



# Blackstone Watershed Collaborative Meeting

May 19, 2022, 10am-12pm

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

## Attendees:

Katie DeGoosh-DiMarzio, Morgane Houssais, Sophia Kostoulas, John Marsland, Mark Allio, Heather Parry, Patti McAlpine, Patricia Austin, Phyllis Charpentier, Rebecca Quinones, Kate Bentsen, Cassandra Florez, Hillary King, Peter Coffin, Stefanie Covino, Molly Cardoza, Judy Rondeau, Allison Hamel, Ted Beauvais, Trevor Cirillo, Cay DenHerder, Paul Mathisen, Arthur Plitt, Nick Cohen, Mark Nimiroski, Sarah Plutnicki, Darrell Moore, Sarah Bower, Greg Doerschler

## Recording Available:

<https://clarku.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=6d52d2a7-3eef-44c9-87d9-b00701085e70>

## Collaborative Structure

- Stef will be drafting a group agreement for us all to work under – draft coming soon! This is something that just calls out our goals of being inclusive, welcoming, listening to one another, etc. I'm proud to work with you all and we've never had a problem! I just wanted to memorialize this base of understanding.

## Presentation

**Katie DeGoosh-DiMarzio**, Principal Environmental Scientist at RIDEM, speaking about water chestnut management and upcoming pulls in the Blackstone and beyond (see the [press release here](#))

- These invasive aquatic species spread rapidly – one seed can reproduce to cover acres of ponds in just a few years. Early detection is key! Prevent expansion by hand pulling.
- Register for ANY of the water chestnut pulls here:  
<https://forms.microsoft.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=0MIXt6x4YEiK1jws61UQncP1zgYMkFEtjGR-tRPVD1UQTgwS0ZHRVTRFpGSKwzNk04NVk3TFpLVy4u>
- Water-chestnut Spot-Pull-Prevent pdf is available online here:  
<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/water/quality/surfwg/pdfs/invasive-spot-water-chestnut.pdf>
- For more Clean-Drain-Dry Prevention Tips to share on social media (in English/Spanish), see:  
<https://playcleango.org/take-action/playcleango-awareness-week/#toolkit> or  
<https://naisma.org/programs/playcleango/freebies/>
- PlayCleanGo Awareness week is coming up, June 3-10! <https://playcleango.org/take-action/playcleango-awareness-week/>

## Subgroup Updates:

- University work
  - Holy Cross finished up their research on the benefits of fish passage and the overview of the four dams in which we're working to get passage. Those materials will be shared soon!
  - WPI has finished up their culvert assessment and outreach in Sutton, and many other WPI working groups have similar, wonderful work. Check them all out at <https://wp.wpi.edu/wroc/projects/projects-by-term/spring-2023-wroc-projects/>
  - WPI is also working on identifying opportunities to enhance/restore natural green infrastructure in Worcester to reduce stormwater impairments and combined sewer overflow (CSO) issues.
- Fish passage
  - Community Fish Migration Parade
    - Join us 5/21 at Slater Mill in Pawtucket! 1-4pm <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fish-migration-community-parade-tickets-576598310067>



