



# Blackstone Watershed Collaborative Meeting

July 15, 2022, 10am-12pm

Zoom <https://clarku.zoom.us/j/91977706024> Call: 646-876-9923 Meeting ID: 919 7770 6024

**Attendees:** Zack Blais, Patty Burke, Deb Cary, Nick Cohen, Peter Coffin, Stefanie Covino, Jessica Davis, Greg Doerschler, Bryce DuBois, Allison Hamel, Joanne Holahan, Peter Friedland, Mike Gerel, Susan Gorelick, Colleen Keenan, Ray Kelley, Lori Kennedy, Katie Liming, Paul Mathisen, John Marsland, Kate McPherson, Mark Nimiroski, Heidi Ricci, Heather Parry, Paul Popinchalk, Rebecca Quinones, David Tapscott, Darcy Young, Donna Williams, Jessie Davis, Mike Gerel, Zack Blais

**Recording:** <https://clarku.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=de86805a-35ce-427e-be1a-aed30111f2af>

**Highlighting our Collaborators:** [Patty Burke](#), Pretreatment/Lab Technician, Upper Blackstone Clean Water

- Presentation: [UB Blackstone Collaborative PPT.pdf](#)
- Pretreatment program prevents pollutants from entering the plant
- UBCW conducts voluntary field monitoring for water quality, including nutrient loading, and have 4 continuous temp and DO probes in the river (one before plant, one right after, and two down river) in partnership with UMass Amherst & collaborate with Narragansett Bay Commission
- Water quality data are publicly available: 1979 – 2015 WQ report: <https://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2016/5178/sir20165178.pdf>
- Sludge goes to an incinerator, do not currently pretreat stormwater
- Visitors welcome for a tour! Stef will set one up in the fall

In relation to recent [CSO event in Worcester...](#)

- Sign up for Worcester CSO notifications: <https://www.worcesterma.gov/water-sewer/sewer-system>
- Note: Notifications from Upper Blackstone go to state agencies, Worcester T&G, posted on website, but is separate than the above
- Stef spoke to DPW Sewers 7/14 and this is a regular occurrence in Worcester – it's an overflow of their combined sewer system whenever there's a heavy rain. NOT something we like to see of course, but unfortunately it's a larger, systemic issue of line capacity and not a technical or managerial error and was not associated with the Upper Blackstone CW. Stef will follow up for additional info
- This has likely been happening for decades, but is gaining new attention now with the passage of the MA CSO notification bill. With infrastructure funding and 5,000 additional housing units being built, this is a prominent time to address the CSO.

In relation to Worcester's Integrated Water Resources Management Plan (Integrated Plan):

- [About page here.](#) [Full plan here.](#)
- Submitted to EPA October 2019
- Stef is working with EPA to put together a virtual integrated water plan workshop for Blackstone communities – save the date sometime between Sept 20-22, 2022

## Subgroup Updates

- Municipal Resolutions Supporting Needs Assessment
  - Mendon Select Board meeting on 7/20. Land Use Committee has already voted to approve.
- ZAP 50<sup>th</sup>
  - Looking for volunteers for Steering Team, cleanup captains, and sponsorship
  - Google Drive of media resources:
- Bike/greenway



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- Dick Moore: BRVNHC effort to encourage Massachusetts legislators to include funding for completion of the bikeway and reopening of the Heritage Center in Worcester in the MA Economic Development Bill now under consideration.
- Water quality
  - BRC working on database update with 2004-current data
- University work
  - Paul: Setting up projects in collaboration with City of Worcester, looking for Masters Student funding
- Expedition 2022: Save the date! August 11-14, 2022
  - August 11 Rep. Mary Keefe and Rep. Donahue speaking, have asked Karla from Upper Blackstone to speak as well at press event
  - Festival on August 12, 3-7pm at River Bend Farm in Uxbridge in partnership with DCR, focused on access and other river issues – bring games, arts & crafts, & more!
    - i. Let Stef know if your organization is interested in tabling!
  - End of paddle speakers & celebration on August 14, 4pm at Indian Point Park/Narragansett Beer in Providence
- Other: Water chestnut/invasives work group?
  - Water chestnut pulls best done June–July
  - Short video Worcester's Lakes & Ponds program made about the issue of water chestnuts here: <https://play.champds.com/worcesterma/event/1361>

