



NEWSLETTER FOR THE UPPER MISSISQUOI & TROUT RIVERS WILD AND SCENIC STUDY

Upper Missisquoi & Trout Rivers Study

Thank you for checking out the first newsletter from the first Wild and Scenic Rivers Study in Vermont!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Next Study Committee meetings are July 15th in Lowell, and August 16th TBD. Please check out our website or contact Shana Stewart.
- MRBA has been awarded a grant from the State's River Management Program to perform a Phase 2 geomorphic assessment of the Upper Missisquoi River (Lowell to Canada to North Troy). This is part of an on-going effort to build up a science-based understanding of the condition & behavior of the waters in our watershed. Arrowwood Environmental will conduct the fieldwork this summer; a public presentation of the results is scheduled Oct. 21 at our Wild & Scenic Mtg in Westfield.
- Aug 28th River Festival, Montgomery Rec. Center from 4 - 11pm. More details to follow.



Baker's Falls, Missisquoi River. Photo by Jonathan and Jayne Chase

Issue #1 Spring/Summer 2010

WHAT IS WILD AND SCENIC?

The Wild and Scenic Act

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act became law in 1968 with the purpose of protecting rivers of our nation which possess *outstandingly remarkable values* (ORVs) for the benefit of present and future generations. (More information on partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers can be found in Jamie Fosburgh's *Partnership* article on Page 4 in this newsletter. The Act in its entirety can be found at <http://www.rivers.gov/publications/act/current-act.pdf>).

Thanks to the efforts of John Little, Wendy Scott, Anne McKay and Chris O'Shea of the Missisquoi River Basin Association (MRBA) and the support of Vermont's Representative Peter Welch and Senators Patrick Leahy & Bernard Sanders, President Barack Obama signed a bill into law in March 2009 authorizing funding for a Wild and Scenic study of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers. The Study is supported by the ten towns through which these rivers flow. (Continued on Page 2)

HELP US IDENTIFY OUTSTANDING RIVER RESOURCES

Identifying Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs):

As part of a Wild and Scenic River Study, a determination must be made whether the river area contains any outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs).

The process of determining whether a river contains any ORVs often begins with an effort to gather information about river-specific resources that may be unique, rare or exemplary when compared to similar resources at a regional or national scale. For the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers this will be done by the Wild and Scenic River Study Committee with the help of area river specialists.

Many different kinds of resources can be ORVs. They include things like wildlife and their habitat, fisheries, scenery, geologic features, and historical, archaeological and recreational sites. For instance, there may be an historic grist mill on the bank of the river that was the

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NEWSLETTER DETAILS

This newsletter will be published during the approximately 3-year Wild & Scenic Study scheduled to end in 2012. If you are receiving this newsletter you likely live or work within the study area, you are on our mailing list, or you belong to a local watershed or conservation organization. You contact information will not be sold or shared by our organization, and will not be used for any purpose other than Wild & Scenic education and outreach. Please contact Shana Stewart [shana.stewart\[at\]vtwsr\[dot\]org](mailto:shana.stewart[at]vtwsr[dot]org); 802-393-0076 if you wish to be added or removed from our mailing list, or if you can save us money by receiving this newsletter electronically! Newsletter archives and more are available on our website.

WHAT IS WILD AND SCENIC? (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

More information about the events leading up to the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers being included by Congress in an Amendment to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act can be found on the MRBA website (<http://www.troutrivernetwork.org/mrba/wild+scenic.html>).

The Study Area

The Study section includes:

- 25 miles of the upper Missisquoi from Enosburg Falls/Enosburgh, through Berkshire to Richford/Canadian border
- 25 miles of the upper Missisquoi from the Canadian border/North Troy/Troy, through Westfield, Jay, to Lowell
- 20 miles of the Trout River through Montgomery and Berkshire

The Study Committee will determine the areas they feel are best suited for designation. Designated areas may include tributaries, and boundaries can go out from the river an average of one quarter of a mile.

The Study Committee

Representatives from the 10 towns and from partner organizations make up the Study Committee which meets on the third Thursday of each month. All are welcome, and details about agenda and venue can be found on our website (www.vtwsr.org). A multi-year grant from the National Park Service provides the funds for the Study Committee's activities including the hiring of Study Coordinator, Shana Stewart. Please see our website for our mission statement. We appreciate the time and dedication of both these official appointees, and the committed folks who attend our meetings and move the study forward! Please see page 5, or our website, for a listing of current Study Committee members and partnership organizations. We have blank slots in Berkshire, Jay, Lowell, and Troy.

