

NARROW RIVER NOTES

Narrow River Preservation Association: Protecting, Preserving and Restoring the Narrow River Watershed Since 1970 / June 2022

Dam and Bridge Repair at Silver Spring Lake

by Rebecca Russell, NRPA Program Director



Lauren Miller-Donnelly, Public Access Coordinator for The Nature Conservancy, and staff with RI DEM Division of Planning and Development.

On the daily commute along Route 1 through North Kingstown, many residents of the Pettaquamscutt (Narrow) River watershed have been observing construction activity at the Silver Spring Lake dam and bridge. Beginning April 11, Rhode Island's Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM) and

private contractors have begun the first phase of work to repair and fortify the dam, which was last rebuilt 70 years ago. The 260-year-old dam is located just west of the junction of Route 4 and Route 1, across from the old Rodman farm with the much-loved red barn.

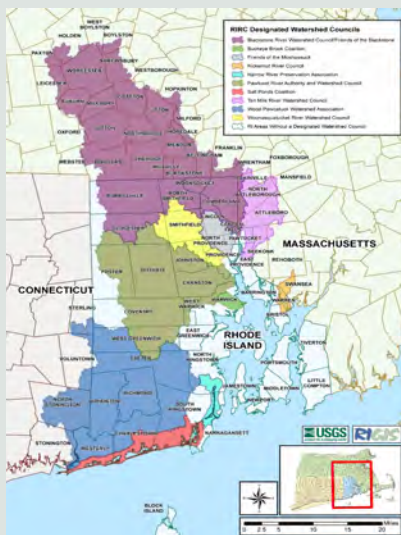
In a critical groundwater recharge area, these are the headwaters and primary source of freshwater inputs to the Narrow River. RI DEM stocks Silver Spring Lake with trout and many locals will attest that the site is popular for small boats and fishing.

The Silver Spring Lake dam is one of six 'high hazard' and unsafe dams in RI, owned by RI DEM and in the process of being repaired. The dam was deemed a high hazard structure in poor condition and was rated with an unsafe status in the most recent dam safety report from 2020, available online at dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/compinsp/pdf/damrpt20.pdf. The reconstruction work involves repairs to the stone masonry spillway and cracked embankment walls. After the repairs, it

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State-designated Watershed Council: NRPA's role is key to monitoring issues potentially impacting the watershed

by Rebecca Russell, NRPA Program Director



Map courtesy of RI Rivers Council, shows the ten designated watershed councils and their watershed jurisdictions, including the Narrow River, in turquoise.

Since 2002, the Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) has been designated by the RI Rivers Council (RIRC) as the "State-designated Watershed Council" for the Narrow River (Pettaquamscutt Estuary) and Watershed. This means that in accordance with General Laws of Rhode Island Section 46-28-8, NRPA shall receive notice from state, city, and town agencies and other relevant entities regarding proposed actions pertaining to projects, developments, and activities located wholly or partially within the Narrow River (Pettaquamscutt Estuary) Watershed. This mandatory notice requirement generally pertains to the Planning and Zoning Boards in South Kingstown, Narragansett, and North Kingstown, as well as the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC)

and the RI Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM).

The RIRC has designated ten watershed councils in Rhode Island to represent the interests of their rivers and associated watersheds. The designation gives legal standing to NRPA for appearances and to present testimony, on behalf of Narrow River and its watershed, before local and state agencies on issues potentially affecting the watershed. The basic intent of this statute 46-28-8, is to facilitate evaluation and comments provided by recognized watershed councils on proposed actions so they can be considered by the responsible agency.

NRPA's Board of Directors takes seriously

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President's Cove

Dear Friends of the Narrow River,

While it is true that we are in the third year of the pandemic, it is also true that public health in RI is the best we've experienced in the past three spring seasons. I am happy to say during this trying time that NRPA has survived well and in many ways has become stronger. Despite the global challenges of our times, we hope that you and yours are making the best out of conditions available to us here in the Northeastern US.

