



The Hoosic River Voice

News from the Hoosic River Watershed Association Autumn 2013
Clean Water Habitat Restoration River Access Watershed Recreation

Taking the river's temperature

HoorWA is partnering with staff from the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) in a year-long study of water temperatures in streams in the North Branch and main stem of

the Hoosic River in Vermont. The activity is a follow-up to bridge and culvert surveys conducted last year by Trout Unlimited teams for the GMNF.

Early this autumn, staff and volunteers from HoorWA placed sixteen temperature loggers in stream segments identified as having barriers to passage by aquatic organisms. Part of GMNF's South of Route 9 Integrated Resource Management planning initiative, the temperature monitoring will help confirm the suitability of streams for trout habitat otherwise at

risk because of inadequate stream crossings, and help define which crossings are of highest priority for repair or replacement.

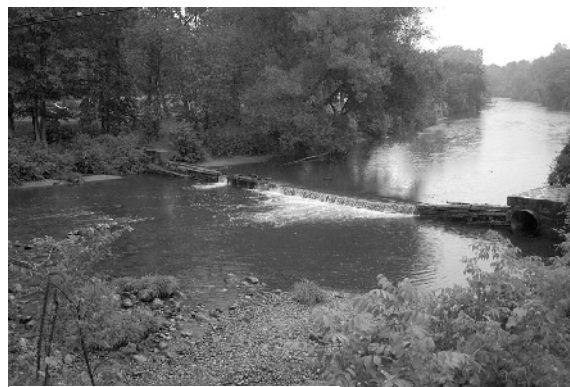
For example, the culvert shown in the photo is raised or "perched" above the stream bed, limiting the ability of fish and amphibians to migrate upstream. If the temperatures upstream can support trout, as indicated by the sensor's data, the replacement of the culvert will be prioritized, and cooperative agreements with towns will be sought to replace them. With the effects of global warming raising regional air and water temperatures, every effort should be made to preserve and improve those cold water streams in our watershed that support fish and wildlife.



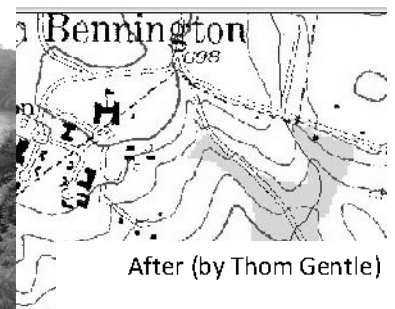
Photo courtesy Berkshire Environmental Action Team

Henry Dam gone

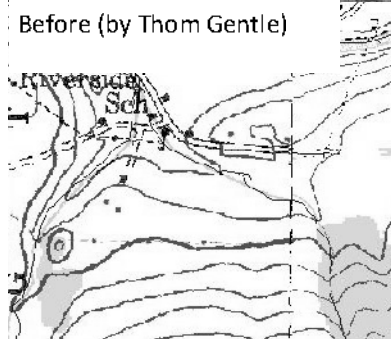
The Henry Dam on the Walloom-sac River in Bennington and N. Bennington, VT has been removed. Abandoned since the Depression, the collapsed timber crib and rock-fill dam has threatened public safety for decades. A deep and turbulent scour hole on its downstream edge had captured people and pets, and led to some drownings. HoorWA was among several partners working with the Town of Bennington and the Village of North Bennington to take out the dam in early September.



Before (by Thom Gentle)



After (by Thom Gentle)





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HoorWA is dedicated to the restoration, conservation and enjoyment of the Hoosic River and its watershed, through education, research, and advocacy.

The beautiful weather this summer and early fall, along with record rainfalls, has made the Hoosic River and its watershed a very enjoyable place to paddle, bike, hike, or to just sit and contemplate its splendor.

HoorWA has the goal and responsibility of making sure that this ecosystem remains as healthy and unspoiled as possible. To these ends we are doing our best to continue and expand our involvement with other organizations and people who share our interests – including, recently, Hoosic River Revival, the National Forest Service in Vermont, and scientists from MCLA and Williams College. Using the latest methods of riparian science to collect chemical, thermal, and biological data, we hope to document effects climate change may be having on the Hoosic; if there are negative effects, we will do our best to plan and carry out corrective measures.