The Study

The Study Committee meetings are well underway, and our current mission is identifying what outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) exist in and around the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers, and what their state and national significance may be. [Help us celebrate these rivers by letting us know what YOU feel are the outstanding resources of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers.](#) What areas of these rivers provide —>



Comstock Bridge, Montgomery, VT. Photo by: Ken Secor

outstanding recreational opportunities? Where are the most significant historical sites in or along these rivers? What areas are the most scenic, or provide the best wildlife habitat? SEND US YOUR INPUT (info@vtwsr.org)!

We encourage you to be part of the Wild & Scenic Study process by sending us your pictures & your opinions on what areas of the upper Missisquoi & Trout rivers are outstanding. This information will help the Committee & the ten communities plan for the future of the rivers whether or not designation is sought after the Study. Once the ORVs are identified, the current levels of town, state & federal protections will be assessed. As a final step, the Committee will pull together this information into a document, including its best recommendations for the future of the rivers & our best assessment of whether a Wild & Scenic River designation makes sense. If designation is sought, it will then go to vote at Town Meeting in the ten study area towns to demonstrate whether they support seeking designation. If supported, then information collected by the Study Committee will be taken to Congress for approval.

The Designation

If designation is sought the rivers will be classified in one of the following ways:

- Wild river areas are those with the cleanest water, and the least amount of development around the shoreline. These areas are typically only accessible by trail, and do not have impoundments.
- Scenic river areas are those with clean water, and minimal development around the shoreline. These areas may be accessible in areas by roads, and do not have impoundments.
- Recreational river areas are those which may have some development along shorelines. They are readily accessible by roads or railroads, & may have had historical impoundments or diversions.

Designation would be granted if the Study demonstrates 1) regionally or nationally outstanding resources, & 2) a local commitment to protect them. If designated, Congress would appropriate funds for projects to preserve the recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, natural, & geologic resources in the upper Missisquoi & Trout Rivers. The goal of designation is to protect & enhance the ORVs that caused it to be designated. Private property rights and current land-use would not be affected by designation. Town & state laws & regulations would continue to govern private property rights & land use. The Study may produce recommendations for local actions related to river management and protection, but these would need to be implemented through traditional local processes. Not only would designation recognize the upper Missisquoi & Trout Rivers as among the nation's best rivers, designation would qualify the Missisquoi & Trout for federal funds on an annual basis to support projects & activities that protect & enhance the river's outstanding values determined by the local Study Committee. For more information please visit our website, the Wild & Scenic Rivers website, or contact us. By: Shana Stewart



Photo of the wooden dam provided by the Enosburgh Historical Society

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR TOWNS: ENOSBURGH, VT

The Town of Enosburgh and Village of Enosburg Falls, in Franklin County, Vermont, were named for Roger Enos though he never lived there. Enos was a commander of troops in the American Revolution, and his daughter, Jerusha Hayden Enos, married one of Vermont's famous founders, Ira Allen.

The Missisquoi River has long been important to Enosburgh. The Wild & Scenic Study Area ends at the falls in Enosburg Falls. These falls are believed to originally be a natural falls. Early town records record it as 'Great Falls.' The wooden dam pictured was built presumably in the 1800s, and can sometimes be seen behind the current dam. The area has also been called 'Kendall's Falls' after the one of Enosburgh's most famous families. Samuel Kendall settled in Enosburgh and built a woolen factory in 1824. This mill was operated by water power, and was located behind the current hydro plant.

Enosburgh was chartered in 1780. Its population in 1800 was 143, but it quickly reached a population of 1,560 by 1830. Today the population of Enosburgh is around 2,800.

More information about the Town of Enosburgh or the Village of Enosburg Falls can be found on their website <http://www.enosburghvt.org/>. More information on the history of Enosburgh can be found in the wonderful book used as a resource to write this article: Geraw, Janice Fleury, compiler. (1985). *Enosburgh, Vermont*. Enosburgh Falls, VT : Enosburgh Historical Society, Inc.; and from their historical society: Enosburgh Historical Society, 55 Railroad Street, Enosburgh Falls, VT, Janice Geraw, Curator, 802-933-2102. This historical society is open June through October for free.

By: Shana Stewart

HELP US IDENTIFY OUTSTANDING RIVER RESOURCES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

first in the region to use a backshot wheel; a river may contain a population of migratory salmon that is federally listed as endangered; or once every five years the river may be the venue for the national canoe poling championships. These are just some possible examples.

There is not a prescribed list of what constitutes an ORV. All must be related to the river in some way – either by location, function, or origin. They can be located in the river or on its immediate environs, contribute to its ecosystem or channel processes, or derive their location or existence to the river.