## Partner Updates

- [STEW-MAP](#): Presentation from Bryce Dubois, RISD. The Stewardship Mapping and Assessment Project (STEW-MAP) of Southern New England is a survey and public database designed to map where stewardship organizations work and how they are connected to each other with the goal of strengthening community capacity for stewardship in this region.
  - If you want to see the full webinar on STEW-MAP, see <https://snepnetwork.org/2022/06/29/the-stewardship-mapping-and-assessment-project-of-southeast-new-england-learn-about-organizations-and-find-new-collaborations-across-snep-watersheds/>
  - Learn more & see resources at <http://snepnetwork.org/stewardship-mapping/>
  - Stewardship broadly defined to comprehensively capture civic actors
  - Data publicly available on: Who works where, where do they get funding, how they're organized, their mission/what do they do, geographic location, etc... and how are they connected?
    - STEW-MAP has produced a data visualization tool, useful to identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination. Dashboard tool will be publicly launched soon!
  - Current efforts are working to expand this to the rest of New England
  - Dashboard not yet live for public review, but hopefully by August
  - Questions/comments? Contact Bryce at [bdubois@risd.edu](mailto:bdubois@risd.edu)
- NBEP Water Clarity Indicator Update – see report [here](#)
- Blackstone Heritage Corridor portage cleanup funding: BHC received a grant from the Narragansett Bay Commission that has funded all the necessary supplies to hold clean ups of the portages of the Blackstone River in Rhode Island before August 31st. If there are any groups that would be interested in joining us for a clean up they can reach out to Molly Cardoza by email or phone.
- Friends of the Blackstone: Connecting with Canoes event series will be expanded to adults with disabilities on the last Thursday of the month through October. Also partnering with Nipmuc Nation on fish ladder projects.



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- CC4ES: Rocking the Boat program teaches urban youth sailing and stewardship skills. Susan would like to partner with organizations in youth outreach
- BVTC has a goal to get 200 youth get on the river at Central Falls Landing

## Discussion of Priority Projects & Criteria

- What are your priority projects for your organization or municipality? How do they overlap between groups? Do you know what they'll cost yet or where to start? Let's get our Collab priorities list going!
- Sewer/CSO issues in the Blackstone and how we can work together to have one voice for improvements
  - Has Worcester's Integrated plan been approved by EPA yet? Update from Sewers.

## Next meetings & Speakers

Zoom link: <https://clarku.zoom.us/j/91977706024> or Call In: 646-876-9923 Meeting ID: 919 7770 6024

**August 19, 2022 Shasten Sherwell**, ORISE Research Fellow, U.S. EPA Southeast New England Program (*conducting research on harmful algal blooms and cyanobacteria impacts on recreation*)

**September 16, 2022 (Speaker TBD)**

**October 21, 2022 (Speaker TBD)**

## Events

- **July 14-16** – RI Land Trust Council Land and Water Conservation Summit. The main day of the summit is July 15, featuring keynote addresses and several workshops on environmental justice, solar development, and more. <https://www.landandwaterpartnership.org/>
- **July 16** – Riverzedge Arts 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summer Block Party. Riverzedge is a member of the Blackstone Commons Group, raising awareness about the River through events this summer. <https://fb.me/e/1zurqXtXo>
- **July 16** – Friends of the Blackstone hosting Connecting with Canoes!
  - Every third Saturday through October (7/16, 8/20, 9/17, 10/15)
- **August 11-14** – Blackstone Commons/Expedition 2022 paddle
  - Uxbridge: River Bend Farm on August 12, 4-6pm
  - Providence: India Point Park/Narragansett Beer on August 14 at 4pm
- **August 27** – ZAP 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Clean ups & Green ups throughout the watershed! Have you signed up yet? See <https://www.zaptheblackstone.com/> to learn more and register your event or you need for volunteers
- **September 11** – ZAP 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration at Old Slater Mill in Pawtucket, RI <https://www.zaptheblackstone.com/>

## Grants:

- **MassDEP NPS Program 604(b) Water Quality Management Planning Grant DUE 8/17**
  - Questions are accepted through 7/6 at 5:00pm. [https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality#604\(b\)-grant-program:-water-quality-management-planning-](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-financial-assistance-watersheds-water-quality#604(b)-grant-program:-water-quality-management-planning-)
- **National Fish & Wildlife Federation (NFWF) DUE 7/21**
  - America the Beautiful Challenge – several grant programs for conservation, stewardship, invasives, connecting waters, capacity building, and more. \$85 Million available.
  - Note: if municipalities or tribes are interested in partnering, the Collaborative will help you apply! Nonprofits are not eligible for the Dept. of Interior funding, which would best align with the Collaborative's goals.



