

# **onservation Times**

Newsletter of the Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District, Inc.

January 2008

## ***District Launches New Pet Waste Program: GIVE A BARK FOR A CLEAN STATE PARK!***

Anyone who has been to Chatfield Hollow State Park in Killingworth knows that it is not just a favorite of hikers, bikers, climbers and horseback riders; it is also well loved by dogs and their human companions. People and dogs alike enjoy the beauty and recreational value of the brook that meanders through the park, and the large central pond where swimmers can enjoy the water on a warm summer day. All of this sounds idyllic, and is generally the case—except when it rains. Surface runoff from on and near the paved loop road, along with “poop” from our four legged companions (whether dog or horse), can end up in the brook and pond. Water testing in the swimming area by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has closed the pond to bathing on a number of occasions due to high levels of bacteria. As a result, DEP developed a Total Maximum Daily Load (see sidebar) to help reduce bacteria levels, and ensure the bathing beach is open and safe for contact recreation (e.g. swimming).

One of the park rules is that visitors must pick up and remove all waste, including pet waste. Many dog walkers, however, do not collect their pets' waste. Unfortunately, the park does not have enough staff to constantly monitor activities or enforce park rules. Waste from dog visitors was identified as the primary potential source of bacteria to the stream and pond.

This past spring the District developed and initiated a pet waste education and outreach campaign focused on Chatfield Hollow State Park in collaboration with the DEP. The purpose is to build awareness of the health and environmental risks of dog waste, and encourage park users to pick up after their pets. In addition to installing five new “all-in-one” pet waste stations in the park (see photo), the campaign included in-park education and distribution of information outside the park. The District staffed a table in the park (see photos), talked to visitors about picking up after their pets, and handed out “Doggie Bags” with treats for dogs (biscuits) and humans (hand sanitizer and educational materials).

Educational materials developed for the campaign include a postcard, a poster and a website. Printed materials were



In-park campaign table (above, right), pet waste station (below)



### ***Definition:***

#### **TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD**

A TMDL establishes the maximum amount of pollutant that a water body can take in without adverse impacts to fish, wildlife, recreation, or other public uses.

The end result is a percentage reduction goal for the pollutant that must be achieved to meet water quality standards.

For example, based on the TMDL, Chatfield Hollow's Schreeder Pond requires a 5% reduction in bacteria levels to meet state standards for contact recreation.

distributed in the park and at area veterinary offices and pet stores. The campaign website has information and additional resources for dog owners (go to [www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal](http://www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal) and click on the “*Give a Bark*” link).

So far the response has been overwhelmingly positive—especially with park visitors and staff at the veterinary offices. Future plans include outreach to horseback riders and developing a Public Service Announcement. Similar campaigns may also be launched at other state parks.

*The Give a Bark project was made possible by a US EPA Clean Water Act Section 319 grant administered by the CT DEP. Doggie Bags included generous donations from the all-natural dog treat company, Blue Dog Bakery.*

## District Provides Community's Link to Coginchaug River Study

In an effort to protect and improve the health of the Coginchaug River, the District is working with staff from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the DEP on a watershed study sponsored by these two agencies. In addition to serving on a local advisory committee, the District took the lead in planning and coordinating a series of river-based education and outreach activities to inform and engage the community, and help connect people to their river. We held a scenic and informative hike at the Northend Peninsula in Middletown at the confluence of the Coginchaug and Mattabeset Rivers attended by over 30 people; led a productive river cleanup at Veteran's Park in Middletown with 24 volunteers in conjunction with Connecticut River Watershed Council's Source to Sea Cleanup; and, as part of our Connecticut River Watch Program, conducted a bioassessment of the river at Wadsworth Falls State Park in Middlefield on a very chilly grey day with seven intrepid community members.

Looking forward, we are planning a canoe/kayak trip on the Coginchaug in the spring. We hope you can join us!



Northend Peninsula hike participants enjoy the view of Boggy Meadow while learning about the area's special features, natural resource concerns, and future plans for public access and recreation.

## Track Down Surveys Point the Way to a Cleaner Mattabeset

Willow Brook, Chestnut Brook, and part of the Mattabeset River, all in the Town of Cromwell, were the focus of Mattabeset watershed track down surveys conducted recently by District staff. Track down surveys are intensive stream walks designed to identify existing and potential pollution sources within a local watershed. Our explorations covered nearly seven miles of stream and enabled us to locate and document the conditions of 68 stormwater outfalls, 29 stream crossings, five debris dumps and five areas of extreme erosion. The District is now completing study reports with recommendations for how best to tackle the worst of these pollution sources. Addressing these problems will go a long way toward lowering levels of bacteria, metals, toxins and sediment in the affected streams. Our ultimate goal is to facilitate restoration efforts in each local watershed that will lead to these streams being removed from the state's list of impaired waters.