This past winter, NRPA's Program Director and Board of Directors created a workplan for this year ahead and this plan involves resuming most outdoor events, including the Turnaround Swim fundraiser and timed open swim in June. The only event we've decided not to continue is the Narrow River Road Race, as operation costs began to outweigh the income from registrations. Our Program Director is working with a summer intern, a Colby College student studying environmental science, who will be supporting River Watch monitoring, outdoor event activities led by our Board members, social media outreach, and more. This will free up time for our one paid contract staff to optimize integration of our incredible pool of volunteers who over the years have expressed interest to support the following areas of our programs and activities: Education, Fundraising, Land Preservation, Newsletter Production, General Office Work including Media Communications, and Water Quality Monitoring.

As NRPA's President, my main role is marketing and fundraising. NRPA counts on the membership aspect of fundraising for 33% of its income each year. Grants, local business sponsorship, general donations, and fundraiser events (virtual and in-person) make up the rest of NRPA's income. I look forward to working with our Fundraising volunteers to identify and co-write grant proposals for new sources of income to drive further development of the organization, now entering its 52nd year of operation. Are you a local business owner? Please consider becoming a sponsor of NRPA to support all programs and events, or a specific program you are passionate about such as the NRPA College scholarship program or the Turnaround Swim. To sign up for sponsorship, visit our website at: narrowriver.org/sponsor.

Tracking the issues of rising sea levels and flood-prone areas, promoting watercraft safety, monitoring, reviewing, and providing expert input on applications for new construction and docks are examples of some of the work that NRPA's volunteer Board Directors perform in your interests for a healthy watershed. All dedicated member-donors, sponsors, grantors, and general donors have a stake in the health of the watershed, as it directly affects the quality of life for full-time and part-time residents. Proper sewer and septic system operation and stormwater management increases your property value. Access to river-related recreation opportunities, swimming, fishing, boating, paddling, birding, bring value-added experiences to daily life; and environmentally responsible land development practices protects the future quality of life for everyone who visits or lives in or near this coastal watershed.

One of my hobbies is genealogy research as it relates to this part of Rhode Island. If you'd like to share an ancestral story relating to the Narrow (Pettaquamscutt) River Watershed, please drop me a note and share your genealogy story to PO Box 8, Saunderstown, RI 02874.

I thank you in advance for your ongoing membership, sponsorship, and your volunteer work on behalf of the watershed!

Respectfully,



Richard Barker Grant, NRPA Board President

Annual Membership Cycle

NRPA's annual membership cycle runs from January 1 through December 31 each calendar year. Renewals or signups received after our annual membership drive in the fall, are considered active from date received through the end of the following calendar year. If memberships are renewed in the spring, they will be active through the end of that same calendar year. To get the most from your membership, we encourage renewal or signups in the fall or winter, or simply schedule recurring annual donations through Donorbox, a payment processing tool NRPA links through our website for secure transactions and automatic tax receipts. Visit narrowriver.org/join-renew.

Rhode Island Rivers Council



Rhode Island Rivers Council has designated NRPA as the official watershed council of Narrow River.

For more information, please visit ririvers.org.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) works to preserve, protect, and restore the natural environment and the quality of life of all communities within the Narrow (Pettaquamscutt Estuary) River and Watershed.

NARROW RIVER PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

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You can give back to NRPA through your **United Way workplace campaign**. Simply write in Narrow River Preservation Association on your pledge form or search/write-in and add us via electronic pledging.

NRPA to Host Silent Art Auction Fall 2022

by Alison Kates, NRPA Advisory Director

Talented local artists have donated artwork to benefit Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA). A wide variety of media, including photographs, watercolors, mic-a-rt, and oil works will all be put up for silent auction this fall. Many of these works are inspired by or feature Narrow (Pettaquamscutt) River.

Several pieces are currently exhibited at People's Credit Union Wakefield Branch (150 Old Tower Hill Road, Wakefield) and People's Credit Union North Kingstown Branch (7490 Post Road, North Kingstown). More will be displayed in local businesses throughout the summer.

All artwork that will be available for purchase through the auction can be seen at narrowriver.org/art.