For several years, we have

President's Post by Tom Hyde

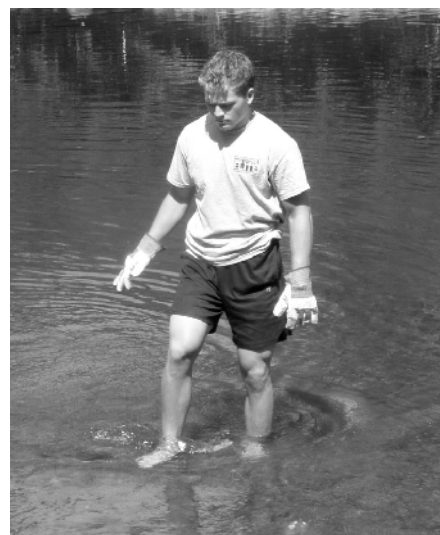
monitored BMIs (benthic macro invertebrates or riverbed dwelling insects) and temperature in various river reaches. This year we have extended our study of BMIs to tributaries where dams have been removed and culverts repaired to see if such alterations have improved water quality. Temperature is a key variable that can have a major effect upon the health of breeding trout populations. We have also cooperated with MCLA scientists and students in studying E. coli bacteria in the river and Williams scientists and students studying PCB levels. We are evaluating the use of other scientifically proven methods of assessing water quality and will continue to encourage other organizations to work with us to accomplish these goals.

To continue to enjoy living in this watershed we must do our best to continue to monitor and protect its ecosystem.

Tom Hyde

River Clean Up

A dozen incoming Williams College freshmen chose to start their orientation to Williamstown with HoorWA, cleaning up a small section of the Hoosic River bank behind Cole Fields. The original plan was to wade into the river along Route 2 in North Adams, but high water levels changed the itinerary: we took a van tour of the watershed from Cheshire to North Adams, and cleaned up a river bank. HoorWA thanks Williams College for arranging for this activity and their Buildings and Grounds staff for helping with the removal of the debris.



A Williams College freshman helps HoorWA and the river

\$ HoorWA receives settlement funds \$

As part of an out-of-court settlement between George Apkin and Sons Inc, a metal recycling company in North Adams, and Clean Water Action of Boston, HoorWA received \$35,000. The funds can be used on projects benefitting water quality in the Hoosic River. Clean Water Action is a nationwide non-profit organization working for prevention of pollution in the nation's waters. HoorWA intends to use the majority of the funds to support the annual river monitoring program.



Generous Gift for Greenway from Whipstock Hill Preservation Society (WHIPS)



At its meeting on September 19, the WHIPS board voted to donate \$8,000 to HoorWA to help cover the costs of resurfacing the northern section of the Hoosic River Greenway in Hoosick Falls, NY. This section was cleared and graded earlier this year.

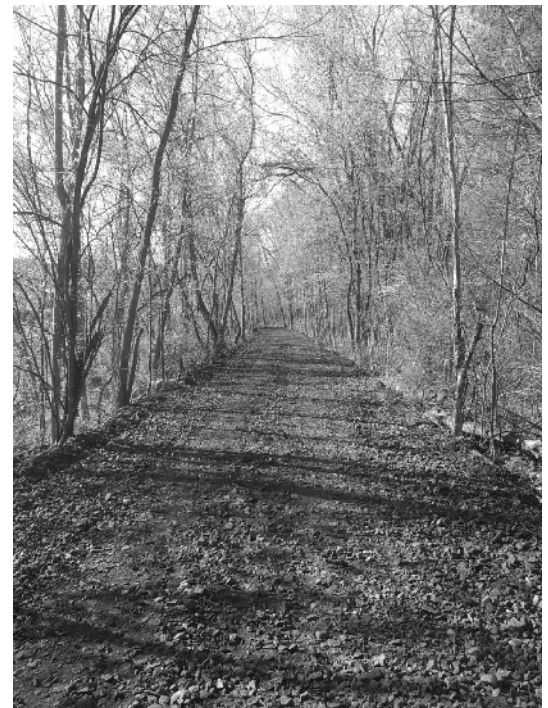
This is the second gift WHIPS has made toward the Greenway project. In 2007 it donated \$5,000 toward the purchase of the greenway lands from Pan Am Railways. The twenty-six acres of former railroad land, including an abandoned rail bed about 2.5 miles long, was acquired by the Village of Hoosick Falls in January 2009.