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- Sign up to table here! <https://forms.gle/JxRWyrzojZ396jqw9>
- Elizabeth Webbing Dam
  - One Drop Hydro has submitted a pre-application to FERC for Elizabeth Webbing Dam ([FERC Docket P-15041-001](#)). See the full application in [pdf here](#).
  - The Collab is drafting comments opposed to the use of hydro at this dam, along with DEM, Friends of the Blackstone, Smoke Signals, and the Narragansett Indian Tribe.
  - DEM purchased the dam with the intention to lower it “at least” 2 feet with the goal of providing fish passage over the dam. Hydro power is financially infeasible if the dam is lowered as the covenant currently requires, though if the (federal) license is provided, it may supersede state rights and eminent domain may require the hydro instead of the lowering – attorneys are reviewing this.
  - Fish passage is being created at the lower two dams currently, with a 60% design anticipated by the end of 2023, so the promise of fish passage is farther than it ever has been. Migratory fish passage would provide benefits to the local ecology by restoring the historic range of species such as herring and shad, as well as restore cultural connections and importance for tribes that have had these species as a critical component of life for millennia. Passage would also mean enhancing local populations of fish that would then support populations throughout the entire North Atlantic.
  - Blackstone Hydro Associates, owner of the hydro facility at Central Falls (Valley Falls Dam), [submitted comments against this project](#) due to potential impacts of backwatering and energy generation at their facility.
  - These economic, cultural, and ecological benefits far outweigh the small green energy benefits of a single 700kw hydro project which would affect generation at another facility.
  - Comments are due to FERC by 6/20.
- Ashton Dam
  - There was a second preliminary permit application (P-15282) that was filed in the same docket as the Ashton license application by Slater Hydro. Bill Fay, the applicant, has voluntarily withdrawn the preliminary permit application. New England Hydro is now the only applicant.
  - Comments are due to FERC by 6/17? 6/6? ASAP!
- Water quality
  - Upper Blackstone Clean Water is currently taking on our annual Blackstone River Monitoring project and here's a link with more detail, including last year's story map: <https://www.ubcleanwater.org/operations/pages/blackstone-river-monitoring>
  - BRC is still looking for water quality monitoring volunteers! Contact Heather to sign up. Training available & no experience necessary! [heatherparry.wqm@gmail.com](mailto:heatherparry.wqm@gmail.com)
- *New! We'll be making a Mumford River Subgroup this summer or fall; stay in touch! Focus on Northbridge, Sutton, Douglas, Uxbridge.*

## Partner Updates

- Join us at the Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Forum! Tuesday, June 13, 2023 at Bristol Community College: Margaret L Jackson Arts Center 777 Elsbree Street Fall River, MA. The Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Strategic Plan identifies three priority goals to address by 2050: safe and healthy waters, thriving watersheds and natural lands, and sustainable communities. This Forum is designed to solicit community feedback on how SNEP, its partners, and program affiliates can most effectively address the environmental,



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social, and economic impacts of environmental change through community-based design practices. Register at: <https://ceiengineers.com/snep-forum>

- AMC Interchapter Paddling Committee is actively seeking interested parties to pursue the upcoming cycle of grant applications due June 8th. Grants typically range from \$500-5,000 with a simple application! <https://forms.office.com/r/7xjclKn6Rh> Contact Mark Allio for more info or assistance in applying: [markrallio@gmail.com](mailto:markrallio@gmail.com)
- Upper Blackstone Clean Water is currently taking on our annual Blackstone River Monitoring project and here's a link with more detail, including last year's story map: <https://www.ubcleanwater.org/operations/pages/blackstone-river-monitoring>
- Blackstone River Watershed Council (BRWC) received a \$10k Papitto Opportunity Connection ([POC Foundation](#)) grant to support multi-tribal indigenous education in afterschool programs
- Blackstone River Coalition (BRC) still looking for WQ monitoring volunteers! Contact Heather at [heatherparry.wqm@gmail.com](mailto:heatherparry.wqm@gmail.com)
- Blackstone Valley Tourism Council (BVTC)
  - Rivers Day at Central Falls Landing will be on June 17 from 4-7pm. Tabling available from 3-6 pm; contact Patti to sign up at [patti.bvtc@gmail.com](mailto:patti.bvtc@gmail.com)
  - 30th anniversary of Explorer River Tours in 2023! Special programs offered throughout the season; check out the guest speakers at [www.rivertourblackstone.com](http://www.rivertourblackstone.com)

## Next meetings

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

**June 16, 2023:** Sophia Kostoulas [SKostoulas@ubcleanwater.org](mailto:SKostoulas@ubcleanwater.org) talking about water quality story map