Please join us on Friday evening, October 7, 2022, at Studio Blue, Coastal Institute, URI Bay Campus, Narragansett, for our Gallery Opening and start to silent auction bidding.

The public is invited to browse the artwork and meet some of the artists at this festive gathering. All are welcome to then attend NRPA's 52nd Annual Meeting at the Coastal Institute Auditorium across the hall.

All bidding will be online and will be accepted starting at this gallery opening. Bidding will close a few weeks after the opening at a date and time to be determined.

Proceeds from the Silent Auction will benefit NRPA's many preservation, monitoring, and education programs. NRPA expresses our sincerest appreciation to the artists whose donations are making this fundraiser possible!



Clinging Jellyfish - watercolor and gouache on paper by Chris Machinski, christinamachinski.com, 14 3/4" x 12 3/4", framed.

The artwork pictured here and many more art pieces by local artists will be available for sale to benefit NRPA at NRPA's Silent Art Auction. Gallery opening and start to bidding at 5:00pm Friday, October 7, 2022, URI Bay Campus.

Photos of artwork and more information at narrowriver.org/art



Osprey at Sprague Bridge - photograph framed with salvaged driftwood, by Joe Beckham, Light Forge Studio, LightForgeStudio.com, 21" x 27".

Dam and Bridge Repair at Silver Spring Lake

Continued from Cover



Historical late 19th century photo of the original Silver Spring Lake Mill complex founded by Joseph Taylor and last owned by the Rodman Manufacturing Company before the site was purchased by the State of RI in 1950's. Photo courtesy of Tim Cranston.

will still be classified as a high hazard dam – meaning it would still have the potential to cause the loss of human life if it were to fail – but it would no longer be rated unsafe.

On March 14, 2022, at the North Kingstown Town Council meeting, RI DEM provided an overview of the proposed dam repair project during a public comment period. The project passed the review, comment, and response process with Town Board and Council members and the public, and RI DEM received permit for the repairs of the dam.

RI DEM is making every effort to minimize sediment and erosion impacts to Mattatuxett River and surrounding watershed and wildlife habitat, as well as ensuring safe public access around the lake during this project. Fishing access close to the dam and a portion of the parking lot closest to the dam are limited due to the presence of construction crews and equipment. The northern end of the parking lot and small craft launch remains open for public use. The repair work is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Funding for the \$1.2 million project is supported by the 2018 Green Economy Bond, a FEMA High Hazard Potential Dams Grant, and through the RI Capital Plan Fund.

RI DEM Principal Engineer and Deputy Chief of the Division of Planning & Development, Art Zeman, shared with NRPA that work on the Silver Spring Lake dam will occur in two phases. Zeman explained, “J.H. Lynch, a company based

out of Cumberland, RI, was contracted to perform the repairs and Phase 1 repairs will focus on the northern side of the dam. By late April, Lynch work crews had finished installing a temporary dam called a Portadam (a type of cofferdam), just upstream of the permanent dam, so that repair work can be completed in dry conditions on one side.” At the time this article went to print, completion of Phase 1 was estimated to be end of May 2022.

Zeman further described, “Lynch crews will then install the Portadam on the southern side of the dam, so work in that area can be completed in the dry. Phase 2, the final phase on the southern side, is expected to be completed by summer’s end. No drawdown of the lake is anticipated, unless an extremely heavy rain event occurs.

Overall, repairs will include removal of vegetation from the dam, infill of the voids that removal creates, replacement of the wooden maintenance bridge across the spillway, installment of a new low level outlet gate structure, spillway improvements, adjoining slope stabilization, downstream channel improvements, and other ancillary work.”

