2023 ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION



Protecting and preserving the natural resources of the Farmington River Watershed through **research**, **education**, **stweardship**, and **advocacy** - for you, for all, forever

2023 BROUGHT HIGHS AND (F)LOWS

Compared to last years drought conditions, this year's rainfall was historic. In June we were about normal for rainfall but by August, we were experiencing 40% more rain than normal. This translated to swollen tributaries, the river reaching bankfull and flood stages, and reports of erosion. Flooding is the most common natural disaster in the US and 41 million Americans are at risk from flooding.

Goodwin Dam had lots of water in the spillway due to historic rains combined with MDC's lack of releasing water from their 10 BG water storage in Colebrook River Lake Reservoir due to contract negotiations between MDC and USACE.

FRWA was lucky to be at the table to assist with the effort to protect MDC's Colebrook Reservoir Lands. In July 2023, MDC signed an agreement to sell a conservation easement for 5,500 acres of MDC's Colebrook Reservoir lands to Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy if the Connecticut DPH approves MDC's abandonment permit application. This is a historic win for the Farmington River Community as it preserves those 5,500 acres as forested habitat and preserves the watershed with the same protections that drinking water reservoirs across the state have.



Goodwin Dam spillway in action after historic rainfalls in 2023



Executive Director Aimee Petras speaking at the press conference regarding the agreement between MDC and NCLC

REMEMBERING DAVID SINISH



FRWA mourns and remembers David Sinish, who we sadly lost this past June. For more than 40 years David championed the Farmington River. Many accomplishments of the FRWA would not have happened without his vision, guidance, deep knowledge, and understanding of the river. His generosity, gentle spirit, sense of humor, and persistent advocacy made him a wonderful conservation partner. The impact David Sinish had on the river and watershed was profound and will continue to inspire us.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING OF 2023

Bacteria Monitoring

From June through September, FRWA staff, interns, and one volunteer monitored 59 sites for *E.coli*. There are 17 sites in Massachusetts and 42 in Connecticut, spanning the entire watershed. We extend our gratitude to the Town of Simsbury's Water Pollution Control Authority for allowing us to utilize their lab to analyze our samples.



Summer Interns learning how to take bacteria samples

Water Temperature

FRWA installed 3 new temperature loggers in Massachusetts, to accompany work being done with our Berkshire Clean, Cold, and Connected (BCCC) partnership. In Connecticut, 18 loggers were retrieved and 17 were redeployed throughout the Farmington River and it's tributaries.



FRWA Staff deploying a conductivity logger in Becket, MA

Chloride / Conductivity Research

FRWA continued to sample 24 sites throughout CT for chloride, in partnership with the Izaak Walton League of America's Salt Watch program. Based on the data gathered, FRWA decided to expand the chloride program to include continuous conductivity loggers in 8 CT sites and 2 MA sites with potential to reach toxic levels of chloride.

Stream Crossing Assessments

FRWA has been busy working away at stream crossings in Sandisfield, Becket, and Otis for the BCCC partnership in MA. All crossing assessments in Sandisfield have been completed, with the final 80 having been assessed in 2023. FRWA completed 47 assessments in Becket, and we are prepping to continue this work through the winter. In CT, a total of 53 crossings were completed in Barkhamsted, Bloomfield, Canton, Granby, Hartland, and Windsor.

Aquatic Insect Sampling

This fall, FRWA has trained 28 volunteers to assist in assessment of streams following the CT DEEP RBV (Riffle Bioassessment for Volunteers) Protocol. Using aquatic macroinvertebrate assessments, CT DEEP is able to identify high quality stream habitats. FRWA has submitted 10 samples to CT DEEP, and the results will be published in an annual report.



