



The Hoosic River Voice

News from the Hoosic River Watershed Association Summer 2012
Clean Water Habitat Restoration River Access Watershed Recreation

Riverfest!

HoorWA's 21st annual Riverfest on Memorial Day weekend this year was again a great success! Music by MoCA Jam and a drum circle led by Otha Day kept feet tapping while attendees looked at exhibits from local organizations. A live reptile program was presented by Tom Tynning and walks were led along the river by local experts including Leslie Reed-Evans of Williamstown Rural Lands, Elena Traister of the Massa-

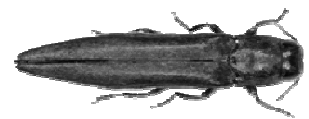
chusetts College of Liberal Arts, and regional botanist Pam Weatherbee. Children enjoyed face painting, pony rides and making their own kite banners. Fidel Moreno of Healing Winds (see photo below) explained Native American customs and traditions. Many visitors enjoyed a stroll along the river to view art on display. The Hoosic was running just high enough this year to allow for our popular raft rides to take place.

Our thanks to our title sponsor, the Williamstown Savings Bank, and major sponsors the Massachusetts Cultural Council, Williams College Center for Environmental Studies, and Alton and Westall Real Estate.



HoorWA Co-sponsors Invasive Forest Insect Program

On June 30th, Samantha Brady of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) led a workshop that focused on identification and management of two non-native forest pests: the Asian Longhorned Beetle and the Emerald Ash Borer. Over thirty people attended the program at Hopkins Memorial Forest in Williamstown. While neither insect pest has been found in our watershed, they have been found nearby. One important way to stop the spread of these insects is not to move or import firewood, especially during the summer camping



Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*)
NOT TO SCALE!

Summer Intern Projects by Julieanne Fontana

The team of Celeste Venolia, a senior at Mount Greylock, Julieanne Fontana, a junior at Williams College, and Jake Laughner, a North Adams resident, is working on two projects to benefit the Hoosic watershed this summer. Their shoreline surveys of the main stem include describing the streambed and banks, as well as assessing human influences such as the location of outflow pipes. The information will be used

to target problem areas and to compare to future data. The team collects information by canoeing the river where possible, or by walking along the banks.

The team is also working on culvert surveys in Berkshire County, MA. This data will be used to resize culverts to the stream width and depth and allow the flow of water to support fish, mammals, and other organisms.



Volunteers Jake, Celeste, and Julieanne.



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Hoosic River Watershed Association

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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.

President's Post by Lauren Stevens

Your watershed association once paired artists and scientists to send them to area schools to work with the students on projects. (Hint: we'd love to do so again but need both funding and school interest.) For one of dozens of pairings, beginning in 1995, artist William T. Beattie and geoscientist David Dethier spent beneficial time with Mr. Allard's, Mrs. Boisert's and Mrs. Willard's ninth grade earth science classes at the Charles H. McCann Vocational Technical High School in North Adams.

After learning about local geology, students painstakingly cut out cardboard along contour layers from Geological Survey maps and stacked up and glued together the results to create a three-dimensional topographic map of the Massachusetts portion of the Hoosic River watershed—basically the area surrounding Mount Greylock. Then they painted it. The project was more time-consuming than planned, being finally completed in 1997. The scale is one

inch equals 24,000 feet and the vertical exaggeration, 3:1. It measures six feet by four feet, and is definitely a two-person carry.

As well as giving students the sense of a job well-done, it was a fine introduction to the geology, topography and geography of their home. Furthermore it created considerable interest when it was exhibited at the school, at libraries, banks and a visitors' center. We recently retrieved the map from Williamstown Rural Lands Foundation.

With a bit of refurbishing, it is now going on to a second or maybe third life, as part of the science cabin at the Manice Education Center, in Florida, Mass., a camp that treats inner-New-York-City kids to a wilderness experience and environmental education.

I am pleased to see that the hard work of the McCann students will continue to benefit them and youngsters from New York. May all HoorWA's projects have such long-lasting legs.

Lauren

Russ Cohen Leads Edible Plant Walk

Russ Cohen, author of **Wild Plants I have Known ... and Eaten** (and a river advocate with the Riverways program in Massachusetts), recently led an evening walk around the barnyard and fields of Tilldale Farm in Hoosick, New York. On a beautiful June evening, 14 people learned how common plants, and even invasive ones, can have several culinary uses. Samples of black walnuts and hickory nuts and a delicious fruit leather Russ made from the autumn olive were passed around.

Thanks to Russ and Joanne and Dan Tilley for making the event possible.



Russ Cohen holds his audience.