The areas surveyed this year, in combination with last year's surveys of Coles Brook and Little Brook, create a single large block of the Mattabeset watershed that has been evaluated in a comprehensive manner. The data will be used to complete a watershed-wide companion project, a Comparative Subwatershed Analysis. This Geographic Information System (GIS) based study will help identify restoration priorities and focus water quality improvement efforts throughout the Mattabeset watershed.

## Summer Intern Helps "Track Down" Pollution in the Mattabeset

This past summer the District was lucky to have Kathryn (Kate) Woodruff as an intern working on our track down surveys and the "Give a Bark" campaign (see first page story). Kate, a graduate of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies Master's program, had an ideal background to help us move toward our goal of restoring the Mattabeset. We thank Kate wholeheartedly for her hard work, and wish her the best in her new position with the UConn NEMO and CLEAR programs.



*Funding for our summer intern was provided by a US EPA Clean Water Act Section 319 Grant administered by the CT DEP and a very generous grant from The Rockfall Foundation.*



## Connecticut River Watch Program News

CRWP continues to involve Connecticut River watershed community members in studies of river health and promote river stewardship through several types of monitoring activities. In addition to the Coginchaug River bioassessment conducted this past fall (see above), CRWP activities include ongoing bioassessments in the Eightmile, Hockanum and Blackledge Rivers, as well as periodic visual inspection of Mattabeset watershed streams conducted by VIP (Visual Inspection Program) volunteers. To learn more about CRWP and how you can get involved in monitoring your local river, contact Jane Brawerman at (860) 346-3282 or [jbrawerman@conservect.org](mailto:jbrawerman@conservect.org), or visit us on the web at [conservect.org/ctrivercoastal](http://conservect.org/ctrivercoastal).

## DISTRICT HOLDS 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING: Ted Sergi Speaks about the New Connecticut Science Center in Hartford

At our 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting held October 24, 2007, friends of conservation, District Board members and staff were treated to a glimpse of the new CT Science Center by guest speaker Ted Sergi, President and CEO of the museum. In his remarks, Ted stressed the need to excite young people about science, and explained how the museum's interactive, experiential approach will inspire that excitement. The Science Center, slated to open in Hartford in 2008, will feature several permanent exhibits, one of them focused entirely on the Connecticut River. Of particular interest to our District, *A River of Life* will explore the river's watershed, its history and changes over time, the life it supports, and how we monitor its health.



## Natural Resource Management Plans Support Sensitive Use of Westbrook-owned Natural Areas

District staff completed three Natural Resource Assessment and Management Plans this year for the Horse Hill Gorge, Horse Hill Woods, and Salt Island Overlook open space properties in the Town of Westbrook. Each plan is the result of an intensive on-site evaluation, followed by an in-depth desktop GIS analysis. The plans provide Westbrook with vital information about existing natural resources, management strategies for protecting those resources, and recommendations for how best to facilitate public enjoyment of the properties. Additionally, the plans will assist the town in applying for grant funds needed to realize future goals for the properties.

Natural Resource Assessment and Management Plans are an excellent example of the kinds of fee-based services that the District can offer, at a reduced rate, to our local municipalities.

Large mature trees, meandering streams, and unique rock outcrops are just some of the natural resource features that are now permanently protected through the Town of Westbrook's open space acquisitions.



## 2007 Conservation Award Recipients Congratulations!

### Environmental Professional

Kim O'Rourke  
Recycling Coordinator  
City of Middletown

### Municipalities of the Year

Eightmile River Watershed  
Towns of East Haddam,  
Lyme & Salem

### Teacher of the Year

Paula Courtemanche  
New Britain High School

### Cooperator

Mapleleaf Farm, Hebron

### Communications/Media

Ken Simon  
SimonPure Productions

### Special Merit

Steve McLarty  
Coastland Enterprises

Middletown BioBlitz 2007  
Steering Committee

### Certificates of Appreciation

Gary Crump &  
Gloria Priam  
Priam Vineyards

Larry McCulloch  
Chamard Vineyards

Mark & Mindy Yuknat  
CT River Expeditions

John Dolishny  
General Manager  
Tanger Outlet Center

Thomas D. Comer, CPA  
Comer and Company, LLC



Anthony Irving, Lyme, and Brad Parker, East Haddam (top); Tom O'Dell and Ken Simon (middle); Tom O'Dell and BioBlitz Steering Committee members Valerie Marinelli, David Wagner, Ellen Lukens, Sheila Stoane, Ron Klattenberg and Katchen Coley (bottom).