FRWA and McLean Game Refuge interns sorting aquatic insects

MONITORING IN 2023

Bacteria Sites: **59**Bacteria Samples Analyzed: **354**Bacteria QC Samples Analyzed: **144**Chloride Sites: **24**Chloride Samples Analyzed: **202**Conductivity Logger Sites: **10**Temperature Logger Sites: **23**2023 Temp Data Points: **138,192**Stream Crossings Assessed: **175**

Cyanobacteria Research

FRWA has once again monitored for cyanobacteria blooms in Rainbow Reservoir in Windsor, thanks to funding from an Aquatic Invasive Species grant from CT DEEP and assistance from LFSWS. Due to large amounts of precipitation and flooding on the river this summer, there was no bloom. However, data gathered suggests that it is possible for a bloom to occur again. Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB's) have been reported on Rainbow Reservoir in 2019, 2020, and 2022. Blooms occur in July and August, and they pose a health risk to people, pets and wildlife.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ON THE RIVER

In the last year, FRWA has received incredible support and enthusiasm from our community across the watershed. We are so thankful for the hard work of our volunteers and members, who help us in our work to preserve and protect the Farmington River and its watershed; we could not do this without you all.

In 2023, we had our annual river clean-up, water chestnut removals on Barber Pond in Bloomfield, and volunteer trainings on aquatic insect populations. We participated in Canton's farmers market, Bloomfield's Summer Concert Series, the Burlington Fish Hatchery's 100th year anniversary celebration, and so much more that brought us closer to everyone in our watershed community.

FRWA continued the Water Wanderer's camp program with Environmental Learning Centers of CT, which brought a group of kids down to Long Island Sound to learn about the diverse habitats. FRWA also continued its partnership with Bristol Eastern High School, who participate in rain gardens plantings and upkeep, along with taking a trip to Project Oceanology where they learned about marine research on LIS, and got up close with some cool marine organisms. This summer, FRWA also hosted paddles with youth groups, including ELCCT and NAG, to get people out on the water and learning about our river.



Volunteers leaning how to sample aquatic insects at our RBV training in Salmon Brook

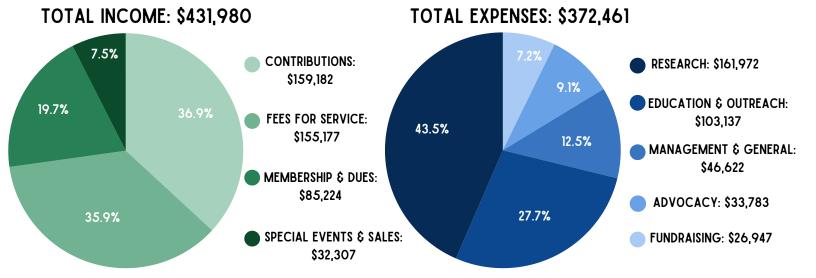


BEHS students learn about marine research aboard the Enviro Lab II



ELCCT Water Wanderers looking for crabs on Hammonasset Beach

FINANCIALS: JULY '22 - JUN '23



FRWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We salute our fantastic Board for their hard work and steadfast commitment to protecting and restoring the Farmington River Watershed!

NOMINATED FOR RENEWED THREE YEAR TERMS

Robin Baran John Laudati Debbie Leonard John E. Robinson

PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2024 (ONE YEAR TERM)

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Vice President, John Laudati
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Secretary, Beckie Sahl
Treasurer, Chris Whalen

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FRWA STAFF

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Laura Hart - Conservation Director
Paige Vichiola - Watershed Manager
Heather Geist - Education and Outreach Manager
Ciara Kilkenny - Program Assistant

FRWA SUMMER INTERNS

Olivia Bechard Emily Markelon Christian Reboul

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

MACROINVERTEBRATES & RBV

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Dave Capello Nova Hart Hill (2 year old)

