



Blackstone Watershed Collaborative Meeting: Agenda

August 18, 2023, 10am-12pm

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

Attendees

Sarah Plutnicki, David Newton, Patti McAlpine, Bill Napolitano, Judy Rondeau, Elizabeth Scott, Amanda Coffuire, David Tapscott, Nisa Pistacchio, Nick Cohen, Jessie Davis, Katie DeGoosh-DiMarzio, Ted Beauvais, Sophia Kostoulas, Arthur Plitt, Heidi Ricci, Darrell Moore, Michael Wilkinson, Cassandra Florez, Sarah Bower, Vincent Thai, Julia Chun, Darcy Young, Greg Doerschler, Stefanie Covino, Caleigh McLaren

Recording Available <https://clarku.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=2a64a198-a7a0-4da5-b83c-b062010b8735>

Presentation by [Elizabeth Scott](#), Network Liaison for Rhode Island, discussing [Stormwater Planning Training Series](#) – RFP available: <https://snepnetwork.org/stormwater-planning-series-2023-2024/>, apply by 9/8/23.

Subgroup Updates:

- University Bike/greenway
- University work
- Fish passage
 - NOAA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) available for fish ladders, see news release [here](#)
 - [\\$175 million Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal](#) NOFO funds projects that reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for fish across the coasts
 - [\\$85 million Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal](#) NOFO will support tribes and tribal organizations in implementing fish passage work and building tribal capacity to sustain these efforts.
- Water quality
 - Sign up [here](#) for the SNEP Network's stormwater training series (due 9/8) to identify and solve a stormwater challenge.
 - Worcester Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Facility Tour: Join us in touring the CSO facility in Worcester on August 24th 3:00-4:00pm. Learn more about the recent combined sewer overflow notifications and what it really means for treatment and water quality in this tour with the Worcester DPW Staff. Register for the tour [here](#).
 - Culvert assessment trainings available – sign up [here](#).

Partner Updates

- **Blackstone Valley Tourism Council** –
 - Planning a test program with BVTC's Kayak Youth program in Woonsocket working with Riverzedge Arts and Neighborworks BRV 8/22 at Cold Spring Park in Woonsocket.
 - Clean up at Festival Pier in Pawtucket to prepare for our upcoming Chinese Dragon Boat Races.
- **Narragansett Bay Estuary Program** just opened registration for its annual symposium, which is focused this year on regional biodiversity. It's taking place at Roger Williams University on Friday, October 6 - hope to see folks there! Learn more and register [here](#).
- **Blackstone River Watershed Association** is having a meeting at the Grafton Public Library Common room on 9/18, 6:30-8:30. The business meeting will begin at 6:30, and Emily Vogler will present her work on the Dam



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Atlas at 7:00. This meeting is open to public, and there will be an event flyer coming soon. Click [here](#) to learn more, and click [here](#) to register for the event.

- **DCR and the City of Worcester** is making a stormwater and drainage masterplan. This work is anticipated to be done by the spring. As of now, they are looking for volunteers to participate by signing up to be a flood watch volunteer. Click [here](#) to sign up.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service** is offering financial and technical assistance to communities through the [Emergency Watershed Protection Program funding](#). This includes repairs to damages from flooding, (ex: stream bank restoration, property buyouts). If you have questions, please reach out to the following:
 - MA contact: Deron Davis, State Conservation Engineer - Deron.Davis@usda.gov
 - RI contact: Darrell Moore, PE State Conservation Engineer Darrell.Moore@usda.gov & Michael Wilkinson, PE Watershed Engineer - Michael.Wilkinson@usda.gov
- **MassDEP** – Email Judith.rondeau@mass.gov to learn more about the following opportunities:
 - Summer Watershed Planning Newsletter
 - The Virtual Nonpoint Source Planning Program will be held the week of September 18th (date TBD).
 - 319 RFR will be coming out in October (date TBD). This opportunity funds implementation and capacity building projects. There is a 40% match requirement, and a preference for projects with an Environmental Justice focus.
 - The Community Based Social Marketing workshop will be held in January, (date TBD). Click [here](#) to learn more.
 - The 604B grant will be coming out this November (date TBD). This opportunity will fund planning and assessment, including BMP identification and planning and WQ monitoring. There is no match requirement, but match will help your application.
- **CMRPC** is beginning to work on a regional heat resiliency plan for the south-central MA region. If any community members are interested in becoming a member of the community advisory board to ensure that the needs of vulnerable populations are being considered and to help with survey outreach, please reach out to splutnicki@cmrpc.org. The questionnaire that CMRPC will be launching soon will be asking about residents' heat experiences and access to cooling resources (i.e. awareness of high heat events, A/C access + costs, health impacts, etc.), and the other part of the survey will be a mapping survey for residents to show where they go to cool down, and where they feel overheated most often within their communities.
- **Mass Audubon** – Growing Solar Protecting Nature coming soon!

