



Blackstone Watershed Collaborative Meeting Notes

November 18, 2022, 10am-12pm

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

Attendees

David Tapscott, Cay Denherder, Kate McPherson, Paul Popinchalk, Ted Beauvais, Aiden Humphreys, John Marsland, Greg Doerschler, Hillary King, Logan Torres, Nick Cohen, Rebecca Quinones, Sarah Bower, Tyler (Franklin), Heather Parry, Allison Hamel, Stefanie Covino, Donna Williams, Anne Armstrong, Morgane Houssais, Patti McAlpine

Recording Available:

<https://clarku.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=27a5a711-feb6-45dd-bf39-af51011d1936>

Presentation by David Tapscott & Cay Denherder, Uxbridge Board of Health on their MVP Action Grant

- MVP previously reviewed all stream crossings in town (still need to put in NAACC though)
- This project will look at removal of
 - Home Brew Dam (unknown ownership) to prevent contamination of town drinking well & to restore the ecological integrity
 - Whitins Pond Dam (also unclear ownership) to enhance wetland capacity & reduce flooding upstream as well as protect property & infrastructure downstream, including Crown & Eagle apartments with mostly Section 8 housing
- Property owners along the pond may be concerned about dam removal and loss of the pond (view, property value). The Town is hosting a visioning session to determine what partial or full removal would look like and gather feedback
 - Visioning session to be hosted in March, exact date TBD
 - Develop costs of removal, but also costs of no action & potential impacts
- The project will also focus on water chestnut removal – currently done by hand
- Have a solid core team, but still looking for planning board involvement

Subgroup Updates

- Municipal Resolutions Supporting Needs Assessment
 - 11/28 Auburn Select Board presentation
 - 11/28 Worcester Technology & Environment Subcommittee
- Bike/greenway
- Water quality
 - Grant available from Mass DFW for land conservation and wetland restoration work to improve water quality: <https://www.mass.gov/in-lieu-fee-program>
- University work
 - Are you signed up for ALPINE news? <https://wildlandsandwoodlands.org/alpine/>
 - Academics for Land Protection in New England (ALPINE) is a network of academic institutions committed to increasing the pace of land protection in New England to address the region's environmental challenges and to support nature and people. ALPINE seeks to expand the role that academic institutions can play in conserving the New England landscape by sharing experiences and resources among faculty and staff, students, administrations, and alumni. The network's shared belief is that academic communities can be a powerful force for positive environmental change locally and globally.
 - Currently, only Clark is in the network in this watershed – let's expand!



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Partner Updates

- Congrats to **Worcester Green Corp** for being awarded the *Keep Massachusetts Beautiful* 2022 Rookie Chapter of the Year!
 - WGC is actively looking for volunteers to help maintain pollinator gardens in the fall and winter. Interested? Please email Daniella at dmarie@worcesterchamber.org
- **MA Climate Change Assessment** is open for public comment through 11/16
- **Grafton** wants to know... are there other groups/communities interested in purchasing water chestnut removal equipment? \$85-100k
 - Eco-Harvester <https://weedersdigest.com/eco-harvester-aquatic-weed-harvester/>
 - Eliminates fragmentation by skimming the top and not cutting & can pull by the roots. Only needs 12" water & is a one-person operation.
 - Weedoo Aquaharvester <https://weedooboats.com/weedoo-aquaharvester/>
 - Solar powered, one person operation & only needs 6" of water.
 - Other interested parties: Leicester, Uxbridge, Franklin (bgoodlander@franklinma.gov), (CF/Pawtucket?)
 - Resource for managing aquatic invasive plants: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/list-of-current-and-potential-aquatic-invasive-species>
<https://dem.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur861/files/programs/benviron/water/quality/surfwq/aismaps/transat.pdf>
- Sign up to be a speaker for 2023! <https://forms.gle/ybgyhvSt8WhiRN4m9>
- **BioMap3 now live!** Web-based tool with webinars to be scheduled in the spring!
 - Focused on habitat protection – core species, critical species, and landscapes that support that habitat – includes wetlands, forest, aquatic, etc!
 - Info on what it is, data components, link to map, state & muni priorities, resource center, etc. As well as data downloads
 - Land protection isn't enough; we also need to manage our habitats and includes info on resources & data, including on dam removal!
 - Interactive map with core habitat & critical natural habitats to support those core habitats to see state & local priorities (top % of state priority overall, but also top % of priority within each community too)
 - Does it match with OS plans & documented local priorities? This doesn't consider ownership, just what is the most ecological value
 - <https://biomap-mass-eoea.hub.arcgis.com/>

Legislative/Policy Updates

- Worcester passed the Community Preservation Act! CPA funds are used for open space protection, parks, historic preservation, & community housing.
- MA Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA) has moved out of the Conference Committee and is scheduled for votes by the House and Senate 10/22 & will move to the Governor's desk. See the text of the bill [HERE](#). (MACC)
- **Send an email to MassDEP by November 18** showing your support for their proposed drought conservation regulations to bring water withdrawals into the 21st century by requiring them to conserve water. (*Just click the link – the message is already composed!*) (Mass Rivers)
- Proposed **Water Management Act regulation updates** are open for public comment period through 11/18
- MassDEP has finalized the 2022 **NPDES WWTF permit renewal** (effective 11/5/22). Read it here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/final-medium-wastewater-treatment-facility-general-permit/download>



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Tools You Can Use! Tools & Resources

