

2010 Annual Report

*Our mission:
to restore, protect,
celebrate, and
sustain the natural
resources of the
Westport River and
its watershed*



**Westport
River
Watershed
Alliance**

Many Thanks To Our Volunteers

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Dear Members and Friends:

As we approach our 35th anniversary, 2010 will be remembered as a turning point where Staff and Board dared to dream of WRWA's future and what it might look like. Not always easy: it has been challenging, insightful, and exciting. Staff and Board were involved and the inclusiveness of all voices will redefine our mission and projects, moving forward.

Improving the health of the river is our top priority. We do this by continuing our water quality monitoring and initiating important projects that address the various sources of pollution that contribute to the river's degradation. Top on that list is nitrogen pollution, -- contributed in our watershed primarily from stormwater runoff and septic systems. This year as a result of WRWA's instigation and follow through the Town was awarded another \$234,000 stormwater grant to construct Low Impact Development (LID) practices (rain gardens and bio-retention basins) at the Westport Middle School. We rallied the troops and funds to improve the Herring Run on River Road We began monitoring several sites on River Road and Drift Road, where stormwater flows unchecked into areas of the river, raising bacteria counts and closing shellfish beds. We interceded and advocated for LID at the redevelopment of the Lincoln Park site at the top of the East Branch, and we can proudly report that the numerous suggestions we made in discussions with engineers were implemented in the final plans. Our advocacy programs expanded.

How does WRWA sustain these efforts? We advocate and educate, children and adults alike, about the issues, solutions, and unique natural resources here in the watershed. Our highly regarded school program continues to expand. We allocated more money and staff to projects that contribute to cleaning up the river. And WRWA geared up for the important 2011 delivery of the Estuaries Report that will drive town planning for years to come.

Moving forward requires ever more support, both from interested members and donations. We challenge you to help us grow our membership, which in turn contributes funds for our initiatives, and most importantly, a larger voice in support of the wellbeing of the Westport River watershed environment.



Peter Kastner
WRWA President

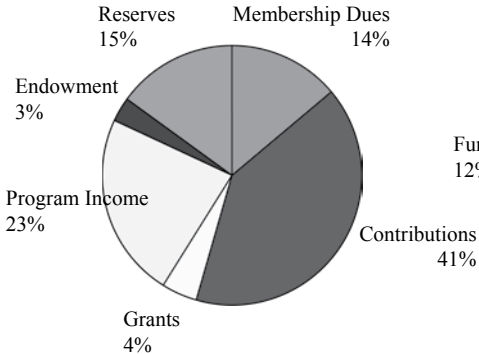


Gay Gillespie
Executive Director

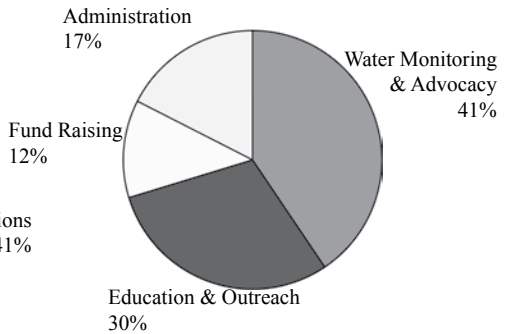
Westport River Watershed Alliance Sources and Uses of Funds in 2010

| | 2010 Amount | 2009 Amount |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Sources: | | |
| Membership Dues | \$ 70,051 | \$ 76,616 |
| Contributions | \$202,379 | \$195,158 |
| Grants | \$ 22,350 | \$ 73,515 |
| Program Income | \$114,987 | \$ 80,705 |
| Endowment Income | \$ 15,641 | \$ 19,483 |
| Reserves | \$ 75,000 | \$ 45,646 |
| Total Sources: | \$500,408 | \$491,123 |

Sources of Funds



Uses of Funds



| | 2010 Amount | 2009 Amount |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Uses: | | |
| Water Monitoring & Advocacy | \$199,236 | \$151,616 |
| Education & Outreach | \$145,707 | \$215,815 |
| Fund Raising | \$ 59,642 | \$ 44,201 |
| Administration | \$ 85,718 | \$ 79,491 |
| Total Uses: | \$490,311 | \$491,123 |

Overview

In 1976, Westport volunteers assembled and defeated a proposal by outside developers for a sewerage lagoon on the upper East Branch of the Westport River. Thus, the



Westport River Defense Fund was born (now the Watershed Alliance). We are proud of our accomplishments. We have the longest ongoing bacteria-monitoring program of any river in the state, which provides scientific data on the health of the river. We created the Watershed Education Program that now serves 2,800 students annually. More recently, we established the Watershed Improvement Fund that has helped finance numerous projects, including the current restoration of the herring run at Cockeast Pond in partnership with the Westport Fishermen's Association and the Town of Westport.