Don't forget to check out the resources & events below! Contact Stef or Caleigh to sign up as a speaker!

Next meetings

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

September 15, 2023: [Kevin Rice](#), Administrative Assistant with the National Park Service at the Old Slater Mill Historic Site

October 20, 2023: TBD

November 17, 2023: TBD

Legislative/Policy Updates

- Massachusetts gets \$58 million to get the lead out of schools. See the full story [here](#).



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Tools You Can Use! Tools & Resources

- [Blue Carbon Reservoirs from Maine to Long Island NY Report](#) – This work maps “blue carbon”, or carbon stored in coastal and marine salt marshes, seagrass, and mangroves along the northeastern coast.
- [The Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in Rhode Island](#) – This new book provides key information to aid in effective land management and conservation for Rhode Island birds.
- [Innovative Use of the State Revolving Fund for Source Water Protection](#) – The EPA and its partners in Maine recently completed a "first of its kind" project and report funded by EPA Headquarters. The report is focuses on how to protect water quality using State Revolving Funds (SRF).
- [Dam Removal Cost Estimator Tool](#) – The U.S. Geological Survey Western Fisheries Research Center and their partners recently published a paper on their dam removal cost estimator model. They also included an accompanying app that allows you to enter key information about the dam and return a cost estimate. Read the paper [here](#), or open the app [here](#).
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Events

- **August 22-September 11, 2023** – [Culvert Assessment Trainings](#) in Northbridge, MA. The Blackstone Watershed Collaborative and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission are offering NAACC Culvert Assessment Certification this summer 2023. Please note that this certification requires a 1.5-hour online training on your own, plus three days of field work with a certified coordinator.
- **October 6, 2023** – [NBEP Annual Symposium](#) is focused this year on regional biodiversity. It will be held at Roger Williams University.
- **October 11-12, 2023** – [Salazar Center for North American Landscape Conservation Symposium](#) in Denver, CO. This event will focus on nature-positive solutions and how they can catalyze better outcomes for climate, biodiversity, and human well-being.
- **October 21, 2023** – [Town Forest Conference in Ashland](#). Join the DCR and the Town of Ashland for a day of informational speakers, refreshments, food, and a family friendly walk through Ashland Town Forest. Register for the event [here](#).
- **October 23, 2023**– [Mass Floodplain Managers \(massFM\) Annual Conference](#). This technical program includes topics in Riverine/Coastal Floodplain Management, Climate Resiliency and Adaptation, Ecological Restoration, Nature Based Solutions, Innovative Stormwater Management, Permitting, Lessons Learned, and Community Outreach.
- **October 24-25, 2023** – [Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop](#) hosted by Restore America’s Estuaries and Galveston Bay Foundation in Galveston, TX. This event is a unique platform to learn, engage, and exchange knowledge with professionals, experts, and stakeholders in the field of coastal and estuarine habitat restoration.
- **October 26, 2023** – [Dam Removal & Ecological Restoration 101 Training](#) at Clark University in Worcester, MA. This program will offer an overview of best practices, resources, and answering common questions, with half of the day dedicated to a hands-on charette. Audience: Local champions, watershed organizers, government officials, engineers, planners, and others providing community technical assistance.
- **October 28, 2023** – [MACC Fall Conference](#) in Devens, MA. Join conservation commissioners, conservation agents, environmental officials, consultants, attorneys, students, activists, and others in learning, asking, understanding, and networking.
- **November 9, 2023** – [Regional Conservation Partnership \(RCP\) Conference](#) at UMass Amherst. This event is designed to bring together people advancing collaborative landscape conservation in the Northeastern U.S. and beyond.



