

*Land Acknowledgment: Through all HooRWA's activities, we work to enhance and promote the value of the Hoosic River Watershed. And it is with gratitude and humility that we acknowledge we are learning, speaking and gathering on the ancestral homelands of The People of the Waters that are Never Still, who are the indigenous peoples of this land. Despite tremendous hardship in being forced from here, today their community resides in Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We honor and respect The People of the Waters that are Never Still, past and present, as we commit to nurturing a more inclusive and equitable space for all.*

## Water Quality Monitoring

The price of clean water is eternal vigilance. Since HooRWA's inception in 1986, HooRWA has been dedicated to water quality monitoring.

In 2024, as in prior years, we:

- Collected bacteria samples bi-weekly May-September and had samples tested at Berkshire Community College, a State-approved testing facility.
- Added new 5 sites to test for E.coli in the North Adams flood chutes.
- Performed water temperature monitoring.
- Contracted with Cole Ecological, Inc. to perform our yearly benthic macroinvertebrate field and lab work.
- Performed sampling for chemical analysis at 3 sites for Science on the Fly.
- Submitted data to state agencies in MA, NY, and VT who prioritize and set policies to improve water quality.



## River Health

The Hoosic River and its tributaries maintained similar results as in prior years when we contracted with Watershed Assessment Associates for our benthic macroinvertebrate study. This tells us that, while the Hoosic remains slightly impaired in its health, the River does support expected aquatic life.



HooRWA wants our River and Watershed to be resilient in the face of climate instability. We are committed to water quality monitoring through the Watershed and especially cold streams which support brook trout and other sensitive species.

We thank our summer interns Zee Taylor and Jakob Revett, Hoosic River Revival volunteers Kurt Gamari and Pamela Tworig and HooRWA board members.



## Membership

20 communities and 3 states comprise the Hoosic River Watershed. The majority of HooRWA's members are from Williamstown, MA, followed by North Adams, MA, Bennington & N. Bennington, VT, Pownal & N. Pownal, VT, Hoosick Falls, NY, and Adams, MA. We welcomed 7 new members in 2024.



## Finances

2024 total income was \$92,111 and expenses were \$87,425. Net income was a gain of \$4685. The income includes a substantial unrealized loss of (\$-3,385) due to a decline in value of stocks. Noteworthy expenses include professional fees and contract labor of \$22,640, primarily for water quality monitoring.

Current mixture of funding sources:

- Spring Membership Appeal totaled \$4,735, down from \$8,492 in 2023.
- Fall Appeal totaled \$4,833 up from \$4,781 in 2023.
- Major Donors \$40,442.61 up from \$33,531 in 2023.
- Contracts equaled \$915; up from \$647 in 2023.
- Business support totaled \$14,525 up slightly from \$14,230 in 2023.
- Grants totaled \$17,979.85, up from \$16,762 in 2023.

In partnership with Housatonic Valley Association (HVA), Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT), Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), Trout Unlimited (TU), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA) we were again awarded Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration grant for the Berkshire Clean, Cold & Connected Coalition.

Grants from Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, Whipstock Hill Preservation Society, and Watershed United Vermont support our water quality monitoring work.

We spent down \$5,415 of a \$50,000 Attorney General payout tagged for monitoring efforts in MA.

Cultural Council of Northern Berkshire supported Haiku on the Hoosic and the Massachusetts Cultural Council supported RiverFest.

Proceeds from two businesses donated half their program income. We also received income for one eco-poetry class with MCLA.