Whenever WRWA focuses energy and resources on a problem we deliver results. We secured over \$500,000 for storm water remediation for a constructed wetland at the Head of Westport. We pursued a court order that determined the Westport River is indeed a river deserving protection under the Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act. We funded local projects that, among other things, helped farmers mitigate manure runoff. And, we increased the number of students that we educate; it's our young people who will determine the future of the River and its watershed.

The imminent Massachusetts Estuaries Report will for the first time provide state approved, scientific research that determines the sources of nitrogen and reduction amounts required to sustain a healthy River. WRWA will be a strong voice; educating and advocating for a healthier Westport River watershed.

We have existed for 35 years as a grass roots advocacy group committed to restoring the health of the River. We need a commitment from you that will permit us to continue our mission and expand our work into the future.

Education

The goals of the Watershed Education Program (WEP) are to complement the existing school science curriculum with opportunities for hands-on science, and field studies that build a sense of stewardship among students for local natural communities. We proudly educated 2,800 students through field studies, classroom presentations and classroom projects. These students will one day be the voters addressing local issues that impact our watershed.



Some of the Education Accomplishments of 2010:

- WRWA produced a new Ocean Ecology curriculum for the Middle School students. The curriculum focuses on the ocean and how the ocean and its creatures are sensitive to change.
- We continued our important commitment to the Feathery Focus program in partnership with the Lloyd Center for the Environment and MassAudubon. Our education staff led more than half of the classes in Westport, every two weeks for the entire school year.
- Wow! Fifth graders at Westport Middle School planted the 11,500th dune grass seedling as part the Dune Restoration Project, which was conducted for the eighth consecutive year this fall. A new journal was created to go with this field study.
- We graciously hosted students from surrounding communities in their exploration of the Westport River watershed through field studies. The Little Compton 2nd grade participated in a field study on wetlands.
- Our team designed a field study to go along with our preschool programs, where students learned about three different habitats at a local wildlife sanctuary.
- WRWA conducted teacher-training opportunities for enthusiastic teachers at the Westport Community Schools.
- This year, we doubled the number of students in the 19th year of Adopt-a-Watershed in collaboration with the Environmental Science Classes at the Westport High School.
- Our expanded and extremely popular summer programs for ages 7 to 15, educating and inspiring the future stewards of our watershed, were filled to capacity.
- Our education team created a Leader in Training (LIT) program (ages 13-16) with six student volunteers, striving to train the future professionals in the environmental field.

Community Outreach

Our goal is to both celebrate the river and to educate the town's residents about the crucial issues that affect the health, beauty, and productivity of our watershed. During the course of 2010:



- The Alliance hosted popular interpretive tours on watershed topics: a vernal pool walk, backyard biodiversity, osprey kayaking tour with Osprey Sea Kayak Adventures, dune hike, and a seining expedition with the Lloyd Center.
- All climbed aboard for our sold-out season of informative river tours in our Carolina Skiff with the assistance of our volunteer River Docents.
- Staff and volunteers waded waist deep, often late at night, monitoring the threatened Horseshoe Crab population in the river.
- WRWA sponsored various talks including: a talk on the affects of Climate Change on the area from Hector Galbraith (with the Westport Fishermen's Association), an update on ospreys, a talk about Wild & Scenic, and an update on WRWA activities.
- We were part of the Shrink Your Footprint Fair a collaborative project with Alliance for Climate Education, Brick by Brick, Buttonwood Park Zoo, Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust, The Lloyd Center, The Marion Institute, MassAudubon Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary, SEEAL, and Trustees of Reservations.
- For a second season we hosted Eyes on Owls, an amazing live owl program.
- We continued our key support of the Osprey Tracking Project with MassAudubon Allens Pond to track ospreys from Westport during their migration south in winter and post their path on www.westportosprey.org
- WRWA manned a booth at Westport Farmer's Markets and other local events to converse with people about the watershed, sell merchandise, and distribute information.
- 6,066 pounds of electronics and computers were collected at WRWA's Electronics Recycling Day.
- The river was alive with joyful paddlers at WRWA's 7th annual River Run.
- We engaged on a business membership drive in which businesses in Westport that had not sponsored us in some way in 2010 were asked to help us preserve the town's natural assets.
- We led much needed cleanup events such as the Earth Day Clean-ups, Earth Week Clean-ups, Key Club beach cleanup, and Coastsweeps.