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- 10% match required for states/municipalities; 3% match requirement for tribes/territories  
<https://www.nfwf.org/programs/america-beautiful-challenge/america-beautiful-challenge-2022-request-proposals>
- **MA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (*rolling basis, recommended 6/28*)**
  - Statement of Interest deadline: Rolling, but recommended by 6/28/2022 (Note: Sub-application final State is 10/09/2022)
  - *Activities can include but are not limited to:* stormwater drainage and culvert improvements; floodplain and stream restoration; flood control, diversion, and storage; property acquisition; slope stabilization; infrastructure protection; aquifer storage; seismic and wind retrofits; structure elevations; resilient infrastructure projects
  - **Must fill out and submit a completed Statement of Interest** about project to determine basic eligibility. *Construction Projects Form:* <https://www.mass.gov/forms/fy-2021-mitigation-statement-of-interest-for-construction-projects> *C&CB/Planning/Advance Assistance Form:* <https://www.mass.gov/forms/fy-2021-mitigation-statement-of-interest-for-ccbplanningadvance-assistance>
  - Note: requires use of benefit-cost analysis (BCA), but support provided on first-come first-served basis from MEMA
  - <https://www.mass.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance-hma-grant-programs>
- **SNEP Network: DUE 7/12 by 5pm**
  - Free technical assistance for community projects.
  - Focused on community-scale and/or watershed-scale planning opportunities for communities to build local capacity and move towards more sustainable financing and long-term climate resilience through enhanced stormwater management and ecological restoration efforts.
  - <https://snepnetwork.org/community-assistance-projects-round-3/>
- **RI Save the Lakes: DUE 7/22**
  - Up to \$2,000 to create a new lake association, develop a lake management plan, or otherwise improve lakes against aquatic invasive species, stormwater runoff, etc. (Note: funding CANNOT be used to purchase equipment).
  - Learn more: <http://stlri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/STL-RFP-2022.pdf>
  - Apply at:  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/10heuX1OK09sIFIsdoTSEfvBOLTAoLep\\_wT9FugaxA5M/viewform?edit\\_requested=true](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/10heuX1OK09sIFIsdoTSEfvBOLTAoLep_wT9FugaxA5M/viewform?edit_requested=true)

## Job opportunities:

- **Audubon Society of RI and Providence Stormwater Innovation Center**
  - Stormwater Education & Outreach Coordinator. Smithfield, RI (remote flexibility). FT. \$51,000/yr. BA and 2 years' experience required. "Develop and deliver curriculum and training to stormwater professionals in Rhode Island and southeast New England."
- **RI Conservation District**
  - Civil Engineer Technician. FT hourly starting at \$21/hr. Warwick, RI  
<https://www.easternriconservation.org/job-postings/blog-post-title-one-58aje>
- **TerraCorps**
  - Several Corps positions currently open in MA and RI for an 11-month position Aug-July 2023  
<https://terracorps.org/available-member-positions/>
- **Conservation Law Foundation**



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- Great Bay 2030 Manager. Lead and coordinate a coalition of conservation and environmental organizations working collaboratively to achieve the shared vision of Great Bay 2030. Ability to commute to NH. 5 years' academic/professional experience
- Learn more or apply by emailing Kaylee Keim at [kkeim@bridgepointassociates.net](mailto:kkeim@bridgepointassociates.net)
- **Mass Association of Conservation Districts** (<https://massacd.wordpress.com/employment/>)
  - Grants & Contracts Manager – 10-15 hrs/wk, \$30-40/hr, remote. Letter of interest & resume to [MLEffMACD@gmail.com](mailto:MLEffMACD@gmail.com)
- **EPA** – *coming soon!*
  - Check out [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov) for new EPA scientist and engineering positions to be posted soon (per SNEP Network!)
- **Mass Audubon**
  - Senior Director, Nature in the City Program: <https://www.massaudubon.org/jobs/senior-director-nature-in-the-city-program>
  - Education Coordinator: <https://www.massaudubon.org/jobs/education-coordinator-community-engagement2>
- **Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council**
  - Green Infrastructure Steward (24 hrs/wk), River Ranger, Senior Civil or Environmental Engineer, English/Spanish Interpreter, Community Engagement Coordinator
  - <https://wrwc.org/wp/about/careers/>
- **Buzzards Bay Coalition**
  - Restoration Coordinator, Water Resource Specialist, Land Steward, Youth Program Assistant
  - <https://www.savebuzzardsbay.org/about-us/our-team/job-opportunities/>
- **Save the Pine Barrens**
  - Attorney: environmental, Native American Indian law. FT. Remote/in person Plymouth, MA
  - [www.savethepinebarrens.org](http://www.savethepinebarrens.org) / [environmentwatchesoutheasternma@gmail.com](mailto:environmentwatchesoutheasternma@gmail.com)