

**Winter
2016**

www.westportriver.org



WESTPORT FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

WFA NEWS UPDATE

The WFA began in 1983 as a non-profit and charitable organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the waters of the Westport River, its marshes and tributaries

Help fund the Westport River Saltmarsh Study!

The Westport Fishermen's Association is partnering with the Buzzards Bay Coalition (BBC) to have the renowned Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) conduct a study this summer of the decline in salt marshes in the West Branch of the river. Dr. Linda Deegan will oversee the project. She is a senior scientist in the MBL Ecosystems Center, who has studied salt marsh loss in the Plum Island estuary.

The project will include developing a historical timeline of marsh loss and upland land use changes, comparing areas of noted creek widening and marsh loss with other more stable areas. In addition, the scientists will assess some potential causes, using image analysis compared to timing of coastal storms, rate of sea level rise, upland development, changes of sediment inputs and nutrient delivery. The study may also measure potential nutrient delivery in groundwater using well point sampling multiple times over the summer. Finally, the study proposes to assess the structure and strength of the creek banks to assess their vulnerability to storms.

The WFA needs to raise up to \$5,000 to fund a college student intern to conduct the field work and data collection. The MBL, BBC and WFA are all providing additional support, including laboratory analysis, staff support and site access. The Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program will assist with the historical imagery analysis. This study will quantify the problem and point toward some of the contributors to this alarming collapse of salt marshes, which in turn degrades the habitat for fish and shellfish in our river.

To support this project you can send a check to WFA, PO Box 83, Westport Point, MA 02791, marked for 'salt marsh study' or make an online donation via PayPal at <http://westportriver.org/donate/>. 100% of donations will go toward the intern stipend for this study. Thank you!

In addition, we are looking for housing for all or part of the summer for the intern. Please contact us if you can offer accommodations or if you know of a student who might be interested in applying for the intern position. Volunteers to help with taking measurements on the marshes are also welcome. The field work will be begin in late June.

Tanja Ryden, WFA Project Coordinator

Like Us On Facebook



The 12th Annual "Run for the Water" Saturday, May 7, 2016

The Westport Fishermen's Association will once again host its 8K Beach Run and 5K Family Fun Run at the DCR Horseneck Beach State Reservation in Westport MA on Saturday, May 7th. The race gun will sound to start the race at 10:00 am.

Be sure to save the date and plan to join us! This year marks the 12th anniversary of this wonderful community event. Come out and run a beautiful Flat and Fast 8K course or walk or run a 5K loop for fun, while supporting our efforts to protect and preserve the Westport River and its tributaries as well as our scholarship and education programs.

We will offer complimentary T-Shirts for the first 150 pre-registered runners. There will be cash prizes for top finishers and other awards for best time in different age groups. A post-race celebration with food and drinks, as well as raffle prizes for lucky participants will be offered compliments of our sponsors.

Race applications and additional event information will be posted on the WFA website at www.westportriver.org.



WESTPORT FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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Jack Reynolds

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Don Dufault

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Contact Info

Westport Fishermen's Assoc.
PO Box 83
Westport Point, MA 02791
www.westportriver.org
wfa@westportriver.org
774-264-9200

The WFA is a non-profit
charitable 501 (c) 3
organization.
All contributions are
tax deductible to the extent
allowed by law.

Lookin' astern . . . with Cap'n Cukie

At, the age of 90, I have a lot memories which I am saving for the future in print or on DVDs. As a young boy, I didn't play ball or any other games because I was too busy building something. My father supplied me with any working tools I wanted. My grandfather taught me carpentry. I started by building small things like bird houses, signs for the garden, door stops for our house, signs with carved messages, etc.

At age 13, I was given a cottage which had washed across West Beach Road in the '38 storm. I dismantled it and my father's truck brought the lumber home, where I turned it into a workshop.



In 1939 I built a catamaran with a steel frame and galvanized steel for the skin. It had a park bench for 3 people and a bicycle frame to turn a paddle wheel. Steering was with a sliding bar to turn the rudder. I had many days of fun on the river with that craft which had a 3 inch draft.

I had never camped but it seemed like a good thing. So I built a house trailer to go behind my Columbia bike. It had steel angle iron for the underbody with a wood frame covered with canvas. With tear drop fenders, two windows, a rear door with a screen door it was first class. I installed tail lights and interior lights with hot-shot batteries. The Herald News sent a photographer and I was in the media. In the summer I towed it to Turtle Hill and camped on the river.

