

# ***BATTEN KILL WATERSHED ALLIANCE***

Newsletter May 2006

**\*\*\*NEW FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR VERMONT RIVER\*\*\***

**\*\*\*BIG RAILROAD BRIDGE PROJECT PROPOSED\*\*\***

**\*\*\*BATTEN KILL ROOM OPENING AT GEORGI MUSEUM\*\*\***

**\*\*\*THANKS TO FORESTER MARK RILEY FOR WORK ON TWIN RIVERS\*\*\***

## **VT FISH & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT BATTEN KILL POLICY PROPOSED.**

The scientific studies of the Batten Kill have been completed, and led to the conclusion that the lack of sufficient cover and shelter is the likely cause of the decline of the trout fishery. The Department has developed a management plan for the fishery going forward that will involve restoration of cover and shelter through installation of large woody debris, rocks, and pools, and education of landowners concerning the importance of wooded riparian buffer zones. The prohibition on harvesting wild brown and brook trout will continue to be in effect below Dufresne Dam. The lower river will be stocked with a limited number of triploid (sterile) rainbow trout. The goal is apparently to improve angler catch rates and allow for the harvest of up to six rainbow trout per angler per day. Some organizations have already opposed this plan because it will further endanger the wild trout population by adding stocked fish that will compete for limited habitat and cover. Some people support stocking as a way to allow harvesting from the river. This is a Draft Interim Management Plan, and public meetings concerning this proposed policy will be coming up this summer. Contact me if you would like a copy of the draft report. Contact Ken Cox of VFWD at 802.885.8828 or [ken.cox@state.vt.us](mailto:ken.cox@state.vt.us) for more information or to express an opinion about this proposal.

## **RIVER ENGINEERING PROJECT AT SHUSHAN RAILROAD BRIDGE POSSIBLE.**

This project would be at the Railroad and Highway 64 bridges over the Batten Kill in Shushan, NY. The combination of two sets of bridge supports in close proximity has created a pattern of erosion and sediment buildup that can threaten to undermine the bridge abutments. A basic principle of natural river dynamics is clearly on display: in flood conditions as the water slows to wait its turn to pass through the narrow bridge opening, it drops its sediment, building an island or bar in one part of the streambed, with a fast scouring current in another. Carl Schwartz of the US Fish & Wildlife Department has designed the installation of rock vanes in the shape of a "W" with the points headed upstream above the railroad bridge. This structure will function to direct the force of the water under the two bridge openings and prevent erosion of the abutments. If all goes as planned, this work will be financed by New York state, the Clearwater Chapter of Trout Unlimited, and the Alliance. TU will have the leading role of project manager.

## **GEORGI MUSEUM TO OPEN BATTEN KILL ROOM.**

The Georgi Museum of Shushan, NY, will be opening a room dedicated to the Batten Kill. Displays will cover history, science, art, and angling on the river. There will likely be artwork and other items for sale. The Alliance will have a display of materials, including all of the posters summarizing the scientific studies of the Batten Kill in Vermont. The Museum is open Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 4 throughout the summer, and by appointment. The opening weekend Saturday 5/27 and Sunday 5/28 will feature some special events, including fly fishing instruction and a photography sale. Call (518) 854-3773 for information. If you have artwork featuring the Batten Kill or materials about the history of angling on the river, or old photographs that you would like to lend for these displays, please contact Sylvia Wilson at (518) 854-3590.

The Museum is at the end of Adams Lane off Highway 61 in Shushan, NY. The turn off is near Yushak's Store. There is a community house used by the public, and landscaped grounds including access to the river. The museum house is off the right, and in addition to the new Batten Kill Room, in contains a collection of Medieval, Renaissance, and Oriental Art from the Georgi family.

## **FORESTER MARK RILEY DONATES SERVICES TO TWIN RIVERS PROJECT.**

Forester Mark Riley of Vermont Forest and Field of Poultney, VT, has donated his services to the Twin Rivers project. He has worked with the project team to identify trees for use as rootwads and treetops on a woodlot in West Arlington. He has designed an approach that will provide the needed materials and then leave a grassy clearing as wildlife habitat. The donation of his expertise has been significant contribution to the progress of this project.

LET ME KNOW IF THERE IS SOMEONE WHO SHOULD BE ON OUR MAILING LIST

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE WE ARE BUILDING AT [www.battenkillalliance.org](http://www.battenkillalliance.org)

## ***THE BATTEN KILL WATERSHED ALLIANCE***

Executive Director: Cynthia Browning (802)375-9019 [exdir@battenkillalliance.org](mailto:exdir@battenkillalliance.org)

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

Mission: To promote good stewardship for the Batten Kill watershed in Vermont and New York.

**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.

Batten Kill Watershed Alliance

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