

BATTEN KILL WATERSHED ALLIANCE

Newsletter September 2005

*****SCIENTIFIC OPEN HOUSES SET FOR OCTOBER 27 & 29*** SUMMARY OF GEOLOGY & HYDROLOGY PRESENTATION PROGRESS ON TWIN RIVERS HABITAT RESTORATION PLEASE REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!**

******The Batten Kill Fishery, a Review of Scientific Findings 2000-2004******

The Green Mountain National Forest and the VT Fish & Wildlife Department will be presenting the results of the 12 studies of the river undertaken in Vermont at two Open Houses. The studies cover water chemistry and temperature, predation, riverbed morphology, fish diseases, and other habitat conditions. This presentation of study results will be offered twice in order to allow as many people to come as possible. The sessions will not be a lecture presentation, but a series of displays that people can view and discuss. The posters will summarize the results of the different studies, and it will be possible to ask questions of the scientists who completed them.

The first Batten Kill Scientific Open House will be held at the Manchester Town Hall at 6039 VT Rte 7A from 5pm to 8pm on Thursday, October 27. The second will be at the East Arlington Federated Church Hall at 79 Ice Pond Road from 11am to 3pm on Saturday October 29. The public can drop in at any point during those time periods. Refreshments will be served.

These sessions can provide all stakeholders with a common scientific understanding of conditions for trout on this river. Discussions of regulations and policies for fishing on the river will occur at later public meetings, but these scientific results will serve as an important component of the fishery management decisions that will be made in the future. Please try to attend one of these sessions, and bring anyone who is interested in the river with you.

Hydrology & Geology of the Batten Kill

What follows is a brief summary of the presentation by Laurence Becker and David DeSimone at the BKWA Annual Meeting. For a longer version of the report please contact BKWA.

The geologists have been studying how surface water and groundwater interact. Groundwater is important for streams and as a water source for residents. Groundwater can exist in several conditions. It is often held in the fractures of hard rock, and can move through these cracks.

Surface water can become groundwater at one site then move through fractures in rock according to gravity and pressure to seep out into a stream. Groundwater can be old water from long ago or from yesterday's rain. It can discharge into streams as springs or as seepage.

Arlington has a combined bedrock aquifer. The mountains have bedrock, with groundwater moving through fractures. The valley has glacial gravel deposits with significant surface water recharge potential.

The springs and groundwater that feed the Batten Kill are important in terms of moderating temperature extremes for good trout habitat. Sometimes groundwater will be seeping into the river and sometimes it will be seeping out into the gravel aquifer, depending on the geology and precipitation.

The bedrock and gravel aquifers can be exchanging water. People draw water from both sources. Therefore it is important that surface water be clean rather than polluted. It may be an important issue for local planning to consider how to keep surface water clean and how to best use groundwater resources for residences and for streams like the Batten Kill. But we need to understand more about the geology to know where the water is and how it moves.

Thanks to BKWA Boardmember Charlie Wilson for Summer Cleanup Patrol

Charlie Wilson has been assisting Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District by clearing up the trash at several public access points along the Batten Kill over the summer. Tremendous thanks to him on behalf of the Alliance and on behalf of the residents of Shushan and Salem, and thanks to WCS&WCD for all of their work.

Progress on Twin Rivers Restoration Project

The USFS and Vermont experts are proceeding with testing and measurements to lay the foundation for the large habitat restoration project in West Arlington. We have partial funding from the Green Mountain National Forest and a pledge from Orvis, but we will not see the Orvis funding until the spring. The Alliance has also applied for additional funding from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation. But in the meantime we do need some working capital to cover the project expenses that the GMNF agreement will not meet. Please remember to renew your membership if you have not done so recently, or consider an extra donation. We are at such an exciting point, we have a chance to finally work on the real problems of the river, but it will take a lot of work and money to pull it off. Thank you for your support.

River Steward Season Completed

The three River Stewards completed their summer of data collection, river patrol, planting, and public outreach. In addition to these activities we had a big focus on planning for the future: better ways of counting river users, better public outreach, and more community involvement. A report on the River Steward program will be available later.

THE BATTEN KILL WATERSHED ALLIANCE

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

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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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.