A federal Interagency Wild & Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council (IWSRCC) consisting of representatives of the four wild and scenic rivers administering agencies—the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service has developed guidance on ORV identification and determination. The IWSRCC's guidance offers suggested criteria that can be helpful for determining whether a particular resource is sufficiently unique, rare or exemplary as to make it outstandingly remarkable.

Ultimately, the final determination on what constitutes an ORV is made river by river. Determinations cannot be arbitrary. Identification of a potential ORV is made by Study Committee members. ORV determinations should be made using professional judgment based on objective, scientific analysis, preferably with the input and advice of experts from the area who are familiar with the river and its associated resources.

If a river is determined to be free-flowing and to possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values, it is eligible for designation as a Wild and Scenic River. To provide input about what you feel are ORVs, or to come and talk to our Study Committee about natural, historical, recreational or scenic resources about which you are informed please contact Shana Stewart 802-393-0076; or [shana.stewart\[at\]vtwsr\[dot\]org](mailto:shana.stewart[at]vtwsr[dot]org)

By: Jim MacCartney - NPS



Spotlight on Local Organizations: **Farmers Watershed Alliance**

The Franklin and Grand Isle Farmers Watershed Alliance's mission is to insure

environmentally positive solutions and enable the dairy industry through education and funding to better the soil, air, and water of the Lake Champlain.

The Farmer's Watershed helps farmers understand environmental regulations, and provides a support network and non-regulatory technical assistance. Most importantly, our organization helps farmers implement best management practices that correct environmental problems that might exist. The Farmer's Watershed Alliance has completed more than 50 on-farm implementation projects to improve water quality within Franklin and Grand Isle Counties. Some of the projects have included fencing cows out of streams, manure containment in barnyard areas, diversion of clean water from animal use areas, erosion control, and nutrient management planning. The most recent project implemented by the Farmer's Watershed Alliance included manure incorporation through aeration on over 13,000 acres of grassland in Franklin, Grand Isle, and Orleans counties.

It is important to recognize that clean water is essential to a successful farming operation. It is one of the essential ingredients in a cow's diet. Did you know that milk is 80% water? Cows need a plentiful source of clean water to produce high quality milk. Clean water is not only important for a farm's livelihood, it is important to them as individuals as they are citizens, parents, and even sportsman who want a clean lake for Vermont.

By: Heather Darby, FWA

WHAT THE MISSISQUOI AND TROUT RIVERS MEAN TO ME

I have spent many enjoyable hours standing in the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers, waving a fly rod for bass and trout. Whether for an hour or four hours, it seems to revitalize me. It's my yoga & meditation all in one. The water rushing around my waders is mesmerizing and focusing on fishing takes my mind off everyday problems. I guess I've practiced "catch and release" most of my fishing years. Leaving them there for another time feels good & I suspect they appreciate it. Getting "skunked" every now and then tends to put everything into perspective, particularly when I imagine that they have a brain the size of a pea & I can't seem to outsmart them.



John Cote, East Berkshire, VT

Sometimes I combine the fly fishing with my canoe & paddle to spots that are essentially inaccessible with waders, especially since I'm not a very aggressive wader. It can get a bit complicated at times, managing a canoe & trying to cast. This usually works best with a fishing partner. When I canoe in familiar territory, I am frequently amazed by how different the perspective is from the level of the river. You're ten or fifteen feet below grade & what a difference it makes. I have canoed by parcels of land that I've sold through my real estate business, & not recognized them. Another remarkable feature while canoeing the river is how much more wildlife can be observed. The silent canoe approaching doesn't alarm the critters; they simply go about their business.

We are so very fortunate to have these two beautiful rivers in our backyard. They offer free recreation for us all. Recognizing & appreciating their value is the first step towards preserving them for ourselves and future generations.

By: John Cote

PARTNERSHIP WILD & SCENIC RIVERS—Adapted from 2008 George Wright Society article – see web site for full article.

The story of the "Partnership" Wild & Scenic Rivers is one of evolution & adaptation as river conservationists spent more than two decades developing & implementing a vision for National Wild & Scenic Rivers in predominantly privately owned lands of the northeast. Almost all early designations were on public lands. The Act anticipated that privately-owned, community-based rivers would also be considered & designated. It encourages local & state participation in administration & management (Sections 10 & 11), with specific provisions limiting land acquisition authority on rivers where communities had enacted "compatible" zoning (Section 6(c)).