**July 21, 2023:** TBD

**August 18, 2023:** TBD

**September 15, 2023:** TBD

## Legislative/Policy Updates

- **RIEEA** – Priority bills need your help! Senate Finance Committee (S-551 / S-558) hearing on the Climate Change and Ocean Protection Workforce Development & Education Program bills on Thursday, May 18. These are for \$1 million in funding to provide youth with the skills and knowledge they need to be competitive in the growing green and blue economies. How you can help: **1. [Learn more about these bills.](#) 2. Sign the [petition.](#) 3. Submit written testimony. 4. Testify in person 5. Call your state representative.** Remember, speaking about your personal experience as an educator or participant really makes a difference! If you have any questions or need any assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jeanine at [jsilversmith@rieaa.org](mailto:jsilversmith@rieaa.org).
- **MA Community Preservation Act (CPA):** MA Senate has adopted a budget amendment, "Community Preservation Trust Fund," which would allocate up to \$30 million in state budget surplus funds for this November's statewide CPA Trust Fund distribution. At the end of this week, the Senate will vote on the final version of their FY24 state budget. In June, a six-member conference committee will be charged with reconciling the differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget. The Coalition will advocate with the conference committee to ensure that the final budget includes funding for CPA, and once the Committee completes its work, the budget will then head to the desk of Governor Healey for her signature.

## Tools You Can Use! Tools & Resources



# Blackstone Watershed Collaborative Meeting: Agenda

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## Events

- **May 21** – All are welcome! Fish passage community parade in Pawtucket, RI. Learn more at [blackstonecollaborative.org/kittacuck](http://blackstonecollaborative.org/kittacuck)
- **May 25** - RI Flood Mitigation Association is hosting our annual meeting and conference on May 25th hosted at University of Rhode Island's Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences. Every year over 100 people gather to eat great food, discuss future flood mitigation/watershed restoration opportunities, and share lessons learned. Early bird registration is now open - > <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/504501677097> If you would like to be a nonprofit exhibitor, please reach out to [rhodeislandfma@gmail.com](mailto:rhodeislandfma@gmail.com)
- **May 25** – Mass Envirothon at DCR's River Bend Farm in Uxbridge. Sign up to be a judge with Brittany Gutermuth: [bgutermuth@massaudubon.org](mailto:bgutermuth@massaudubon.org)
- **June 1** – webinar on SNEP Stormwater and Natural Infrastructure Grant <https://www.epa.gov/snep/funding-and-technical-assistance-southeast-new-england-program>
- **June 9-10** – RI Natural History Survey's Bioblitz at the Narragansett Indian Reservation in Charlestown, RI <https://rinhs.org/events/ri-bioblitz/bioblitz-2023-charlestown/>
- **June 13** – **Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Forum** at Bristol Community College: Margaret L Jackson Arts Center 777 Elsbree Street Fall River, MA. The SNEP Strategic Plan identifies three priority goals to address by 2050: safe and healthy waters, thriving watersheds and natural lands, and sustainable communities. This Forum is designed to solicit community feedback on how SNEP, its partners, and program affiliates can most effectively address the environmental, social, and economic impacts of environmental change through community-based design practices. Register at: <https://ceiengineers.com/snep-forum>
- **Dam Removal Training TBD** – Interested in dam removal? What are your big questions? Permitting? Community buy in? Engineering? Let us know! We're planning a training program in a "train the trainer" program on best practices, resources, and answering common questions for Fall 2023. Audience: Local champions, watershed organizers, government officials, engineers, planners, and others providing community technical assistance. Want to help organize? Contact Stef [scovino@clarku.edu](mailto:scovino@clarku.edu)

## Grants:

- **Rolling As Available 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 are eligible to apply. Contact Aisling O'Shea at [aisling.oshea@mass.gov](mailto: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 5/19/23 MA MVP Planning 2.0 Pilot Grant** <https://www.commbuys.com/bsa/external/bidDetail.sdo?docId=BD-23-1042-ENV-ENV01-87135&external=true&parentUrl=close>
- **Due 5/26/23 MA EEA Environmental Planning Assistance Grants** (COMMBUYS BID # BD-23-1042-ENV-ENV01-87313) Up to 50k/proposal, 25% match requirement. Contract ends June 2024. Goal: to provide TA to municipalities in MA (or regional planning agencies working with a group of municipalities) to improve land use practices in MA. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/fy-24-planning-assistance-grant-bid-document/download>
- **Due 6/8/23 Appalachian Mountain Club** seeking interested parties to pursue the upcoming cycle of grant applications due June 8th. Grants typically range from \$500-5,000. The portal link can be found



