroeder, Grace Kennedy, Hailey Williams, Barbara Bald, Tim White (cartoon), cover photo courtesy of Danforth Bay Campground.

**You're invited!**

**One Aquifer.**  
Let's Protect It.

**GREEN MOUNTAIN  
CONSERVATION GROUP**

**Annual Watershed Celebration  
& Volunteer Appreciation**

**Tuesday July 25, 4:30-6:30, The Preserve, Chocorua**  
Register by Friday, July 21 at [gmcg.org/celebration](http://gmcg.org/celebration)