

WPWA
Executive Director Report
June & July 2013

WPWA Grant Initiatives: Secured

Shannock Fish Passage: - Purpose: Restore access to entire Pawcatuck River.

Final phase (Kenyon Dam) is in construction, behind schedule (1 week by contract, 3 weeks by intended schedule). Project is on budget but is expected to go over budget and possibly beyond current funding. When/if overage is identified, more funding will be secured from funders contingency pool.

EPA Urban Rivers – Purpose: Develop fish sampling protocols for Woonasquatucket River.

Protocols under development. 2 volunteer trainings conducted in June, 1 conducted in July, 1 planned for Aug. Training revisions expected. Heather attended week-long June fish training in ME. Recommend not pursuing future EPA grants due to costly admin.

National Wildlife Foundation – Purpose: Introduce urban youth to kayaking & watershed ecology.

12 trips total conducted benefitting 150+ children engaging 12 volunteers

RI Rivers Council – Purpose: Provide Watershed Science Teacher Training.

All 4 trainings & final report completed, moderately successful

RI Trail Advisory Committee – Purpose: Remove trees blocking rivers.

Some sections cleared. Behind schedule due to lack of capacity & weather. In planning phase with recently engaged Eagle Scout group.

Lattner Family – Purpose: Fund various program and staff expenses.

Engaged 3 middle schools & 78 students in ecology and kayaking

Champlin Capital Revolving Fund - Purpose: \$250K fund provides WPWA capacity to implement reimburseable grant programs.

Alan, Chris & Pete met with Champlin reps on 7/25 to discuss their request to pull back some or all funding. Request was withdrawn based on funds currently fully utilized for fish passage grants. Will revisit with Champlin in early 2014.

RI Foundation INE - Purpose: Support expenses of WPWA planning & development.

Alan and Chris continue to fully participate in INE meetings and workshops, report to board on findings, and implement lessons learned.

USDA's NRCS – Purpose: Fund removal of invasive Purple Loosestrife on upper Pawcatuck River.

Monitored for presence & absence and deployed beetles to mitigate for Loosestrife.

WPWA Grant Initiatives: Pending

Champlin Foundation – Purpose: Complete final phase of campus renovations.

Met with Champlin Foundation reps & secured support for \$75K rehab of both campus buildings. Committee to make final decision in November 2013.

Lower Pawcatuck Fish Passage – Purpose: Improve fish passage at 3 lower dams.

WPWA & RIDEM to meet to define roles in fundraising and oversight of improvements at White Rock, Potter Hill & Bradford. RIDEM & ACoE now performing preliminary feasibility at White Rock

WPWA Funded Initiatives

Programs – Purpose: Generate revenue, increase visibility, cultivate new members, & engage existing members. *more info: www.wpwa.org/events.php*

4 Paddles, 46 participants, 2 canceled due to weather, 3 remaining

Maps – Purpose: Develop & produce web based (printable) WPWA paddle maps.

2 maps produced covering entire Wood River. 3 covering entire Pawcatuck under development. Design funded by RI Blueways, WPWA staff time unfunded.

Campus – Purpose: Serve as primary contact point for members & public.

7 TNC Youth Crew workers & Staff spent 6 hours removing invasive plants.

Water Quality Monitoring - Purpose: Continue 20+ years of data collection.

This \$10K annual expense remains unfunded, stable funding must be secured

Earth Day Event – Purpose: Engage community & foster watershed stewardship.

Volunteers & staff assisted in river/water access cleanups on 4/20 & 4/21. EZ Waste Systems, Inc. donated a dumpster & tipping fees were waived.

Multi-Agency Initiatives

Wood River Stream Gage– Purpose: Facilitate reactivation of gage for flood predication and seek short & long term USGS O&M funding lost due to federal sequestration.

7/12/13 Met with RIEMA, USGS, Natl Weather Service, RIDEM, Water Res. Bd, and municipal reps. Agreed that RIEMA & WPWA would cost share funding for 1 year of O& M (\$12K –WPWA \$4K RIEMA) effective immediately. As of 8/10 gage was reactivated based on RIEMA payment.

Chris & Pete working to raise funds. Will contract with USGS once funding is obtained. WPWA will work with municipalities to assume O&M costs for year 2 and beyond. Positive press exposure for WPWA has resulted.

Watershed Counts – Purpose: Annual reporting on environmental trends in RI.

River & lake water quality reported on at State House on 4/23. Future of Watershed Counts is unclear due to the disbanding its lead, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program.

Wild & Scenic – Purpose: Obtain NPS funding for protection and improvement of the watershed's recreational & ecological values.

The Pawcatuck Protection Act passed by the US House on June 12.

Companion bill passed by the US Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on April 23. Full Senate and Executive approval not yet achieved.

WPWA & NPS have nearly completed a preliminary suitability report that indicates the river sections do qualify for W&S status. Partner reps met with Sec. of the Interior Jewell, Sen.'s Reed & Whitehouse, Rep. Cicilline to advocate for bill passage.

Fundraiser Event – Purpose: Raise unrestricted funds and increase exposure.

Partnered with St. Paul's School alumni (Steve Crandall & Sen. Whitehouse) to perform river cleanup & auction that generated appx. \$3K (net).

Shannock Tour – Purpose: Promote and report on WPWA projects to funders.

7/9 Chris provides well received tour of fish passage projects to Regional director, deputy director and staffers from USFWS.

Hopkinton Harvest Festival – Purpose: Partner with like-minded local groups to engage new audiences and share resources.

WPWA & The Friends of the Hopkinton Land Trust to share a booth at October festival.

Membership

2013-2014 membership prices increased and updated on all media

Revenue comparison expected in August

Membership renewal letter sent out on 6/12/13 (late)

237 members renewed as of 7/24/13

217 members, whose membership expired 5/31/13, have not renewed

110 members, whose membership expired 5/31/12, have not renewed

74 members, whose membership expired 5/31/11, have not renewed

71 members, whose membership expired 5/31/10, have not renewed

Renewal reminder stickers, for those who have not renewed as of July 31st, will go on the cover of Spring 2013 Newsletters to be mailed mid August 2013 (late).

Watershed Based Programs

This season WPWA staff (ACA Kayak Safety Certified) has engaged with The Narragansett Indians, Southern New England Paddlers Group, Environmental Council of RI, Operation Military Kids, The Compass School, the Curtis Corner School, Chariho Schools, Greene School, and the public & membership to provide over 15 recreational and educational programs on the river engaging over 350 individuals on a cash and grant supported basis.

August 15th 2013

Fundraising

Request from Friends of the Hopkinton Land Trust for WPWA to serve as its fiscal agent was put on hold per FHLT at a meeting on 6/13.

Dick Holiday has introduced Chris to Robin Doumar (wealthy westerly landowner) who has interest in fish passage. First meeting will be a project tour which will involve discussion of sustainable annual WPWA donation.