### Many thanks to our business sponsors & grantors!

**Ridgetop Society**

**Allen & Company Inc.**

2024

**Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation**

**Cultural Council of Northern Berkshire**

**Massachusetts Cultural Council**

**MA Division of Ecological Restoration**

**MountainOne**

**Whipstock Hill Preservation Society**

**Watershed United Vermont**

**Watershed Guardian**

**A-1 Septic \* Greylock Federal Credit Union**

**Offerings for Community Building \* Wild Soul River**

**Tri State Area Federal Credit Union**

**Stream Advocate**

**Adams Community Bank \* Atlantis Corporation East**

**Becks Printing \* Berkshire Photovoltaics \* Caretaker Farm**

**Cain Hibbard & Myers PC \* Jack Miller Contractors \* rk MILES**

**Pioneer Fish & Game \* Second Chance Composting**

**South Williamstown Community Association \* West Oil Company**

**General**

**Berkshire Outfitters \* Waubeeka Golf Links**



**HooRWA.org**



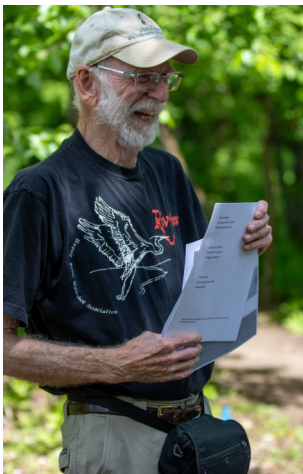


## Programming & Projects

HooRWA held and/or participated in 26 events in 2024. Where attendance was taken, we know we touched 631 lives.

At our Annual Meeting and State of the River, Alison Dixon, formerly of the Housatonic Valley Association, was honored with the Tanzman Friend of the River Award for her assistance with our ongoing water quality monitoring work and training staff, volunteers, and interns in MA State protocols for data collection. Our presentation was by ecosystem ecologist Allison Gill on “Land to Water: Managing Terrestrial Landscapes to Support Healthy Waterways.”

The bulk of our public programming was in collaboration with local businesses Wild Soul River and Offerings for Community Building. HooRWA received half the proceeds from these monthly programs. One series “Foraging Walk” was hosted at The Clark Art Institute and the other series “Wild Edible and Medicinal Plant Walk” was hosted at several sites in Williamstown. HooRWA also participated in the Williamstown 4th of July Parade. We tabled twice at Wild Oats Market. We co-lead river and trailside clean ups on the Green River in Williamstown and the Hoosic in North Adams. And upon request, we facilitated an “Eco-Poetry” class for MCLA at Natural Bridge State Park in North Adams, MA.



Through a Cultural Council Northern Berkshires grant, HooRWA facilitated a Haiku on the Hoosic project. We held 2 workshops, solicited haiku from the public, and held a celebratory event at TOURISTS in North Adams.

Due to a batch of enthusiastic teens shouting jubilantly at us as we walked by in the 2023 Williamstown 4th of July Parade, we brought back RiverFest, in collaboration with Trout Unlimited Taconic Chapter. RiverFest was held at The Spruces in Williamstown, MA in August.

We hosted three service learning students from MA College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) to assist us with a bank stabilization project and preliminary preparations for RiverFest. You can visit the demonstration site at Rural Lands Williamstown.

Our two summer interns, one from Williams College and one returning from MCLA, contributed significantly to our water quality monitoring work. They also assisted with RiverFest, general outreach, highlighted their work through blogs and social media, and helped us with trail projects including a memorial bench installation for the late and beloved Tom Hyde, a former longtime board member and president.

HooRWA finds it immensely beneficial to work in collaboration with sibling organizations and coalitions. 2024 Community partners included: Berkshire Clean Cold & Connected Coalition, Hoosic River Revival, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, Rural Lands, South Williamstown Community Association, Trout Unlimited Taconic Chapter, and Williams College.



## Advocacy

In 2024, HooRWA signed on with other organizations and corresponded with State officials, on concerns including:

- Specialty Minerals landfill expansion project, Adams, MA
- Wetlands Protection Act regulations as part of MassDEP's "Climate Resilience 1.0" package.
- MA Drought Bill w/MA Rivers Alliance
- EPA requirement to General Electric Company (GE) to upgrade the culvert that carries Mill Brook under Roaring Brook Road in Lenox as part of their plan to "recondition and upgrade" Roaring Brook Road.
- Breach concerns at former Country Club in Clarksburg, MA
- Federal budget support w/American Rivers to protect USA rivers



## 2024 Board of Directors

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***Together we can be a force of Nature in cleaning up, reviving, and sustaining our watershed's health and well-being.***