## District News & Upcoming Events

### MEET OUR NEW STAFF AND BOARD MEMBER

#### *Eric S. Mosher, Watershed Projects Coordinator*

In May 2007 Eric Mosher joined the District as the Watershed Projects Coordinator. Eric has an M.S. from UConn in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology with a focus in plant ecology. He is a former CRWP volunteer, an avid hiker and canoeist, and a long-time conservationist. We welcome Eric as a great addition to our District team!



Eric in the field. . .tracking down pollution in Willow Brook

#### *Timothy Myjak, Board of Directors*

Join us in welcoming Tim Myjak to our Board. Tim has a B.S. in Natural Resource Management, and is a consulting Environmental Scientist focusing on assessment and compliance. A resident of East Haddam, Tim has a strong life-long interest in open space protection and water resource conservation.

### STILL A SUCCESS! 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CRWP BENEFIT RIVER CRUISE

What could be better than a cruise on the Connecticut River with a glass of wine and wonderful local food? A graceful swallow ballet at sunset! Once again, the Cruise and Wine Tasting to benefit CRWP was a great success due to the enthusiasm of our many sponsors and participants. Special thanks to *RiverQuest* owners Mark and Mindy Yuknat, Gary Crump and Gloria Priam of Priam Vineyards, and Larry McCulloch of Chamard Vineyards for their generous contributions. New to this year's cruise was a gemstone raffle, thanks to the charitable donation of a pair of Brazilian garnets by supporter Jim Sipperly.

### UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

#### **READING THE LAND: A PRACTICAL WORKSHOP FOR REALTORS**

**Tuesday, March 4, 2008, 9 AM to 12:30 PM** (snow date Wednesday, March 5th)  
deKoven House, 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT

Attention Realtors! Earn 3 Continuing Education Units at this half-day workshop. Learn about web-based soil maps, get the facts about septic systems and wetland permits, and hear about *Low Impact Development* practices. For details go to [www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal](http://www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal) or phone the District at (860) 346-3282.

#### **BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND! RAIN GARDEN WORKSHOP**

**Tuesday, March 4, 2008, 7 to 9 PM** (snow date Thursday, March 6th)  
UConn Extension Center, Rte. 154, Haddam, CT

Learn to design, plant and maintain your very own Rain Garden! Fun, easy, and aesthetically pleasing, a rain garden will make a difference in your yard, neighborhood, and local watershed. Contact the District at (860) 346-3282 and register today for this very exciting workshop!

#### **17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SHRUB AND SEEDLING SALE — April 25, 26 & 27, 2008**

**NEW Location! Old Saybrook Shopping Center at Boston Post Rd. & Elm St.**  
Looking for exquisite native plants? We are offering a wide variety of shrubs, grasses, ferns, flowering perennials, and tree seedlings native to Connecticut. For a brochure and order form phone us at (860) 346-3282, or visit us online at [www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal](http://www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal). There are only limited quantities of some plants, so don't be disappointed—send in your **pre-sale order by April 2, 2008**.

### January 2008

The Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District, Inc. is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the sound use and management of our natural resources through technical assistance and education.

#### **Board of Directors**

Thomas M. ODell, Westbrook, *Chair*  
Alison Guinness, East Haddam, *V. Chair*  
Michael Lutz, Higganum, *Treasurer*  
Cindy Gaudino, Middletown, *Secretary*  
Jim Costello, East Haddam  
Gary Crump, Colchester  
Christopher Holden, Portland  
Timothy Myjak, East Haddam  
Brian O'Connor, Clinton  
David Papallo, Haddam  
Mark Yuknat, Essex

#### **District Staff**

Jane L. Brawerman  
*Executive Director*  
Wendy Goodfriend  
*Natural Resource Specialist*  
Barbara A. Davis  
*Office Administrator*  
Eric S. Mosher  
*Watershed Projects Coordinator*  
Ken Geisler  
*Senior GIS Analyst*

The District serves the towns of Berlin, Chester, Clinton, Colchester, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, Essex, Haddam, Hebron, Killingworth, Lyme, Madison, Marlborough, Middlefield, Middletown, New Britain, Newington, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Portland, Rocky Hill, Salem and Westbrook.

The Board of Directors hold public meetings every fourth Wednesday, 7:00 PM, at the deKoven House Community Center in Middletown. All programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

**Conservation Times** is published by:  
Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District, Inc.  
deKoven House Community Center  
27 Washington Street  
Middletown, CT 06457  
Phone: (860) 346-3282  
FAX: (860) 346-3284



[www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal](http://www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal)



What's the **One Thing** you can do to conserve energy?

To find out, go to [www.onethingct.com](http://www.onethingct.com) and learn how you can conserve energy whether you are at home, at work, on the road, or on the farm.