

Watershed News

Keeping our water pure and plentiful

Summer 2005

Coalition Takes the Spotlight at National Rivers Conference

River Network, the national river protection organization (www.rivernetwork.org), held its annual River Rally conference in Keystone, Colorado in May. The Coalition was invited to provide two ninety-minute sessions on our Watershed Management Plan and research. The sessions were touted by River Network as providing tools for conference participants to use in their own watersheds, making our plan and methods available nationwide!

The sessions were entitled "Developing a Scientifically-Based Watershed Management Plan, Parts 1 & 2". Laurie Giannotti, our Executive Director, provided an overview of our Watershed Management Plan process and showcased the website version of the plan. Ms. Giannotti was followed in Part 1 by US Geological Survey (USGS) hydrologist David Bjerkli who gave a detailed presentation of the Pomperaug Watershed surface and ground water model and its applications. Part 2 included a presentation of our instream habitat model and



National Director of the U.S. Geological Survey, Dr. Charles Groat, met with Coalition Executive Director Laurie Giannotti and USGS Pomperaug researcher Dave Bjerkli at River Rally and commended the Coalition's work.

applications by Dr. Sean Werle, an assistant of Dr. Parasiewicz at the University of Massachusetts.

The sessions were very well attended by representatives of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), USGS, and various watershed and river protection organizations as well as university researchers, all of whom gave us positive feedback. River Network has already asked the Coalition

to make a presentation at next year's Rally, which will be held in New Hampshire.

The Coalition received a federal Watershed Assistance Grant from River Network in 1999 which was critical to getting the new organization established at that time. River Network's continuing sense of ownership and interest in our progress here in the Pomperaug Watershed was clearly evident at the recent River Network conference.

With your help... we can do it! Call for Volunteers

The Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition is your local nonprofit working to protect the quality and quantity of water in the Pomperaug Watershed, a 90 square mile area that provides both water and recreational opportunities for thousands of people.

Founded in 1999, the Coalition has come far and done much on a limited budget and with only one and a half staff. Programs such as the Water Resources Management Plan,

Volunteer Streamwalk Program, Critical Resources Mapping, stream gauge funding, and water quality monitoring could not have been accomplished without the dedication of numerous volunteers.

We have wisely used donations, gifts and grants to achieve our goals and have kept our annual operating budget to just under \$200,000 a year. Over half our income and expenses is restricted to our research projects. To

continue this level of work on a limited budget we need additional

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POMPERAUG PONDERINGS

Bottled water costs from 240 to over 10,000 times more per gallon than tap water — and 25 - 30% of all bottled water comes straight out of the tap!

Call for Volunteers

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volunteers who would be willing to donate a little of their time to help in one or more of the following areas:

- ◆ Mailings
- ◆ Bookkeeping
- ◆ Correspondence
- ◆ Web site updates
- ◆ Writing press releases and news articles
- ◆ Planning events
- ◆ Research including land use trends, municipal and state regulations, habitat, geological and water assessments.
- ◆ Grant writing

If you would be willing to assist with any of the above, please contact us at (203) 267-1700 or info@pomperaug.org.

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Coalition Watershed Management Plan Now on Line!

The Coalition has developed and adopted a comprehensive, scientifically-based management plan for the Pomperaug Watershed. The management plan describes how the Coalition puts its research results into action. The goal of the plan is to insure that our water resources remain drinkable, swimmable and fishable. The management plan outlines how the Coalition identifies its research agenda, develops action items based on the results of the research, and monitors and updates the action items. Action items include: a community outreach program; facilitation of the CT Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Stormwater Phase II Management Program; the development of an aquifer protection plan; and a strategy to insure continued support for USGS river gauge funding.

Our management plan is a **living document**. With generous support from the DEP's 604B program, we have put the management plan on our website. This allows us to make real-time updates available to all stakeholders as more research results and other local and regulatory water issues arise. We believe this will help the Coalition insure best management practices for our precious water resources.

At our website, you can read or download the document in full - or simply read the pieces that you are most interested in by clicking on the appropriate box in the flowchart version of the plan. We

encourage everyone to familiarize themselves with our management plan because it will help you help us keep your water pure and plentiful!

<http://www.pomperaug.org/wmp/index.htm>

The screenshot shows the website for the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition. The header includes the organization's name and a map of the watershed. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for: POMPERAUG WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, GOALS, WATERSHED RESOURCES, and WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN PROCESS. The main content area is titled "Water Resources Management Plan" and includes the following text: "For The Pomperaug River Watershed and Aquifer", "Sponsored By: The Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition, Inc.", "Prepared By: Margery Winters, Project Manager", and "April, 2005".