Water Resources

In 2010 WRWA's water quality monitoring program evolved and was renamed the Water Resources Program. Staff and Board members worked together to plan and coordinate the science, research, monitoring, and remediation activities within the organization. This year we reclassified our program focus areas:



- Assessment—monitoring the chemical, physical, and/or biological characteristics of water with respect to its suitability for a particular use. Inclusive of river and streams, stormwater and groundwater.
- Remediation and Restoration—Research and develop projects that restore habitats or remediate pollution affecting water resources in the watershed.

2010 Accomplishments:

- Water quality monitoring for fecal coliform bacteria in the River and tributaries. In 2010 we took over 260 water quality samples and used the data to publish the 2010 Health of the River Report.
- We worked with the Town of Westport on the Westport Middle School stormwater drainage project at the Head of Westport. This is part of a larger, ongoing project to remediate pollution at the top of the East Branch.
- With help from UMASS Dartmouth's Coastal Systems Laboratory and Westport's Highway Department, we quantified pollution loads associated with stormwater run-off from a direct discharge pipe under the Westport Point area into the River.
- Recertification of WRWA's Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP): *Westport River Watershed Alliance QAPP for Monitoring Salinity, Turbidity, Temperature, pH, Fecal Coliform Bacteria Parameters on the Westport River*
- Our team researched methods and strategies to determine bacteria pollution hotspots specific to stormwater drainage systems and discharges; to target restoration efforts that are scientifically sound and will most likely achieve improvements in water quality in the Westport River.
- Synthesized protocols for phragmites eradication techniques providing a technical document to guide property owners in permitted methodology.
- Coordinated the rebuilding of a key herring run to allow migrating alewife, eels, and white perch to easily reach Cockeyeast Pond to spawn in the spring. The project was made possible from the partnership with Westport Fishermen's Association, the Westport Highway Department and local residents and businesses (listed on page 19).
- Promoting and planning for the release of the Westport's Massachusetts Estuaries Report, which will enhance the Town's ability to make informed decisions regarding local water resource planning and management.

Watershed Advocacy

Advocacy's goal is to promote a watershed approach to resource management for the Westport River watershed by pursuing and strengthening cooperation and communication with area towns and residents. We achieve this by creating and reinforcing an ethic of individual responsibility and stewardship essential to effecting positive change.

Members of the Advocacy Committee attend, monitor, and participate in meetings throughout the watershed including, the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the Board of Health, the Estuaries Committee, the Select Board, and others. Our volunteer monitors have positive impacts with some of our Town boards who accept suggestions on sustainable practices which benefit the River and its watershed.

We continue to monitor the progress of the Estuaries Report, having met with our State Representative, UMASS Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology, the Coalition for Buzzards Bay and others to be assured that progress is being made. We expect to receive the Report in the very near future.

The Watershed Improvement Funds which funded engineered plans for stormwater solutions at the Westport Middle School near the Head of Westport on Old County Road have born fruit. A significant 319 Grant from Mass DEP was awarded to the Town for construction of stormwater solutions.

Meetings we initiated with the Town of Dartmouth over the past several years regarding redevelopment of the old Lincoln Park have been productive. Recently approved plans for this site incorporate some of our stormwater remediation suggestions, utilizing Low Impact Development best management practices to reduce impact on the upper reaches of the East Branch of the Westport River.

Finally, following the oil spill in the Gulf this past year we reviewed the adequacy of Westport's preparations for a repeat or worse of the oil spill in Buzzard's Bay a few years ago. We're glad to report that there is a plan, and that thousands of feet of oil booms are stocked in Westport. There is also an overall plan for Buzzard's Bay, implemented and coordinated by the Coalition for Buzzard's Bay.

Annual Giving

In an effort to acknowledge the many ways in which our contributors support WRWA throughout the year, members are listed according to their total annual giving. Gifts in this total include memberships, Annual Fund contributions, matching gifts, memorial contributions, endowment gifts, Summer Gala contributions (excluding auction purchases) and other donations from January 1 – December 31, 2010. Every effort has been made to ensure that these listings are accurate and inclusive. If you feel that an error has been made, please contact the WRWA office.

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\$500 +

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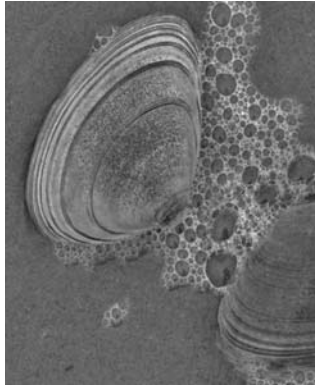


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