According to Tim Cranston, local historian, and Director of the Town of North Kingstown’s Water Department, it was back in 1762 when entrepreneur Joseph Taylor decided to dam the Mattatuxett River to construct what became the Silver Spring dam and mill, one of the area’s first *carding and fulling mills. In doing so, Taylor set in motion an enterprise which existed on the shore of the mill lake the dam created, the 17-acre Silver Spring Lake in North Kingstown, lasting for nearly 200 years in one form or another. The old Rodman farm property on the east side of the Route 1 and Route 4 junction, historically housed tenant farmers who worked closely with the Silver Spring Lake Mill complex, growing, storing, and supplying food for local mill workers. The mill property stayed in the Rodman family, who were the owners of the Rodman Manufacturing Company, the legal entity who owned the property

and sold it to the State of RI in 1950. Soon after the State of RI purchased the property, the old mill buildings were demolished. RI DEM rebuilt the dam in the 1950s and repaired the spillway and right-side abutment in 1980.

*Carding is a manual or mechanical process that disentangles, cleans, and intermixes fibers to produce a continuous web or sliver suitable for subsequent processing. Fulling is the process of shrinking and thickening woolen cloth.

Historian Tim Cranston has written that, “Joseph Taylor’s dam and its associated waterfall, having been rebuilt and reinforced multiple times, is a living artifact, testifying daily to the history of colonial efforts to harness the power of streams and rivers.”

The lake was named ‘Silver Spring’ for the peculiar habit of an existing natural spring which constantly gushed chips of mica rock (a silicate mineral) along with its clear cool water. In synchronicity to the presence of mica in the headwaters of the Narrow River, NRPA Board President Richard Grant creates ‘mic-A-rt’ - artwork created by layering and collaging pigment and paper with thin sheets of mica rock - and he has donated two mic-A-rt pieces for the upcoming NRPA Silent Art Auction that will take place on October 7, 2022.



Site activity during April 2022, the first month of Phase 1 repairs on the north side of the dam. Photo credit Craig Wood.

15th Narrow River Turnaround Swim, Saturday, June 25, 2022

by Alison Kates, NRPA Advisory Director



A group of swimmers smile and wave to the camera at NRPA's 2018 Turnaround Swim. Photo credit Frank McQuiggan

Swimmers from NRPA's 2019 Turnaround Swim, making their way across Lower Pond, with Ken McShane as a safety spotter on his kayak. Photo credit Alison Kates.



Join our one-mile open water swim in one of Rhode Island's most scenic waterways, the Pettaquamscutt (Narrow) River. The swim raises funds and awareness of Narrow River as a wonderful place to swim!

One of the first open water swims of the season, the event draws serious competitors and leisurely swimmers. Participants start on the beach, swim a half mile, then turn around our large buoy and finish at the start. **All info at narrowriver.org/turnaroundswim.**

DETAILS:

When: 9:00am Saturday, June 25, 2022 (rain or shine)

Where: URI Boathouse – Campanella Rowing Center, 166 Walmsley Lane, North Kingstown, R.I.

Registration: Online or by mail. In person the morning of the swim will be available if space allows.

Entry Fee: \$35 if by June 15; \$40 after 6/15 and the day of the swim. Includes 2022 Turnaround Swim T-shirt (size guaranteed for registrations by 5/30).

Distance: **One Mile (1/2 mile out and 1/2 mile back)**. Common start for wetsuit and non-wetsuit divisions.

Limit: 150 participants.

Timing: Ankle chip timing by Timing Plus New England.

Check In: 7:45 to 8:40 a.m. No one will be admitted to the Turnaround Swim unless he or she has checked in and received a numbered swim cap by 8:40 a.m.

Maximum Time: Swimmers are given one hour to complete the swim.

Mandatory Safety Briefing: 8:55 a.m.

Safety: Because of the uncertainty of weather conditions such as fog or lightning, the lifeguards and event committee reserve the right to cancel the event to ensure the safety of the participants.

Swim Sponsors: For a donation of \$25, become a member of NRPA and have your name printed on the Swim T-shirt to show your support for Narrow River (if donation was received by 5/30).

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SWIM AREA IS A NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, SO BE AWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF OBJECTS THAT MAY BE SHARP. PROTECTIVE FOOTWEAR IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED.

Watershed Association Partnership during National Rivers Month!

by Alicia Gordon, Gordon Lower Public Relations Associate for 7 Rivers Festival



Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association members and paddlers on the Chipuxet River. Photo credit Elise Torello.

The Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council's inaugural 7 Rivers Festival is pleased to partner with Narrow River Preservation Association's Turnaround Swim for a shared weekend, June 25th & 26th, in celebration of these special waterways flowing through 12 southern RI towns, during National Rivers Month!

As many South County residents know, the Narrow River Watershed and Wood-Pawcatuck River Watershed, although distinct watershed basins, share boundaries along sections of North Kingstown and South Kingstown. "The 34-mile Pawcatuck River makes a humble beginning in the deep swamp along Worden Pond in South Kingstown, yet this is not the only claim in North and South Kingstown to the national Wild and Scenic designation of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed," states Kassi Donnelly, Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinator for the Stewardship Council.

The Chipuxet River begins in North Kingstown, along the railroad and turf fields just east of Yawgoo Ski Area. In South Kingstown, the Chipuxet flows next to TLC Coffee Roasters and under the South County Bike Path. The Queen-Usquepaugh River runs from just above North Kingstown down along the border between South Kingstown and Richmond, passing under Rt. 138 at Kenyon's Grist Mill. The oldest manufacturing business in Rhode Island, Kenyon's Grist Mill is partnering with 7 Rivers Festival. "We'll be offering tours of the historic grist mill and free kayak use on the Queen River," states Ben Drumm owner of Kenyon's Grist Mill and Queen's River Kayak Company.

On Saturday, June 25th, the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association and Wood-Pawcatuck Wild and Scenic Rivers Stewardship Council will be cheering on Narrow River's Turnaround swimmers. After NRPA's Turnaround Swim wraps up around noon, we hope you consider joining us for other festival events including a guided hike at Alewife Brook Preserve with the South Kingstown Land Trust and a Nature Book Display at the Kingston Free Library. All 7 Rivers Festival activities can be found along with registration details at wpwildrivers.org/7-rivers-festival or by calling 401.539.9017 or emailing wildevents@wpwa.org.

Osprey Update: Osprey Family, Web Cam, And Education Program

by Alison Kates, NRPA Advisory Director



This photo from April 17 shows the osprey pair in the nest and demonstrates that the female osprey (on the right, identified by the 'necklace' of dark feathers on her chest) is slightly larger than the male (on left, with white feathers on chest) as is typical. Image credit Alison Kates.

At the end of March, the same pair of osprey that we have watched for a few years returned to the nest along the shores of Narrow (Pettaquamscutt) River featured on NRPA's 24 hour, live web cam. For the third year in a row, this pair of osprey are exhibiting all of the behaviors that indicate they will raise a family again this year. In 2020, the pair raised three healthy chicks and in 2021, two healthy chicks. Ospreys are bonded to their nest site, so they will return to the nest and each other as long as they live.

This year, the osprey pair have laid three eggs. The female incubates the eggs while the male brings her 3-4 fish to eat each day. The male will also sometimes incubate the eggs himself while the female goes off for a short time. This behavior will continue until the eggs hatch in early June. Osprey eggs are laid one at a time over several days and also hatch a few days apart.

All are welcome to watch the web cam at narrowriver.org/ospreycam. Many thanks to all who make the osprey webcam possible, especially the Farrell Family. The operating costs of this webcam have been donated in loving memory of Eileen Farrell by her family. Video clips of activity at the nest and much more are on the web page below the live video.

Gilbert Stuart Birthplace & Museum Spring Fair

by Veronica Berounsky, NRPA Board Vice President

On Sunday April 24, NRPA Vice President Veronica Berounsky and President Richard Grant staffed an NRPA display at the Opening Day festivities at Gilbert Stuart Museum Birthplace and Museum located on Gilbert Stuart Stream, the freshwater headwaters of the Narrow River. Many people who attended the Spring Fair, visited the NRPA booth to admire Pette, our taxidermied female osprey that NRPA shows for educational purposes. Many participants of the Spring Fair visited NRPA's booth to talk about upcoming events, learn new updates on River Watch, and preview Barry Devine's book, *The Pettaquamscutt Estuary: The Narrow River Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*; visit narrowriver.org/nrbook to purchase online. Many folks bought tickets for the October Kayak Raffle ticket drawing, and everyone enjoyed chatting with Veronica and Richard about the ecological importance and natural beauty of this special coastal watershed. The Gilbert Stuart Museum's new Executive Director Michelle Lee Leonard was onsite greeting fair goers. Former Executive Director Peggy O'Connor is supporting the transition of executive leadership to Ms. Lee Leonard and celebrating the beginning of retirement. Many thanks and congratulations to Peggy for her contributions to the Birthplace & Museum all these years; and the best of wishes to Michelle Lee Leonard in her new position of leadership!