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at <https://forms.office.com/r/7xjclKn6Rh>. Questions or for assistance with application, contact Mark Allio at [markrallio@gmail.com](mailto:markrallio@gmail.com)

- **Due 6/30/23 SNEP Stormwater and Natural Infrastructure Grant** Up to six awards of \$400-600k  
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=347853>
- **Due 7/12/23 (LOI) – Synergy Initiative** from the Health Foundation of Central MA – funding for partnership-based projects that target significant health issues, especially inequities and disparities, in Central Massachusetts with integrated, comprehensive strategies with an end goal of systems or policy change. Projects generally progress from planning to pilot to full implementation over the course of three to five years, with grants awarded on an annual basis. Project budgets vary for each phase, and total investment amounts average approximately \$2 million per project over the grant period. <https://hfc.org/synergy-initiative-round-6-now-open/>

## Job opportunities:

- City of Worcester [Planning Division – Planning Analyst](#)
- Blackstone Watershed Collaborative [Program Coordinator/Restoration Coordinator](#)
- Food Solutions New England (with Wildlands, Woodlands, Farmlands & Communities, via University of NH Sustainability Center) – [Policy Program Director](#)
- Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
  - [MEPA Analyst V](#)
  - [Climate Scientist](#)
  - [Deputy Director of Climate Adaptation & Resilience / Climate Finance Strategist](#)
  - [Deputy Director of Climate Equity and Environmental Justice](#)
  - [MVP Program Coordinator](#)
- MA Department of Environmental Protection
  - [Environmental Analyst III Bureau of Water Resources](#)
  - [Environmental Analyst IV](#)
  - [Program Coordinator II Bureau of Waste Site Clean Up](#)
  - [Environmental Engineer IV Bureau of Water Resources](#)
  - Summer Internships (Contracted student intern):
    - Office of General Counsel  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004PK>
    - Water Quality Certification  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004PS>
    - Drinking Water  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004U3>
    - Watershed Planning Program Non Point Source Section  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004U5>
    - Watershed Planning Program Surface Water  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004S8>
    - Watershed Planning Program Total Max Daily Load  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004S6>
    - Watershed Planning Program Data Mgmt & Water Quality Assessmt  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004S5>
    - Bureau of Air Waste/Air Quality  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004S2>



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- Municipal Waste Reduction Branch  
<https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=230004QL>
- MA Division of Ecological Restoration
  - [Ecological Restoration Technical Services Branch Manager](#)
  - [Social Media and Outreach Coordinator](#)
  - [Ecological Restoration Program Manager—Cranberry Bogs](#)
  - [Ecological Restoration Program Manager—Dam Removal](#)
  - [Ecological Restoration Specialist – Coastal Wetlands Restoration](#)
  - [Ecological Restoration Specialist – Dam Removal](#)
- Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition [Development and Communications Coordinator](#)
- Conservation Law Foundation
  - [Foundation Relations Coordinator](#)
  - [Communications & Grants Coordinator](#)
- Groundwork Lawrence [Development Manager](#)
- Mass Audubon
  - [Coastal Waterbird Program Crew Leader](#)
  - [Education Coordinator](#)
  - [Project Manager, Rivers to Sea](#)
- Merrimack River Watershed Council [Water Quality Project Manager](#)
- Sudbury Valley Trustees [Director of Land Protection](#)
- Audubon Society of RI [Associate Director of Development](#)
- Eastern RI Conservation District [Environmental Field Technician](#)
- Native Edible Designs [Gardener & Crew Leader](#)
- RI Department of Environmental Management [Seasonal Water Monitoring Field Intern](#)