- **Black Land Stewardship in the Northeast** – UMass Amherst & Cornell University recently released this publication, which includes the personal stories of forestland ownership and stewardship from the perspective of Black landowners in the northeastern United States. Through sharing their stories, the goal is for other landowners and natural resource professionals to learn from the successes, barriers, and opportunities faced on their journey stewarding the land in hopes that these stories raise awareness and provide key insights to the forest conservation community.
<https://masswoods.org/sites/masswoods.org/files/pdf-doc-ppt/Black-Land-Stewardship.pdf>
- **Highstead Foundation** recently released a new report on “*New England’s Climate Imperative: Our Forests as a Natural Climate Solution*” Check it out at <https://highstead.net/library/forests-as-a-natural-climate-solution/>
- **SNEP Network**
 - **Buffer Restoration Guide & Toolkit** assists public and private property owners in designing & implementing buffer restorations and improvements along a river, pond, lake or the coast. Check it out at <https://bufferrestorationguide.org/>
 - **STEWMAP** – Stewardship Mapping online dashboard is coming soon! This public database was 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. Check it out more info at <https://snepnetwork.org/stewardship-mapping-results-products-data/>
 - [SNEP Network New England Stormwater Retrofit Manual](#)
 - **Bylaw review** – how-to workshop recording available: <https://vod.mccam02346.com/CablecastPublicSite/show/7587?channel=4> and a **Storymap** is available here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e37dbafd001a401c8f56b99708f25636>
- **MAPC** (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) has a resource library on **climate resilient land use practices & example regulations**. Check it out at: <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/climate-resilient-land-use-strategies/>

Next meetings

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

January 20, 2023: Stormwater & Water Management 101 (Newt Tedder from EPA R1 & Laura Schiffman from MassDEP)

March 17, 2023: Topic TBD

May 19, 2023: Water Chestnuts in the Blackstone

Events

- **December 4-8:** Restore America’s Estuaries 2022 Coastal & Estuarine Summit in New Orleans, LA
<https://raesummit2022.estuaries.org/>
- **Dec ’22 – April ’23:** Webinar series from [Conservation Finance Learning Lab](#), presented by Highstead Foundation & the Conservation Finance Network

Grants:

- **MA Department of Fish and Game’s In-Lieu Fee Program** – land conservation or aquatic resource restoration projects (all of Blackstone in MA is eligible). Municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and state agencies



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are eligible to apply. Contact Aisling O'Shea at aisling.oshea@mass.gov for more info or to apply. Materials are also available on COMMBUYS under BD-23-1046-COM-COM4-77929. <https://www.mass.gov/in-lieu-fee-program>

- **Due 12/5 FEMA FY22 Building Resilient Infrastructure (BRIC).** MA is allocated \$2M & MEMA intends to use as much of this available money as possible for Capability-and Capacity Building (C&CB) activities. C&CB activities enhance the knowledge, skills, expertise, etc., of the current workforce to expand or improve the administration of mitigation assistance. This includes activities in the following sub-categories of building codes, partnerships, and project scoping, and hazmit planning related activities. Learn more at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation/building-resilient-infrastructure-communities/before-apply> If you have a potential C&CB activity in your community that you are aware of, please fill out a Statement of Interest C&CB SOI and reach out ASAP to **Shelly O'Toole**, Hazard Mitigation Grants Coordinator at 774-270-5585 or Michelle.OTOole@mass.gov
- **Due 12/5 MEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)** – (FEMA-4496-DR-MA-HMGP) – Final state deadline December 5, 2022. Grants are 90% federal, 10% local (non-federal) cost-sharing. \$110,760,576 available statewide for mitigation projects with ong-term, cost-effective improvements that reduce, minimize or eliminate risk to people and property from the effects of natural hazards, including property acquisition, structure elevation, flood risk reduction, innovative mitigation projects, and others as well as new HM plans, updates, planning activities, and project scoping/advance assistance. <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/hazard-mitigation-grant-program-hmgp>
- **Due 2/6/23 Federal Highway Administration:** Funding for **culvert projects** that improve or restore habitat access for sea run (anadromous) fish species. Municipalities, states and tribes are eligible to apply. Because of its focus on improving habitat for specific fish stocks, interested applicants should review the program details carefully to evaluate whether their project may be competitive. <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppid=343962>
- **Due 1/23/23 MA Land & Water Conservation Fund:** <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-to-the-massachusetts-land-and-water-conservation-fund-grant-program>

Job opportunities:

- **MA Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs:**
 - Coastal Zone Management (CZM): Offshore Project Review Specialist <https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=220008TO>
 - Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program: Deputy Director <https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=22000AYF>
 - Division of Ecological Restoration (DER) Restoration Partnerships Program Manager <https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=220008MX>
- **RI Infrastructure Bank**
 - Junior Financial Analyst position. [Full job description here](#). Cover letters and resumes to careers@riib.org.
- **City of Worcester**
 - Department of Public Works (**environmental majors encouraged to apply** – no need to be an engineer, despite the description!)
 - Water/Sewer Operations, Junior Civil Engineer (G3) \$30.87-\$37.62/hr FT <https://www.worcesterma.gov/human-resources/employment-opportunities/job-details?thingDataId=N-prqzVaDiCosh2SH23Gzw>
 - Planning & Regulatory Services



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<https://www.worcesterma.gov/human-resources/employment-opportunities/job-details?thingDataId=8ky0ZIXzwPad62ihG0hQxA>
- Administrative Assistant \$23.33 - \$28.27/hr, FT
https://www.worcesterma.gov/human-resources/employment-opportunities/job-details?thingDataId=d3_ZvzGiaO3zFYwS8609ow
- **Audubon Society of RI**
 - Executive Director: https://asri.org/file_download/inline/15c1ee39-aaa1-4ece-bd74-6bfd66aeddd9
- **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>
- **Conservation Law Foundation**
 - 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
- **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