NRPA's information booth at the Gilbert Stuart Birthplace & Museum Spring Fair and Opening Day on Sunday April 24, 2022, with NRPA Board Vice President Veronica Berounsky (left) and Board President Richard Grant (right). Photo credit Gilbert Stuart Spring Fair staff.



Young spring fair participant sizing herself up along NRPA's Pette, by outstretching her arms to imagine the size of an osprey's wingspan. Photo credit Veronica Berounsky.



Proud grandfather Bill Edwards (far left) and his family who attended the Gilbert Stuart Birthplace & Museum Spring Fair and Opening day event. Bill purchased raffle tickets to support NRPA and hopefully be the lucky winner of this year's kayak raffle. Photo credit Veronica Berounsky.



Craig Wood (top right) presents about ospreys to fourth graders at Peace Dale Elementary School on April 8. The presentation was video streamed live to classes at other schools. Photo credit Alison Kates.

In mid-March, prior to the birds' return, a team of NRPA volunteers provided extra stability to the nest platform by attaching four guy wires to the nest and securing them in the ground.

The osprey web cam is part of

NRPA's education program, teaching fourth graders in Narragansett, North Kingstown (NK), and South Kingstown (SK) about osprey, ecology, migration and stewardship. This year, NRPA Board Director Craig Wood and Advisory Director Alison Kates presented to more than 280 students at Narragansett Elementary, Hamilton Elementary (NK), Matunuck Elementary (SK), Monsignor Clarke School (SK), Peace Dale Elementary (SK), Wakefield Elementary (SK), and West Kingston Elementary (SK). Plans are under way to reach Quest Montessori School (Narragansett) as well.

Our one-hour program includes a slide show with photos and videos and an opportunity for students to

ask questions. In 2020 and 2021, all presentations were held via video, but this year we were able to do some of the presentations in person. We find that in-person presentations are more engaging and interactive. Our osprey mount, Pette, is available for the students to see up close and we offer the students a chance to compare their own 'wingspan' to our life-sized wingspan banner. After the presentations, students are invited to watch the live web cam to see more osprey activity and become official Narrow River Osprey Observers through our certification program. We hope you will enjoy watching the osprey family throughout the summer!

15th Annual Pettaquamscutt Paddle: A Guided Sunset Tour

by Jason Considine, NRPA Board Director



For this year's 15th Annual Pettaquamscutt Paddle, Narrow River Kayaks will offer a guided sunset paddle, beginning at 5pm on Friday July 29 with a rain date of Friday August 5.

For going on 15 years, Narrow River Kayaks (NRK) business owner and NRPA Board member Jason Considine, on behalf of NRK, has generously contributed all proceeds from this annual paddle event to benefit NRPA's longstanding nonprofit success while raising awareness and fostering stewardship of one of our most precious local natural resources. Please visit narrowriverkayaks.com/pettapaddle for more event details and to book reservations. Capacity for this special sunset tour is limited, so book your paddle spots today!

Once again, NRK has again generously donated a kayak and paddle gear for NRPA's annual fundraising raffle. This year's kayak model is an Old Town Heron, and the prize includes a lifejacket and a paddle. Anyone 18 years and older can purchase raffle tickets in-person at Narrow River Kayaks, outdoor NRPA events, local festivals, and at the Coastal Farmers Market at Casey Farm on Saturdays between NRPA events.



Many happy kayakers with their paddles raised in the air after a guided tour during 2019's 12th annual Pettaquamscutt Paddle. Photo credit Jason Considine.