Tessa Petras-Lkhayer

Paul Spirito

Dr. Ken Wagner

CT DEEP

Camp Shalom

Ensign-Bickford Company

Farmington River Power Company

Gifts of Love Farm

Miss Porter's School

Simsbury Water Pollution Control

Authority

UCONN CESE Laboratory

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Burlington Fish Hatchery

Environmental Learning Centers of CT

Lewis Mills High School

Montessori School of Greater Hartford

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Chet Reed

Malcolm Robertson

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Ted Rosenkrantz

Vicki Hammer Rosenkrantz

Carl Swanson

Rick Warters

Farmington Valley Trout Unlimited

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2023

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Ann Jurkiewicz

Mike Krammen

Leeane Marvin

Jen Perga

Don Rieger

SALT WATCH AND CHLORIDE MONITORING

Sally Rieger Lisa Salazar

Collinsville Canoe & Kayak

Farmington River Anglers Association

Friends of Main Street Winsted

Humanscale

Montesorri School of Greater Hartford

Scout Troop 77 Canton

Scout Troop 263 Windsor Locks

Simsbury High School Earth Adovcates Club

Town of Windsor

Town of Winsted

Waste Material Trucking

Izaak Walton League of America

Chris Barba

Dibo Cai

Tom Cameron

Tom Carpenter

Kathy Dolan

Michael Krammen

Kaeden Stephanik

Han Solo Silva (dog)

Dave Tolli

Renee Turley (Lewis Mills High School)

HOBO TEMPERATURE MONITORING

Kieran Kilkenny Tom Vichiola

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Bristol Eastern High School City of Bristol Parks & Recreation

Northwest Conservation District

Town of Canton

City of Winchester

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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IBM International Foundation
Raytheon Matching Gifts
Symetra Gives - Employee Donations
UBS

United Health Group Travelers

United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley Whole Foods

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Horst Engineering
Medtronics
Symetra
United Health Group

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Camp Shalom
Connecticut River Conservancy
City of Bristol Parks & Recreation
ns
City of Bristol Public Works
City of Winchester
Collinsville Canoe & Kayak
CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection
Farmington River Anglers Association
Feldman, Perlstein & Greene, LLC
Friends of Main Street Winsted
Humanscale

Metacomet Tours

Montessori School of Greater Hartford

Murphy, Laudati, Kiel & Rattigan, LLC

Non-Profit Accountability Group (NAG)

Northwest Conservation District

Scout Troop 77 Canton

Scout Troop 263 Windsor Locks

Simsbury High School Earth Advocates club

Simsbury Water Pollution Control Facility

Town of Canton

Town of Windsor

Waste Material Trucking Company

Winding Trails

Izaak Walton League of America

Knox, Inc.

COMMUNITY GROUP SUPPORT

Barkhamsted Elementary School
Big Pond Association, Inc.
Bristol Garden Club
Carmon Community Funeral Homes
CT Fly Fisherman's Association
Farmington Land Trust
Farmington River Anglers Assoc.
Farmington Valley Trout Unlimited
Garden Club of Avon
Gardeners of Simsbury
Jacklin Rod & Gun Club
New Hartford Land Trust
Traprock Ridge Land Conservancy
U.F.C.W. Local 919

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City of Bristol

FILM FEST SPONSORS '22 & '23

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Farmington River Coordinating Committee - FRCC

Town of Bloomfield

Town of Burlington

Feldman, Perlstein & Greene, LLC

Town of Canton

Lower Farmington River Wild & Scenic - LFSWS

PKT Development

FlexWork Sports Management

Kuhlberg Orthodontics

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Town of Granby

ShopRite - Joseph Family Markets, LLC

Suburban Sanitation Service

Town of Avon
Town of Barkhamsted
Town of Bloomfield
Town of Burlington
Town of Canton
Town of Colebrook
Town of East Granby
Town of Farmington
Town of Granby
Town of Hartland
Town of New Hartford
Town of Norfolk
Town of Plainville
Town of Simsbury
Town of Winchester
Town of Windsor

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CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection Diversify Whitewater Farmington River Coordinating Committee (FRCC) Farmington Valley Trout Unlimited The Fortin Foundation Inc. Hartford Foundation for Public Giving Housatonic Valley Association Kate Emery Fund with HFPG Lower Farmington River & Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Committee (LFSWS) Lyman B. Brainerd Family Foundation Marion & Ellsworth Grant Fund with HFPG National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Robert J. Bauer Family Foundation Save the Sound Sorenson Pearson Family Fdn. Vernon K. Krieble Foundation Walker Group with HFPG Werth Family Foundation

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