I was 15 years old when I built a ten foot skiff. That was handy for fishing around the river. In 1942 we started swordfishing and that skiff brought every swordfish to the "Edith M". Our swordfish boat was named for my mother, Edith Rivers Macomber.

In 1939 Dad bought a 16 foot catboat with an open cockpit. We took the mast out and I spent non schooldays in the winter building a trunk cabin and pilot house. We then had a real fun boat. The mast became our lawn flag pole. Power was by a four cylinder engine with no clutch. The engine was from a Star Automobile. I was chosen captain. Approaching Lees Wharf was a little tricky. I had to kill the engine at the right time to ease up to the wharf. The next winter I installed a marine clutch and then boating was fun.

When Alice and I got married, we had hired Andrew Tabor to frame the house I designed. When the shingling was done, I spent two years finishing the inside. It was not easy spending every minute away from my business working on it but we moved in after two years. Those two years we lived in an old leaky farm house with the only heat being a cast iron kitchen stove and the toilet being 30 feet behind the house. It was not easy but I am sure glad we did it because it helped us to develop a real gratitude for modern things. That old farm house had outside walls made of vertical oak planks with shingles on one side and plaster inside. A 10 degree temp on the outside presented almost the same inside. It was a good thing we were young and in love.

President's Corner

by Jack Reynolds



The herring ditch connecting Cockeyeast Pond to Westport Harbor has been getting steadily wider in the past few years. This is happening because the salt marsh that forms the banks of the ditch are dissolving and falling into the ditch and washing out into the harbor. The WFA along with the Buzzards Bay Coalition are planning and funding an investigation into what's causing this.

The research will be headed up by the Marine Biological Lab at Woods Hole, MA.

One of our concerns with this is that as the ditch widens the water flow is spread over a wider stream causing the water to be shallower. Under low flow periods this makes the ditch be less passable for the herring swimming up the ditch to the pond to spawn. River herring are a keystone species for the river and the ocean and supply food for most of the gamefish we prize and also birds such as the osprey. And years ago when they were plentiful, herring were used by the local lobster industry for bait. And also local fish markets would sell the tasty roe every spring.

A week ago the State Mosquito Control volunteered their time and a wide-track specially designed excavator to dig a narrow furrow in the center of the ditch, thus making a deeper channel. The Westport Fish Commission along with Brad Chase of the anadromous fish section of the Division of Marine Fisheries were involved with coordination of the work.

All of this was done very timely because there were fresh herring scales along the ditch this morning, a sure sign that the first herring of the year had run up into the pond last night. Earlier than last year by more than a month, and earlier than most years. Hopefully this is the start of a plentiful run this year, unlike the past several.

Plastic Problem

If we keep producing and failing to properly dispose of plastics at predicted rates, plastics in the ocean will outweigh fish pound for pound by 2050, according to a World Economic Forum report released in January 2016.

Once it gets washed into waterways, the damage caused by plastics' presence costs about \$13 billion annually in losses for the tourism, shipping and fishing industries. It disrupts marine ecosystems and threatens food security for people who depend on subsistence fishing.

So please reduce, reuse and recycle!



Get Hooked on the WFA Become A Member

Steward \$25

Sponsor \$50

Advocate \$100

Benefactor \$500

Captain \$1,000

Benefits of Supporting The WFA

* You'll receive our quarterly Newsletter packed with News & WFA updates.

* Invitations to our annual events including:

February
Oyster Stew
Annual Meeting

May
Road Race

July
Fishing Tournament

September
Clambake

October
Classic Wooden Boat
Exhibit

Ongoing -Informative Lectures and exhibits on maritime history & the environment at our newly restored Horseneck Point Life Saving Station and Visitor Center

* Eligibility for College Scholarships

* Most importantly, your support enables our education, advocacy and restoration projects for the preservation of our Westport River and marine habitat!

Oyster Stew and Annual Meeting Recap

Luckily the snow storm had just passed through, so over 90 WFA members and friends could safely crowd into St. John's Parish Hall for a scrumptious homemade oyster stew on February 9th. After the stew and apple pie, Project Coordinator Tanja Ryden opened the Westport Fishermen's Annual Meeting with a summary of 2015 accomplishments and a short preview of some exciting projects ahead. The 2015 Annual Report is also posted on the WFA website.

