

“*River Voices*” Publishes Article by Coalition Chairman Taylor

The mission of the national organization **River Network** and its publication *River Voices* is “to help people understand, protect and restore rivers and their watersheds.” River Network consists of grassroots river and watershed conservation organizations like the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition to which it provides information, training, consultation, grants, and referrals to other service organizations. Its annual national conference, River Rally, has provided terrific educational and networking opportunities in past years to Coalition staff and Board members. At last year’s Rally, Coalition staff made a presentation on the scientific studies the Coalition is coordinating in the Pomperaug Watershed (see the Summer 2005 issue of *Watershed News*).



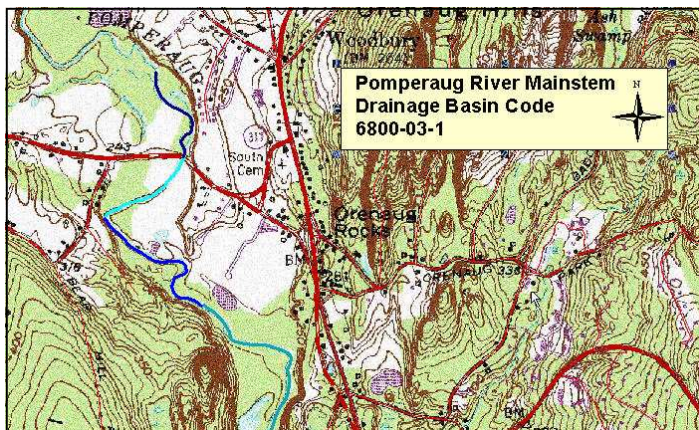
The most recent issue of *River Voices* features an article by **Marc Taylor**, co-founder and Chairman of the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition. Taylor’s article, “The Importance of Long-Term Flow Monitoring in the Pomperaug River Watershed,” appearing in an issue devoted to the topic of **Groundwater**, explains one aspect of the research projects being carried out in the Pomperaug Watershed. Other articles in this extremely useful publication cover such issues as the effects of human activities on groundwater, the way pumping of groundwater affects the levels of water in streams and rivers, the connection between groundwater and the health of aquatic life, the increasing threat of groundwater depletion caused by over-pumping, and the steps being taken by local communities to challenge the exploitation of their groundwater resources by multinational corporate interests.

Copies of *River Voices* may be borrowed from the Coalition office, located at the Bent of the River Audubon Center in South Britain.

Coalition Chairman Taylor leads a discussion at a meeting of the Executive Committee

Interactive Streamwalk Map up on Coalition Website!

One of the newest features on the Coalition’s website is an interactive map showing the results of the five years of volunteer streamwalks that have been conducted throughout the Watershed. Each survey location is designated on the map and, by clicking on a completed survey, you can access the information that streamwalk volunteers collected and recorded about the area that they surveyed. Such information as depth of water, streambank condition, pollution sources, and surrounding vegetation, as well as the names of the volunteers who conducted the surveys, are linked to



the locations. The map is located at www.pomperaug.org/map/.

Please take a look at this interesting page and give us your feedback.

Come to our River Celebration events ---

--- see back page!

Discovering the Unknown Landscape -- book review by Ed Edelson

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There are some history books that take a sweeping look at an event (such as the Civil War) or a series of events (such as colonialism) by looking at the broad landscape of what affected those events and the effects of those events. There are other history books that start from one element of our lives and look at how our perception and use of it have changed over the years. One of my favorites was Salt – a romp through world history from the perspective of how we have used and valued salt over the years.

I now have a new favorite:

Discovering the Unknown Landscape by Ann Vileisis. The subtitle is “A History of America’s Wetlands.” Not only does Ms. Vileisis show how our cultural norms about wetlands (formerly known as marshes and swamps) have changed over time, she also shows how the juxtaposition of “water” and “land” in one word has lead to years of contradictory wetland policies and programs.

For example, at the same time that the US Government was subsidizing farmers to drain wetlands to make more land available for crop growing, it was paying farmers not to plant in order to stabilize crops prices. Some farmers were paid twice – once to drain the land and then again to not use it. And later on, some were paid to help restore the drained lands to their original condition.

The book begins with the early settlers in America and their love / hate relationship with the coastal marshes that were so rich with fish and fowl, but were also close to harbors. Once drained, they offered more land for housing and high quality soils for farming. And so began America’s drive to drain and control wetlands – whether along the coasts, along our rivers (the book offers a very complete saga of the costly efforts to control the Mississippi and

how that laid the groundwork for making New Orleans so much more vulnerable to Hurricane Katrina), or in the prairies.

Much of the book is devoted to the 20th century as Federal and State regulations and bureaucracies began to grapple with wetlands management. The politics are fascinating. Behind it all is the contradiction in the word “wetland.” The “wet” refers to the river-like quality of wetlands (not well understood for many years). Unlike the “land,” which is fixed and can have stable boundaries, the “wet” moves over time and does not have fixed boundaries. Legally we have long recognized that land can be privatized because it has stable boundaries. Legally we have also recognized that rivers cannot be privatized since they keep moving, and that it is essential for the public good to prevent any one person from having private control over a river. So the question is: are wetlands legally like land (a position most developers have lobbied for) or like a river (a position environmentalists see as essential)?

