

BATTEN KILL WATERSHED ALLIANCE

Newsletter April 30, 2005

Membership - is 145.

The Battenkill by John Merwin - This book was published in 1993 by Lyons & Burford, NYC, and is no longer in print. The book is described as an intimate portrait of a great trout river - its history, people, and fishing possibilities. Its jacket cover is a photo of Dick Finlay fishing the Hill Farm stretch. In his introduction, Mr. Merwin discusses the origin of the river's name, which remains a mystery. His research revealed several theories: (1) "Batten" is the contraction of an early settler's name, Bart's Kill; (2) "Batten" in archaic English means to fertilize or enrich; (3) "Batten" was someone's surname; and (4) "Batten" may be derived from archaic Dutch, a general reference to people of the western European lowlands that became Holland. Mr. Merwin believes no. 4 is the most logical, "river of the Dutch", but you can choose your own.

And then there are the Native American names: Ondawa (Iroquois), meaning white stream or possibly country of the rounded hills; and Tyetilegogtakook (Mahican, the Batten Kill's native people), meaning country around the river of toads.

River Use Committee - The next meeting of the Alliance River Use Committee is scheduled for Thursday April 21 at 6:30 pm at the Arlington Town Hall. On the agenda will be the process for River Steward selection and funding, follow up on last year's RS recommendations, and discussion of past river studies led by Heidi Pickering.

It costs about \$2,400 to hire one river steward to work 24 hours/week for 10 weeks during the summer. Currently, 4 young people have applied.

Beaver - Charlie Wilson, with the help of Al Klein and Roy Lamberton (Alliance directors) have used 3 rolls of wire fence to wrap around trees near the Shushan Covered Bridge to reduce beaver damage. If you would like to help or are a riparian land owner having beaver problems, contact Roy or Charlie and we'll try to provide you with fencing and volunteers.

Gone Fly Fishing Weekend - several Inns and B&B's along the river have organized a special package for anglers for the weekend of May 21 - 23. Visit www.vermontlodging.net/fishing, or contact Roy for more information. There will be a Gone Fishing and Crafts Fair, held from 11-3 on Saturday May 22 in the barn at the Battenkill Inn in Sunderland. Alliance and Trout Unlimited volunteers will demonstrate tying of flies originated on the Batten Kill and teach tying for kids.

The Batten Kill Fishery, a Review of Scientific Findings 2000-2004 - The agencies are planning a public open house and poster session to present the results of the 12 studies of the river undertaken in Vermont. The Alliance is making arrangements and will announce details once they are finalized.

Dufresne Dam Removal - The Manchester Conservation Commission and Manchester Rod and Gun Club are sponsoring a public meeting to discuss the Dufresne Dam. The date is April 26 beginning at 6:00 p.m. Representatives of the Agency of Natural Resources will present information, followed by an informal discussion of issues associated with the dam and its possible removal. The meeting will be held at the Rod and Gun Club headquarters, which is located at the Dana L. Thompson Memorial Park off Route 30 in Manchester.

Planting - The planting of black willows, streamco willows, button bush, and red osier and silky dogwoods at the Whitney project was postponed to April 12, because of the heavy rains the weekend of April 2-3. The Whitney project was undertaken last August in partnership with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Trout Unlimited, and the land owner. Tree revetments were used to stabilize the bank and a wetland was created to intercept runoff. Eight Alliance volunteers planted this area heavily with about 500 cuttings (photos below). We hope to use it as a nursery for cuttings to be used at

other sites in the future. Thank you to Alliance volunteers Art Coleman, Al Klein, Roy Lamberton, Ken Nicholson, Shelly Stiles, Ken Waldie, Bill Whitney (land owner), and Charlie Wilson. The event was covered by Jessica York of the Bennington Banner. Special thanks to Shelly for leading Alliance volunteers in obtaining local cuttings of the dogwoods, to Ken Waldie for helping cut black willow in the morning, and to Alliance member Ron Brunson for allowing us to obtain black willow cuttings from his nearby property. Thanks also to Cynthia Browning for arranging newspaper coverage.

Newsletter Delivery Delay - Many of us do not receive the newsletter for many weeks after it is delivered to the post office. That is because the Alliance uses the least expensive postal rate, which results in substantial savings, but also results in substantial delivery delays. Please read the internet version for timely announcements. If you can do without the mailed copy, let Roy know.

Below are photos of the Whitney



volunteers and plants

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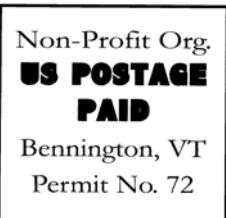
Executive Director: Roy Lamberton (518) 872-2217 Cell phone: (518) 421-2500 roymcl@aol.com

Board of directors: Bill Bullock, Greg Cuda, Jim Henderson, Pete Hetko (Chair), Al Klein, Ken Nicholson, Jay Skellie, Jim Walker, and Charlie Wilson

Mission: To coordinate, educate, and promote stewardship for the benefit and enhancement of the Batten Kill watershed in the states of Vermont and New York.

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April 15, 2005 Issue

IN THIS ISSUE:

**PLANTING AT THE WHITNEY PROJECT
JOHN MERWIN'S "THE BATTEN KILL"
RIVER USE COMMITTEE
THE DUFRESNE DAM**

PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW - *individual membership is \$20 per year; family = \$25; sponsor = \$50; business = \$100.*

This newsletter and the work of the BKWA is made possible by volunteers, funds from the US Forest Service Green Mountain National Forest, donors, and member dues. The BKWA is an equal opportunity organization.