Cukie Macomber was honored with a "Director Emeritus" award and a WFA jackknife to thank him for his long-time service to WFA. Cukie recently stepped down due to family considerations after having served on the board since the founding of the organization in 1983. Fortunately, he still has time to write his Lookin' Astern column for us! The WFA also elected its officers for 2016, with Jack Reynolds, Don Dufault, Tom Perkins and Chris Dunn continuing in their current positions.

Steve Angers and Warren Winders, from Trout Unlimited (TU) and the Sea Run Brook Trout Coalition (www.searunbrookie.org), then presented a slide show and shared their passion about the beautiful and genetically unique "salters" that can be found in Westport streams. Steve started off by describing the study and successful restoration of Red Brook (on the Cape) where the sea run brook trout population has quintupled to around 3000 per stream mile. They use electroshocking to capture trout and implant transponders (just like "EasyPass"!) to track their travel and growth from year to year.

Trout Unlimited volunteers are particularly interested in Westport because it has the most intact watershed in Massachusetts with salters in a dozen cold water streams. 64 degrees is the ideal water temperature. These sea run trout are not only genetically unique but they also have a distinctive appearance in each stream. How cool is that? Steve showed us slides of beautiful trout from Angeline, Dunham, Bread & Cheese, Kirby, Snell and Lyons Brook – which is only 18 inches wide and is "loaded with trout". Interestingly, Angeline Brook has significant hyporheic flow, which is water that runs just below the surface of the gravel, and is essential for maintaining trout habitat. It is critical to maintain streamside buffers (for shading and protection) and to prevent water diversion, such as drawdown from a public water supply near these streams. Unfortunately just north in the Shingle Island watershed there are no trout due to overdevelopment and dams that hold back water, which warms the temperature above the level the trout can survive in.

In addition to risks from development (especially those big 5 bedroom homes that are heavy water users), excess nitrates coming from old septic systems, lawn fertilizer, golf courses and farm runoff are other causes of degraded habitat. TU has started temperature monitoring in Westport, with seed money from the WFA, and is also hoping to do tagging and video monitoring to measure the health of our cold water streams. They also would like to perform dam assessments and work with the Conservation Commission to protect riparian (streamside) areas. Trout Unlimited also meets at 9 am on the first Saturday morning of every month at Brookside Conservation Area (off Rte 177) to continue monitoring our local trout. Volunteers are welcome to come and help out.



Lyons Brook

Merit Scholarship Application Deadline is April 30th

The WFA will award up to two \$650 merit scholarships awards this year to local graduating high school seniors, preferably with a demonstrated interest in river/environmental protection. The award is designated as a “merit” scholarship; academic criteria and community citizenship will be evaluated, not financial need. A relative who has been a WFA member in good standing for the previous three years must sponsor the applicant.

Students may download the application from the WFA website at www.westportriver.org or pick one up from their high school guidance office. The completed application is due by April 30th. The selected recipient(s) will be announced by June 1st and will receive a check after satisfactory completion of the first semester of college.

Good News!

- **Website:** The new WFA website is up and running at www.westportriver.org. We’ve had a steady increase in traffic, and one third of this year’s Oyster Stew tickets were purchased online via PayPal. So if you haven’t visited yet, be sure to do so and like us on Facebook too. We’ve posted updates photos of the raffle boat being built.
- **Weather Station:** Finally, it is back up and running! Click on the weather button on our home page to get the latest weather data from the Horseneck Point Lifesaving Station location. Temperature, wind, humidity, rain and barometer readings are updated every two minutes.

How can you help?

- **Join one of WFA’s workgroups**
Advocacy, Lifesaving Station, or Fishing Tournament
- **Help build our next boat** – a ‘Night Heron’ stitch & glue kayak
- **Become a summertime docent at the Horseneck Point Lifesaving Station**
- **Volunteer at one of our events** – next up is “Run for the Water” on May 7th
- **Donate your Lees’ receipts – we earn 1%.**
Drop them off at Common Ground Coffee on Main Rd. (next to Village Pizza) or Mail them to PO Box 83, Westport Point, MA 02791.

Just ask us – we can suggest lots of ways you can make a difference!

Four Ways to Protect Cold Water Streams

Westport is home to the largest number of native sea run brook trout streams in the state. The Division of Marine Fisheries has identified twelve tributaries of the Westport River as coldwater fish resources (CFRs), where the water temperature stays below 68° F and the streams host trout and other coldwater species of fish. These streams are particularly sensitive habitats which are threatened by changes in land and water use.

