



# ***WILLIMANTIC RIVER NEWS***

*Willimantic River Alliance*

*Spring, 2013*

**Stafford Stormwater Project** WRA was selected to receive \$15,100 for a Supplemental Environmental Project for environmental restoration of the river's watershed or other benefits to it. The funds are part of a citizen's suit settlement with Stafford Auto Recyclers for noncompliance with the Clean Water Act. The project will probably be located in Stafford.

**Water Trail Kiosks** The Last Green Valley received a Ct. DEEP Recreation Trails grant to design and install kiosks at launch sites on the Willimantic, Quinebaug and Shetucket rivers. You can preview the kiosk design at the **WRA Annual Meeting on April 24**. The kiosks are slated to be installed on the Willi River this fall or next spring. Other stewardship projects will improve launch sites as part of National Recreation Trail improvements along the river's water trail.

**Proposed Hydroelectric Project** The Alliance and the Town of Mansfield sponsored a presentation in February by New England Hydropower, which is proposing to install a hydroelectric facility at Eagleville Dam. The Archimedes-type screw design would allow fish passage through it and provide enough power for 70 homes. Sample photos and info at: [www.nehydropower.com](http://www.nehydropower.com)

**2012 Integrated Ct. Water Quality Report has good news!** Most of the Willimantic River and parts of the Hop and Skungamaug tributaries are now listed as "Fully Supporting for Recreational Use" due to low counts of indicator bacteria. For details, visit our Conservation page at: [www.willimanticriver.org](http://www.willimanticriver.org) .

**Launch of Water Quantity Project** Ct. DEEP is sponsoring a statewide streamflow classification project that will initially identify sections of each river and ultimately determine a required streamflow for aquatic life downstream from each dam. The Thames River Basin (including the Willi River) is the first watershed to be analyzed, beginning later this spring.

**Water Supply Update** Work continues on the Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) for new additional water supply sources for UConn's Storrs campus and the surrounding area. Because the test wells along the Willi River did not produce enough water, new wells by the river are no longer being considered. WRA is concerned that a significant increase in water consumption in the Storrs area would cause a major increase in outflow from UConn's sewage treatment plant. This could negatively impact water quality and quantity below Eagleville dam. WRA also recommended a state-wide approach to water supply plans for Storrs and other communities.

**Fanwort Alert** Last fall, boaters noted the growth of this invasive water plant in Eagleville Lake. The floating colonies are inhibiting fishing and boating in the lake's quiet waters. To help prevent it from spreading to other lakes and ponds, check your boat for pieces of fanwort when you take out of this lake. More information will be available at the WRA Annual Meeting.

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### **COMING EVENTS**

**Wednesday, April 24**

#### **Annual Meeting and Open House**

Celebrate the Willimantic River's new National Recreation Trail (NRT). Check out a sample NRT kiosk design and share your suggestions. Lois Bruinooge of The Last Green Valley will give us an update on the NRT project and upcoming events. Bring your photos and news to share. We will provide dessert and soft drinks. At the Eagleville Firehouse at the corner of Rts. 32 and 275 in Mansfield from 7 to 9 p.m. Annual meeting precedes at 6:30 p.m.

**Saturday, May 18**

#### **Willimantic Riverfest**

Family paddling down the river from Eagleville Dam to Willimantic, whitewater demonstrations, music, and food. Sponsored by Willimantic Whitewater Partnership. Information at: [www.willimanticwhitewater.org](http://www.willimanticwhitewater.org)

**Saturday, June 1**

#### **Family Cruise on the Willimantic River**

Celebrate Ct. Trails Day with an easy flatwater trip for canoes and kayaks from River Park to Eagleville Lake. Bring your own boat or rent a kayak at the Mansfield Community Center. Life jackets required for all participants. Bring water, lunch optional. Moderate to heavy rain cancels. Time: 10 a.m. to noon. Meet at River Park on Plains Road in Mansfield. Sponsored by Willimantic River Alliance and Mansfield Parks the Recreation Dept. For information, call 429-3015 x 204.

**Wednesdays, March 27, May 22, June 26. August 28, September 25, October 23**

#### **WRA Board Meetings**

Everyone is welcome to WRA board meetings at 7:00 p.m. at the Tolland Town Hall on Rt. 195 a half-mile west of I-84 junction. Park in the lot behind the building and enter the back door. Walk upstairs to the conference room on the left. The location may change, so email: [info@willimanticriver.org](mailto:info@willimanticriver.org) to confirm that the meeting place has not moved.

### **GET OUTSIDE!**

Check out the Recreation page at [www.willimanticriver.org](http://www.willimanticriver.org) for fishing info, riverside parks, hiking trails, and our paddling guide.

**NEW! LIKE us on Facebook at Willimantic River Alliance.**