Members may want to know:

HooRWA Board meetings are open to all and are held the first Monday of every month (except in July and August) beginning at 7 p.m. at the First Congregational Church in Williamstown, MA. (The Church is located at 906 Main St., nearly opposite Spring St.) Because of the Labor Day holiday, the next Board meeting will be held Monday, September 10th.



River Clean up Days

On May 19th, National Honor Society students from Mount Greylock High School joined Exec. Director Steve McMahon, members of HoorWA's Board, and volunteers from the Berkshire Environmental Action Team on a cleanup of a stretch of the Hoosic River near Cole Field in Williamstown.

The volunteer crew pulled a dump truck load of debris that included shopping carts, many tires, and assorted metal trash. The debris was disposed of by the Williamstown Department of Public Works.

Check our website for notices of other

river cleanup days along the Hoosic in Vermont and New York. Or e-mail us at office@hoorwa.org to nominate a stretch of river for a cleanup day or to volunteer!



Mount Greylock NHS seniors and Board Member Drew Jones

State of the River Conference – September 22nd

HoorWA's 2012 State of the River Conference will focus on climate change and the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene. Events at The Spruces Mobile Home community in Williamstown will serve as a case study. The flooding from this tropical storm impacted both human and natural communities within the watershed and beyond. The one-day conference will be free and open to the public.

The event will provide the opportunity for knowledgeable speakers to address a regional audience on why this event happened. It will explore the storm's impacts on human and natural river communities. And it will offer a forum for discussion on how

Williamstown and similar communities along the river can alleviate or mitigate damage from this kind of storm event.

Speakers will include Jerry Jenkins, noted regional botanist and author of **Climate Change in the Adirondacks: The Path to Sustainability**; Jim MacBroom, Senior V.P.I at Milone and MacBroom Engineering; Robin Lenz, Coordinator for the community service organization Higher Ground in Williamstown; Kelly Nolan, Aquatic Biologist for HoorWA; and others.

Save the date!

Green River Turns Brown

On a Saturday in late June, reports came in to our office that the Green River in Williamstown was nowhere near its usual green color but instead was a muddy, chocolate brown. HoorWA Board Members, local police, and a member of the Williamstown Conservation Commission, went out to seek the source of the sediment.

After some field detective work, it was determined that a beaver dam had let go on private land located in South Williamstown. There was no indication that any human activity caused the sudden release of the one-quarter acre pond that was held in check by a five-foot high dam

While it is unfortunate that a quality wetland was drained, and the resulting sediments downstream in the Green and Hoosic Rivers may have impacted wildlife, this naturally occurring event was most likely the result of the beavers eating themselves out of a safely obtainable food supply and moving on in search of better habitat.

This natural occurrence is better than a scenario in which an old dam, such as the Notch Reservoir, Mount Williams Reservoir or the Windsor Lake Dam in North Adams, fails. The resulting sediment and erosion would do more than color the Hoosic and its tributaries. For this reason, we thank our area legislators for supporting legislation that would fund dangerous dam removals across the state.

Anyone concerned with river quality or impacts to brooks and streams and woodland or aquatic life within the watershed should contact HoorWA at office@hoorwa.org or 413 458-2742.

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HOLD THE DATE!
HoorWA's State of the River Conference will be held Saturday, September 22 at the First Congregational Church in Williamstown, MA. Everyone is welcome!

Summer 2012



The Hoosic River Voice

8th Annual Hoosic River Ride: Registration Is Open!

Mark your calendar for Saturday August 25th and tune up your bike in preparation for the 8th annual Hoosic River Ride, which begins and ends at Southern Vermont College in Bennington. It's not a race but an enjoyable and at times challenging countryside ride through the Hoosic watershed. From short loop rides to a 3-state 75-mile route, this day has a bike trip for every rider.

Bring the family and enjoy the 8-mile Monument Loop that takes in the Bennington Monument and the Henry Covered Bridge over the Walloomsac River. The 30-mile Two-State Tour adds some back-country roads and the quiet residential streets of scenic North Bennington. The Hoosic Fifty offers a beautiful ride through the countryside of Vermont and New York, almost all of it

AUGUST 25, 2012

Hoosic River Bike Ride

A benefit bike ride through the beautiful Northern Berkshires & Southern Green Mountains!

along quiet country roads. Hardcore riders will want to do the Watershed Challenge. This figure eight route asks participants to climb over Petersburg Pass on the New York/Massachusetts state line.

Riders will enjoy well-marked routes and thorough cue sheets; several well-stocked aid stations; EMT support at all aid stations and at the registration area; and roving tech support on each route (although all riders should come fully prepared). A post-ride picnic is included in your entry fee.

Visit BikeReg.com at <http://www.BikeReg.com/16195> to register or www.hoorwa.org to get more ride details. Register by August 1 and save \$10 off your entry fee!