Early Designation Efforts: All of the early studies of potentially designated rivers in New England concluded with recommendations against designation, failing the second test of the Act: *suitability*. Suitability for designation asks two main questions: can the river be effectively managed to protect the identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs); & is there public & stakeholder support for designation. Additional questions include: What are the roles of landowners, local communities, & the federal government, & how will coordination occur? Who has the funding responsibility? What local protection standards will be sufficient to protect ORVs? Study teams were able to identify the issues, but not successful at answering them clearly enough to allow designations to move forward until the success of following efforts.

Several pioneering efforts picked up this challenge, & have laid the groundwork for solving the above issues. **Upper Delaware (NY & PA, 1978):** The designation of the Upper Delaware River was the first time that Congress had designated a river with an (almost complete) prohibition against federal land acquisition. **Wildcat Brook (NH, 1984 Study, 1988 Designation):** Jackson, NH successfully achieved authorization of a new Wild & Scenic River Study, one that would develop & implement a successful river conservation Plan as the centerpiece of the Study. The Wildcat Brook River Conservation Plan, developed by the Town, the NPS & a specially formed local Study Committee, identified & implemented local actions they deemed necessary to protect the river's special values.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY PERIOD - Laying a Foundation in Partnerships: The Study period is a unique opportunity to bring all river constituents together to learn, share, & chart a course for the future. The central tenets are: "What is special about this place?" & "What can we do, working together, to make the most of it for present & future generations?" **Capturing local Knowledge, Enthusiasm, & Volunteerism:** No one knows a river like the people who live along its shores, & the communities that trace their roots & heritage to its ebb & flow. Successful management & protection flows from the Study process bringing local knowledge & commitment together with agencies & partner organizations to understand the resources, identify how they are used & valued, & shape a relevant vision for the future - a River Management or Stewardship Plan. **What Are the Outcomes of a Study?:** A successful study will: Help you learn about your river, its values, & its management; Develop a coalition of interested & engaged partners; Develop the basis of a comprehensive management plan for your river; Assess the potential for Wild & Scenic Designation & other protection options; Be valuable for your river & your communities whether or not designation is ultimately sought or achieved. **Fulfilling The Model: The Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers:** Today, the term "Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers" is used by the NPS & Congress to describe a distinct subset of the Wild & Scenic Rivers System, all sharing the following common characteristics: Federal Land Ownership Not Authorized; Land Use Governed by State & Local Statutes; Management Coordinated Through Local-State-Federal Advisory Councils; No Federal Superintendent or Federal Law Enforcement; National Park Service administers Section 7 of the Act to ensure consistency of federal water resource development projects; Management Costs & Responsibilities Shared Among Partners; Management Directed According to Partnership-Based Management Plans Developed & Endorsed Locally **Prior to Designation.** Under this umbrella, National Wild & Scenic River designation has proven an excellent tool to bring together local, state, federal & non-governmental partners with a single vision for the future of outstanding, free-flowing rivers.

By: Jamie Fosburgh, NPS

CURRENT TOWN APPOINTEES

The Wild and Scenic Study Committee is made up of two official members from each of the ten towns in the study area. These official members are appointed by the towns. The following is the current roster of appointed members from each of the ten towns:

Berkshire

1. Todd Kinney
2. _____

Town of Enosburgh

1. Edward G. Ellis
2. Ken Secor

Village of Enosburg Falls

1. Robert Johnson
2. Mike Manahan

Jay

1. _____
2. _____

Lowell

1. Mark Higley
2. _____

Montgomery

1. Carol McGregor
2. Todd Lantery

Village of North Troy

1. Sue Brassett
2. Jim Starr

Richford's Conservation Commission

1. Hib Doe
2. Annette Goyne
3. George Olio

Westfield

1. Jacques Couture
2. Dianne Laplante

Town of Troy

1. _____
2. _____

Other agencies and organizations represented include: Missisquoi River Basin Association, National Park Service: Jamie Fosburgh; Jim MacCartney, Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC): Catherine Dimitruk; Bethany Remmers, VT Agency of Agriculture: Sylvia Jensen, VT Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) - Rick Hopkins (or Cathy Kashanski) and Staci Pomeroy, VT Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs: Bill Leipold, VT Traditions Coalition: Robert Qua. Study Committee members make every effort to attend monthly Study Committee meetings, and to assist in the Wild and Scenic Study process whenever possible. **BLANK SEATS INDICATE THAT NO ONE HAS BEEN APPOINTED FOR THAT SEAT BY THE TOWN SELECT BOARD. If you live in a town with a vacancy and wish to be appointed to the Wild and Scenic Study Committee, please contact your Select Board.** For more information please contact: Shana Stewart the Wild and Scenic Study Coordinator at 802-393-0076 or shana[dot]stewart[at]vtwsr.org Please also visit our website for updated information and meeting minutes at www.vtwsr.org