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- **May 13-16, 2024** – [River Rally](#) in Grand Rapids, MI. This event combats feelings of isolation, overwhelm, and burnout for network members working at the intersection of water and justice by building knowledge and skills, diversifying perspectives and solutions, recognizing achievements within the network, and strengthening connections.
- **May 14-16, 2024** – [National Adaptation Forum](#) in Saint Paul, MN. This event is a bi-annual convening for adaptation professionals to innovate, network, and focus on established and emerging climate adaptation issues of the day.
- **October 6-10, 2024** – [Restore America's Estuaries Conference](#) in Washington, DC. This is the premier event for policy makers, practitioners, and managers in the United States to explore the latest research, policy, and practice in coastal restoration.

Grants:

- **9/1/23** – [MA Division of Ecological Restoration](#) – A Request for Responses (RFR) is seeking new early-phase dam removal projects that have not yet been significantly advanced, but where the dam owner is interested in removal. Municipalities can submit potential projects, which will be rated based on potential environmental and community benefits resulting from removal, as well as proximity and potential benefits to nearby Environmental Justice communities. Dam owners who are not municipalities should work with their municipality to submit an application. Questions? Contact Susie Bresney, Restoration Specialist, Dam Removal Program susie.bresney@mass.gov.
- **9/8/23** – [SNEP Network Stormwater Planning Series](#) – Open to municipalities and tribes (organizations may also apply and work with munis/tribes) looking to solve a stormwater issue in the SE New England region (all of the Blackstone is eligible). Free technical assistance for groups committing to participation at monthly meetings over six months, with an end product of a preliminary design for a BMP to solve the stormwater challenge.
- **9/15/23** – [SNEP Opportunity to Advance Resilience](#) – This grant will fund projects that improve climate resiliency throughout high priority disadvantaged communities in Southeast New England. The SNEP-SOAR program is intended to support a wide range of project types: planning, implementation, outreach, training, and capacity building/staffing.
- **11/8/23** – [Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grant](#) – Aims to provide federal financial and technical assistance to fish passage through the removal of dams and other in-stream barriers for native migratory or sea-run fish.
- **11/8/23** – [Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grant](#) – Aims to provide federal financial and technical assistance to Indian tribes and organizations that represent Indian tribes through formal legal agreements to remove barriers to fish passage.
- **Rolling As Available** – [AMC Waters and Rivers Protection Fund](#) – Receive up to \$10,000 to fund a project that supports the protection and understanding of our region's water resources, including but not limited to the development of recreational opportunities, research on, and protection of riparian environments, and advocacy to protect clean water and recreational access. Contact markrallio@gmail.com for more information.
- **Rolling As Available** – [MA Department of Fish and Game's In-Lieu Fee Program](#) – This program funds 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 for more info or to apply. Materials are also available on COMMBUYS under BD-23-1046-COM-COM4-77929.

Job opportunities:

- State MassDEP – [Program Coordinator I](#)



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- The Nature Conservancy – [Northern Appalachians Freshwater Conservation Manager](#)
- City of Worcester –
 - [Lakes and Ponds Program Coordinator](#)
 - [Energy Advocate](#)
- City of Woonsocket – [City Planner](#)
- State of RI – [Chief Resilience Officer](#)
- United States Biosphere Network – [Network Coordinator](#)
- Conservation Law Foundation –
 - [Oceans Policy Manager](#)
 - [Fall/Winter/Spring Intern - MA](#)
- [Groundwork Lawrence](#)
 - Development Manager
 - Urban Agriculture Manager
 - Pa'Lante Resident Task Force
 - School year '23 - '24 Green Team Application
- Mass Audubon – [Field Teacher at Broad Meadow Brook](#)
- Sudbury Valley Trustees – [Director of Land Protection](#)
- RI Department of Environmental Management – [Seasonal Water Monitoring Field Intern](#)