A grass-free—and lovely—front yard

Save Water

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to keep a lawn green. Less lawn also of course means that less energy is required - both human and fossil fuel energy: less mowing, lower gasoline consumption, less maintenance, less raking. Many areas of lawn can be converted to trees, shrubs, perennial flowers and ground covers. Such areas, in addition to requiring less water, will also encourage birds, butterflies, and other wildlife to take up residence. Once such plantings are well established, they will require less upkeep and care than lawns.

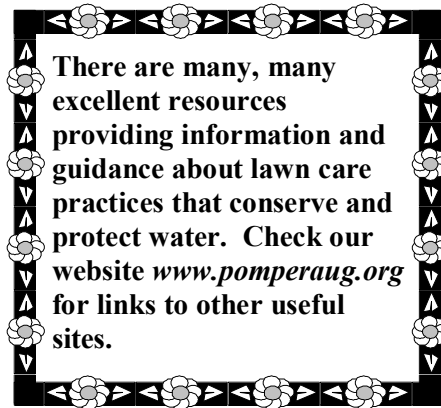
Where grass is naturally hard to grow, such as wet, shady or rocky areas, it makes sense to plant alternatives that will naturally thrive and not require the extra care that grass would need in a spot to which it's not well adapted. Native plants that have co-evolved with their local environment are hardy and sustainable and require little care.

Certain lawn care practices will promote more efficient use of water. Leaving grass clippings on the lawn adds nutrients to the soil and keeps the soil from drying out. Improving the health of the soil by adding

compost and eliminating poisons will promote the health of plants; such soil also acts as a filter and purifier, biologically cleaning the water that passes through it. Drought-resistant grass varieties that are appropriate for an individual site and location require less water than grass does.

Additionally, any reduction in lawn care products - fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides - is a very, very good thing for our water resources. It has been estimated that 60% of the nitrogen applied to lawns eventually ends up in ground water. Herbicides and pesticides can be absorbed through the soil or run off into water bodies.

Cultivate tolerance for bugs and "weeds." Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "What is a weed? A weed is a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered."



O&G Industries a Pomperaug Watershed Stakeholder

by Kenneth Faroni

With approximately nine hundred acres of land in the Pomperaug Watershed under ownership, including considerable frontage along the Pomperaug River itself, O & G Industries, Inc. (O&G) is a relatively "big fish in a small pond" for a watershed comprising only ninety square miles. The Pomperaug River

Watershed Coalition's founders recognized the importance of O&G's participation in maintaining the health of the local landscape and local water bodies and invited Kenneth Faroni, Planning & Permit Coordinator for O&G, to served on the Board of Directors, which he has done since the organization's incorporation in 2000.

O&G maintains a number of environmental and land use permits (e.g. diversion, inland wetlands and zoning) for its quarry operations and appreciates the interrelationship between land use and water quantity and quality. The Coalition has done a remarkable job of coordinating a number of exciting research efforts as well as promoting environmental awareness throughout the watershed. O&G is proud to contribute to these efforts.

As a sponsor of the Waterbury Symphony's annual Picnic 'n Pops concert at Hollow Park in Woodbury, we invite you to enjoy this year's concert and encourage you to take a leisurely stroll along the banks of the Pomperaug River before or after the concert, and get to know our lovely local river.

The Picnic 'n Pops concert will take place on July 9 starting at 2 pm in Hollow Park, Woodbury.

summer PWSO POPS

Pack a picnic! Join your friends, bring the family for a great outdoor concert - close to home.

july 9 • 2:00 pm
Hollow Park • Woodbury, CT

Patron Tent Seating: \$50 Children: Free
Adults: \$10 (Advance purchase) \$15 (Day of the event)
For tickets call: 203 574-4283

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Have you visited our website lately?

Recent additions to the Coalition's website include:

- ◆ **Welcome to the Pomperaug Watershed** - information about the hydrologic cycle in our Watershed and tips on how you can help insure clean and abundant water for your home and business
- ◆ **Watershed Management Plan** - a comprehensive document outlining the Coalition's strategy for protecting our local water resources (see details on page 2).

We encourage you to spend some time exploring the website and making use of its many resources!

Save time, save money....save water!

One of the best and easiest ways homeowners can protect local water resources is to reduce the size of their lawns, and to manage the remainder such that ground and surface water is not exposed to chemicals.

According to the EPA, about one-third of all outdoor water use goes into lawn care alone! But conserving water outdoors doesn't have to mean abandoning your lawn altogether: smart landscaping techniques will save not only water, but time and money as well.

This works in a number of ways: cutting down on the amount of lawn that needs to be maintained obviously reduces the amount of water needed

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**Naturally-landscaped yard with
an inviting sitting area**