MEET OUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jacques Couture

Chairman

Organic dairy farmer and proprietor of Couture's Maple Shop and B&B, Jacques Couture has made his home on the Missisquoi River in Westfield since 1970. He and his wife Pauline have raised six children in that time, all the while proving themselves to be excellent stewards of the land. Never a man to avoid responsibility, he continues to serve the community in many ways including various volunteer positions for the town of Westfield and the Vermont Sugar Makers Association. The Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Study Committee is very fortunate to have Jacques' valuable input as our Chair.



Jacques Couture



Todd Lantery

Todd Lantery

Vice Chairman

Todd Lantery has lived on the Trout River in Montgomery Center since January 2008. He and his wife Nicole truly appreciate raising their three children in such a beautiful, natural playground. An avid angler, hiker and botanist with a thirty year background in real estate development, Todd brings an interesting and relevant mix of experience to the Study Committee. He really enjoys the opportunity to give back to the community as vice chair.



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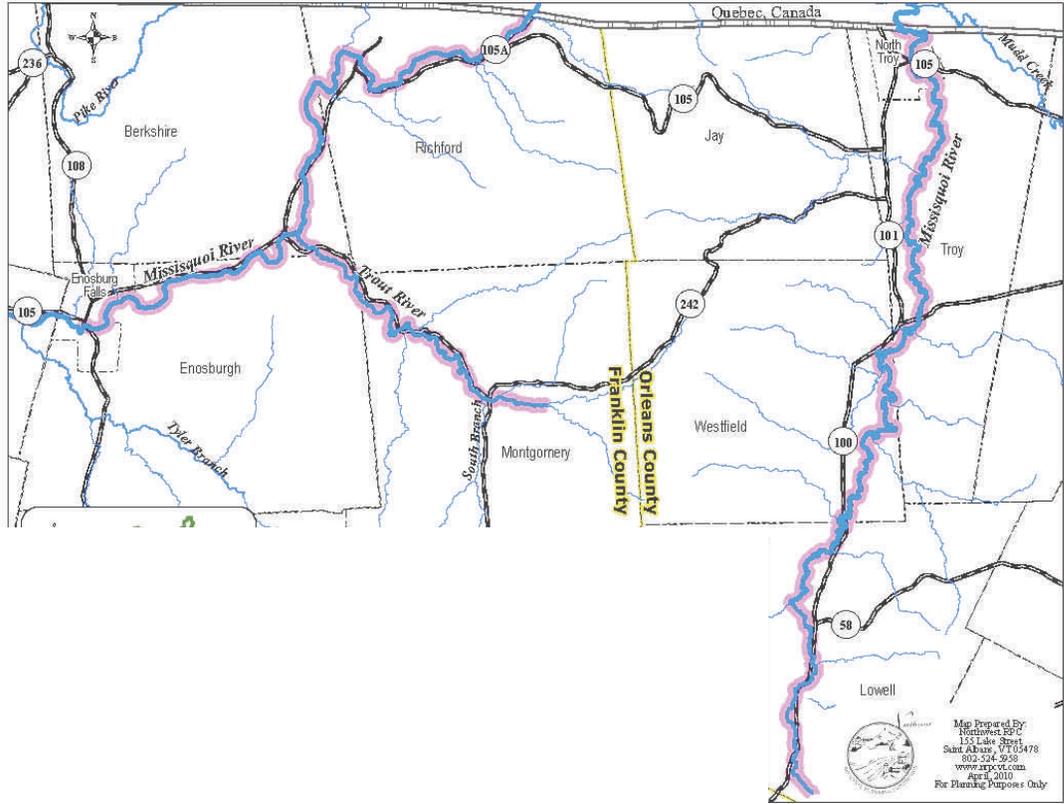


Photo by David Juare

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Photo Contest

The Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Study is sponsoring a photo contest! Our first photo contest is open from now until December 1, 2010. Winners of our photo contests will be featured on our website and newsletter, and entered into the running for the best photo of 2010-2011, and receive a \$50 Gift Certificate generously donated by Tosca's Trout River Traders, Montgomery, VT. Each photo submitted must be accompanied by its own completed entry form which can be downloaded from our website www.vtwsr.org. Please submit both a hard copy and email a digital version of your photo. Digital copy may be emailed to info@vtwsr.org. You may also request an entry form by mail.

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