The Whipstock Hill Preservation Society was founded in 1995 by a group of New York and Vermont neighbors who were concerned about the impacts of development on the scenic area that includes Whipstock Hill, which lies astride the New York/Vermont line, and nearby Breese Hollow in East Hoosick, New



Resurfacing of Greenway North

At its September meeting, the Village of Hoosick Falls issued a request for proposals to armor a culvert on the northern end of the greenway – thus permitting access to the trail by heavy construction equipment; lay down geotextile; and resurface this section of the greenway with stone dust (as was done on the already completed southern section). The Village Board will choose the successful proposal at its October meeting. The Greenway steering committee's resident engineer, Mike Danforth, prepared the construction documents for the Village and will supervise the contractor. The committee and Village Board hope to see the work completed before the end of the year.



Part of the northern section to be resurfaced soon.

Hoosic River Ride

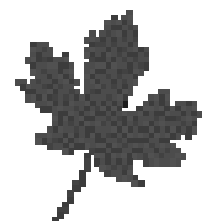
This year's 9th Annual Hoosic River Ride took place in late August under nearly perfect skies. Over 200 bike riders once again took to the roads along the streams and rivers – and for some routes, lots of hills! – of the watershed.

Our new base venue at the Williamstown Youth Center proved to be ideal. Picnic and aid station food donated by Williams College Dining Services and Wild Oats Market in Williamstown provided great refreshments for all.

Feedback from the riders was again mostly very positive (though not entirely so: we'll avoid most of Route 22 in New York next time).

This year we had a pair of riders from Moscow, Russia!

Special thanks go to our major sponsors: Donovan and O'Connor, LLP; Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics; and Jack Miller Contractors. Thanks also go to our ride committee – Emily Brannan, Tom Hyde and Steve McMahon – for their amazing efforts. We also thank HoorWA's Board and all our other wonderful volunteers. We are looking forward to next year and hope you are too. Volunteering begins with you saying "I'd like to help!"



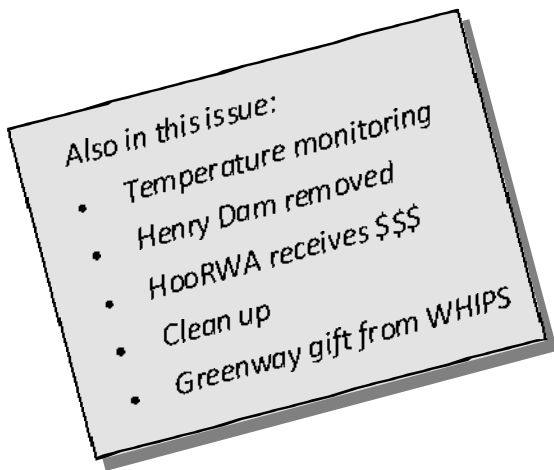
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Autumn 2013



The Hoosic River Voice

State of the River Conference 2013 on PCBs

This year's State of the River Conference will take place in Fellowship Hall of the Williamstown Congregational Church on Saturday, November 2, from 9:30 to 12 noon. The main focus will be PCBs in our Hoosic River. Local and regional news are filled with stories of polychlorinated bi-phenols (PCBs) present in the sediments and within the aquatic food chain of the Housatonic and Hudson Rivers and the clean ups planned or underway to remove them. PCBs are also present in the Hoosic River. Williams College chemistry professors David Richardson and Jay Thoman, along with students Amanda Schott ('15) and Austin Paul ('16) have analyzed crawfish taken from the Hoosic River and most recently from the Green River and North Branch. Professors

Richardson and Thoman and Mr. Paul will report on their research findings and on other PCB studies going back to 1991.



Last year's conference

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TODAY!
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Have you seen "Our River"?

Each Friday evening at 8:30 on Channel 15 (Northern Berkshire Community Television Corp.) and occasionally on Channel 17 (Willinet and Willinet.org), one can view a half hour program on Our River, a show sponsored by HoorWA and the Hoosic River Revival (HRR). Host Lauren Stevens interviews guests on topics relating to the Hoosic River and sites within its watershed. Guests have included Judy Grinnell of HRR, Steve McMahon of HoorWA, Jennifer Trainer Thompson and Jody Joseph of the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, and Mackenzie Greer, city planner for North Adams. It's worth a look, so tune in or watch it live.