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Deerfield River News

1 message

Deerfield River Watershed Association <drwa@deerfieldriver.org>

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To: jim.perry@gmail.com

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NEW website: www.deerfieldriver.org

email: drwa@deerfieldriver.org

Stemming the Decline of River Access



Zoar Picnic Area & River Launch

The Deerfield River Watershed Association (DRWA) has been very active in our work to protect **your right of access** to the Deerfield River and its tributaries.

If you have been out on the Deerfield or Green Rivers, you have noticed popular public access parking areas closed or severely restricted and increased levels of policing of the river launch points, parking areas, and access roads. Soon there will be towing of parking violators in the new “No Parking” areas within the Town of Charlemont. This is all in response to increasing river use and the resulting safety issues created by a subset of river users and human pressure felt by some in the local communities.

The DRWA has been pushing very hard to reverse this trend of limiting river access. We are working with many others to develop short- and

long-term solutions that will help meet local community needs, while providing you with continued access to the rivers you love. We are hopeful that by July, port-a-potties will be installed at Shunpike Rest Area for the first time in years and increased at Zoar Picnic Area; day-use parking will be restored to Shunpike; and a search for longer term solutions, including a River Recreation Plan, will begin.

New (vastly improved) Website



It was a long time coming, but one of our Board Members created an **all-new website** for you, packed with new information and links. We want to make this a one-stop river and watershed resource for you. Anything else we should add? www.deerfieldriver.org

Our **new email provider** will also allow us to provide faster response times to your questions! drwa@deerfieldriver.org

Wild & Scenic River Study



DRWA's new initiative to seek **National Wild and Scenic River** designation for the Deerfield River and its tributaries **has advanced substantially** over the past few months. DRWA representatives have been meeting with communities across the watershed to discuss this initiative with Selectboards and Mayors.

To date, sixteen communities, including nine in Massachusetts and seven in Vermont, have voted to support **seeking Congressional authorization** and funds for a **planning study** to evaluate whether portions of the Deerfield River can be designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. In addition, eleven organizations, state agencies and businesses have submitted letters of support for this initiative. DRWA has also met with the Congressional delegation for Vermont and Massachusetts and have garnered the support of Senators Bernie Sanders, Patrick Leahy, Edward Markey and Elizabeth Warren, and Representatives Peter Welch, Jim McGovern and Richard Neal for filing legislation for a Wild and Scenic **study bill** for the Deerfield River.

Greenfield City-wide Cleanup Event



One of our Board Members, in addition to running the Annual Green River Cleanup, also helped develop and run the **1st Annual – Greenfield City-wide Cleanup Event**. All litter flows downhill to the river and then on to the ocean. We are working with volunteers to help **stop river contamination at its source**.

Passing of Two Important Board Members

It deeply saddened us to lose two of our valued Board Members.



Polly Bartlett at Polly's Crossing Footbridge on the Mohican-Mohawk Trail

Many of you probably know one of our founders, **Polly Bartlett**. If not, I highly encourage you to [check out our tribute to Polly](#), which also includes a link to a much more detailed tribute page by her family. Polly was active on the Board until the end, a real leader and will be greatly missed.

Robert May, a former Board Member of the DRWA and a member of the Deerfield River Watershed Trout Unlimited, passed away this January. Robert was kind and thoughtful, and worked hard to preserve and restore local rivers, motivated by his love of nature and fishing.

From the President

What a year! We hope you, your family, and friends all did well. So many of us took this opportunity to get outdoors, and we hope you did too.



Jim Perry

President
DRWA Board of
Directors

This was a **sad time** for the DRWA Board as two of our highly valued Board Members, passed away. Fortunately, we have a very active Board, but now are **putting out the call for additional Board Members.** Typically, new Board Members arrive with some watershed experience and a not-so-hidden agenda, including projects they want to work on that will benefit the river, watershed, and its users. We have a very low budget with no paid employees, so you have to be creative too. **Interested? Please let me know.** drwa@deerfieldriver.org

Happy Hiking and Paddling! Keep safe!

DRWA is an affiliate of Connecticut River Conservancy. This working partnership makes us a more effective advocate for this special watershed. Your donations go to the Deerfield River Watershed Association and our many projects.



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