As with many “micro-histories,” through the tight lens of wetlands we also learn much about our society and how it has changed over the last 400 years. We can hope that what we learn will help us make better decisions about wetlands management in the future.

By the way, Ann Vileisis is the



daughter of Marc Taylor, Coalition Chairman.

**Author
Vileisis
rafting on
Oregon’s
Rogue River**



Klausner Joins Coalition Board of Directors

New Board member Samuel Klausner is Chairman of the Heritage Village Civic Association Environment Committee, a member of Audubon Connecticut and a frequent hiker at the Bent of the River Audubon Center where the Coalition office is located. A chemist by education and training, he founded a water treatment company in New York City in 1958, concentrating on corrosion control and domestic water treatment. The Coalition is fortunate to have the experience and skills that Klausner brings to it, and we are grateful for his interest and participation.

Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition's Annual Fund Drive

How does it work? As is true at most nonprofit organizations, Coalition membership income does not fully cover the cost of operating the organization. That's why each year we rely upon the generosity of the entire community – members, volunteers, businesses and local residents – to support an **Annual Fund** drive. The Annual Fund is an essential revenue source for the Coalition's annual operating budget. Your contributions go to work immediately, and the impact of these gifts extends to every corner of the Watershed.

What does it support? Your tax-deductible gifts to the Annual Fund enable the Coalition to:

- implement a *Watershed Management Plan* that recommends strategies for wise water and land use, thus insuring that our water will remain drinkable, fishable and

swimmable;

- produce *Watershed News*, our quarterly newsletter that includes information about the Coalition's activities and research projects, tips on how you can help protect our water supplies, and other information of interest relating to water;
- run a *Volunteer Streamwalk Program* that trains volunteers to collect physical information about the Watershed's rivers and streams. The information is used to identify potential water-quality problems and to direct restoration initiatives;
- provide *Educational Programs* designed to inform and involve the community in water-resource protection.

How much difference can my gift make? Every gift is important. Broad-based participation, combined with leadership levels of support from some individuals, ensures that we will meet our financial goals and demonstrates that the objectives of Coalition are worthy and widely supported.

We will be mailing you an Annual Fund contribution envelope in the coming weeks and sincerely hope you will respond generously. If you would like to learn more about how you can help, please call 203-267-1700.

Gifts In Honor/Memory Of

Contributions to the Coalition's Annual Fund can do more than protect our local water resources. They can also honor someone special. Designating a contribution to the Fund as a tribute to someone is a way to make a gift unique or bring recognition to someone for whom conservation is an important value. You can make a gift to honor a friend or family member on a birthday, graduation, anniversary, retirement, or other event, and a memorial gift is an especially thoughtful way to honor the memory of a loved one. The Coalition will send a formal acknowledgement of your gift to the person or family in whose honor your tribute is made (the amount will remain confidential). A separate receipt will be sent to you for tax purposes.

Gifts to the Coalition have been received

in honor of	Stanley Barnett
	Edwin Mickenberg
	Dr. Marc Taylor
and in memory of	Evan H. Gillette
	Gerald A. Ivers

Board Member's Volunteer Hours Earn Funds for the Coalition

The Coalition has recently received a grant through an interesting program of the ExxonMobil Foundation called the Volunteer Involvement Program. The company encourages its employees and retirees to donate their time and talents to nonprofits; by way of encouragement, it will contribute matching grants based on the number of hours a volunteer has given. The many hours given to the Coalition by board member and chair of the Coalition Development Committee Ed Edelson have resulted in two grants from ExxonMobil totaling \$1,500, with more to come! We are grateful to Edelson both for all the time he has given to the Coalition, and for making possible this generous grant from ExxonMobil. Thank you!!



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Come Celebrate the River With Us!

The Coalition has planned two exciting events for spring/early summer designed to bring people out onto the Pomperaug and its tributaries and to increase the public's appreciation of our wonderful local water resource.

April 29

***First Annual POMPERAUG
FISHING APPRECIATION DAY --***

-- a day of fishing, demonstrations, and displays in celebration of the rivers of the Pomperaug Watershed, in partnership with Trout Unlimited. Spend the morning fishing at your favorite spot in the Watershed (or discover a new one!), then join us for lunch at the Bent of the River Audubon Center followed by an afternoon of fishing-related activities -- guest speakers, a video ("Underwater Trout"), and workshops on fly tying, fly casting, and fly rod building.



June 4

First Annual POMPERAUG RIVER RUN --

-- a canoe/kayak day on the Pomperaug, plus lunch, speakers, displays, and demonstrations. After a morning run down the Pomperaug, come back to the Audubon Center and enjoy lunch in the barn or on the lawn, watch a demonstration of canoe and kayak building, hear talks about the Watershed, and attend a clinic on canoe/kayak selection and safety. Our partner in this event will be the Appalachian Mountain Club.



Please join us for these "A Day On the River" events. Come get to know your local river and your local water resource protection organization -- the **Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition**. For more information call the office at 203-267-1700.