Development projects sited near cold water streams can pose a serious risk by contributing excessive levels of sediment, thermal and other pollution to the receiving water. Increased drawdown of water for household use, watering lawns, etc. also threatens the integrity of the fish habitat.

Here are four ways to protect these special streams:

1. **Keep a streamside vegetated canopy along “CFR” and similar streams** to keep water shaded, cool and clean.
2. **Support the Westport Conservation Commission’s effort to develop a local bylaw to protect cold water streams.**
3. **Restore and enhance coldwater stream habitat and/or continuity** by assisting WFA, Trout Unlimited, land trusts, wildlife agencies and others who are seeking to remove dams, fix dropped and/or undersized culverts, add or retain large woody debris (for fish hiding places), etc.
4. **Help local organizations acquire and protect undeveloped land along coldwater streams.** Locally, the Westport Land Conservation Trust’s acquisition of the 50-acre Herb Hadfield Conservation Area to protect Angeline Brook is a great example.

The Westport Fishermen’s Association invites members and volunteers to help spread the word about the challenges facing the Westport River and its marine environment and collectively advocate for stronger protection measures. Call 774-264-9200 or email wfa@westportriver.org if you would like to get involved.



Coldwater Fish Resources Map



Quahogging on the Westport River, February 2016

Sponsors for 2016 as of 2/29/16

Captain (\$1000)

D2 Biological Solutions
Van Sloun Foundation

Benefactor (\$500)

The Cronin Family
Michael A. Kelly, Esq.
Leo V. Marshall
Brian & Barbara Pontolilo

Advocates (\$100 - \$499)

Beaugard & Burke
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Arnold & Patricia Tripp
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Nils Bruzelius & Lynne Weil
Catherine Williams
George Yeomans

Sponsors (\$50 - \$99)

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Bittersweet Farm
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Tow Boat US Westport
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Norman Anderson & Laurie Marinone
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Jim Sturges
Jerry Sundheimer
Lewis L Taylor
Allen & Amelia Tripp
Joan & Paul Tripp
Ingeborg Van Pelt
Gus Vleck
Larry & Gretchen Whipple

Please let us know of any errors or omissions.

Remember to renew your Membership

Check your mailing label – if it doesn't have 2016 above your name then we haven't received your renewal dues yet. Send a check or pay online to make sure you continue to receive the WFA quarterly newsletter.

The WFA wish list to enhance our operations:

- ~~PC running Windows 7 or higher~~
- Printer/scanner
- Laminating machine
- Solar powered spotlight for the flagpole at the Lifesaving Station
- ~~New weather station hardware and software~~

We are making progress, but additional donations to support the WFA are always welcome.

Remember you can renew or donate anytime online at www.westportriver.org

Thank you!

WFA MEMBERSHIP / MERCHANDISE / DONATION FORM (Checks payable to WFA, PO Box 83, Westport Point, MA 02791)

Membership: Steward \$25 ____ / Sponsor \$50 ____ / Advocate \$100 ____ / Benefactor \$500 ____ / Captain \$1,000 ____

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ How your name should appear: _____

I'd like to volunteer or donate an item, contact me at: _____

Donation: Lifesaving Station _____ / Scholarship _____ / WFA Wish list _____ / Other: _____

Save the Date



The Westport Fishermen's Association

WFA Community Calendar

Saturday, March 19th: "The Spirit of Westport" Benefit Party to support Dharma Voyage's new Boatbuilding Program for students of Westport Community Schools. 7 to 10 PM at the Dedee Shattuck Gallery. Advance tickets are \$75. More information at www.dharmavoyage.org.

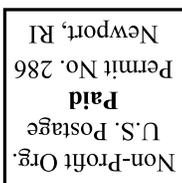
A portion of the proceeds will be shared with the WFA.

Saturday, May 7th: WFA's 12th Annual 'Run for the Water' at DCR Horseneck Beach State Reservation. Scenic 8K run and 5K family fun run/walk. Prizes and refreshments Start time is 10 AM.

Registration and more details are online at www.westportriver.org

Saturday, June 4th: River Day at the Head of Westport, sponsored by WRWA. WFA will have a booth and our raffle kayak on display.

July 8th to 16th: WFA Fishing Tournament. Striped bass and bluefish adult and youth divisions. Prizes and BBQ reception on Saturday, July 16th. More details will be posted online.



Westport Fishermen's Association
P.O. Box 83
Westport Point, MA 02791