Kayakers taking a paddle break on Sedge Island during a Pettaquamscutt Paddle event, pre-2016 when The Shack on Sedge Island still existed. Photo from NRPA archives.



KAYAK RAFFLE

Length - 9' 6"
Width - 28"
Weight - 38 lbs
Capacity - 300 lbs

\$5.00 PER TICKET
OR
3 TICKETS FOR \$10.00

KAYAK DONATED BY NARROW RIVER KAYAKS

@narrowriverkayaks.com

Prize for 2022 kayak raffle. Drawing for winning ticket will happen at the 52nd Annual Meeting on October 7, 2022. Image courtesy of oldtowncanoe.com and Matt Smith with iCopy.

Narrow River Land Trust 2022 Schedule of Volunteer Workdays for Trail Improvement and Invasive Species Removal

Sign up at office@narrowriverlandtrust.org Put "Workday" in the subject line. If cancellation due to rain, the office will reschedule and contact you. All updates will be done by email. Join us!!

- June 12 Sunday 9-12** Walmsley Woods and Lower Pond Overlook Preserves
Meet at 112 River Road, North Kingstown
- July 24 Sunday 9-12** Winter Preserve and Benson Preserve
Meet at 795 Middlebridge Road, South Kingstown
- Aug 14 Sunday 9-12** Walmsley Woods and Winter Preserve
Meet at 25 River Road, North Kingstown
- Sept 11 Sunday 9-12** Winter Preserve
Meet at 795 Middlebridge Road, South Kingstown



Suggested what to wear:

Light-weight and light-colored clothing. Long-sleeved shirts and long trousers with legs tucked into light-colored socks. A hat with a brim to block the sun and sturdy shoes or boots for uneven ground.

What to bring: Gloves, hand clippers and loppers. Water, snacks, sunscreen, masks, and bug spray. Face masks optional.

Juneteenth and RI Slave History Medallion

by Jane Hennedy Site Manager, Southern RI Historic New England and Alison Kates, NRPA Advisory Director

Join us on the Juneteenth holiday, Sunday June 19, to celebrate the emancipation of African captives in America, and to honor those who were enslaved in this region and on Casey Farm. Admission is free to this family-friendly event, from 12–4pm at Casey Farm, 2325 Boston Neck Road, Saunderstown, R.I. Food and drinks will be available for purchase and people are invited to explore the farm on foot or by hayride.

Historic records indicate that Southern RI is the site of the largest African slave holdings in New England. For many years, the ‘Narragansett Plantations’ were home to African and Indigenous captives on appropriated land. Learn more about the history of slavery in the area at this event and at RISHM.org. Hear Lorén Spears of

Tomaquag Museum, Casey Farm’s historians, and R.I. Black Storytellers speak about Indigenous and African American culture. Learn about this area’s tie to the watershed from the Narrow River Preservation Association. Listen to music by the Nettukkusq Singers, the URI African Drummers and Dancers, and Sidy Maiga & Afrimanding.

Bring your chairs or blankets and enjoy lunch purchased from local BIPOC-owned food vendors.

Sarcastic Sweets will have gluten-free and vegan desserts for sale. Trap Box PVD food truck will offer a modern twist on Cuban and Latin-influenced food. Incred-a-bowl serves multicultural food with bowled (bold) flavors, such as Cuban chili mango, and spicy kimchi noodles.

Please dress for the weather and leave pets at home. Questions? Call Casey Farm at 401-295-1030 ext. 5 for more information.



The highlight of the day will be the unveiling and dedication of a RI Slave History Medallion (RISHM) on the front lawn at Casey Farm. Photo courtesy of RISHM.

State-designated Watershed Council: NRPA’s role is key to monitoring issues potentially impacting the watershed

Continued from Cover

their responsibility to advocate for river and watershed protections. NRPA’s Board currently consists of 15 members, many of whom are well-recognized experts in the fields of marine sciences, water resource management, coastal and freshwater ecology, and best management practices for mitigating impacts of stormwater runoff, rising sea levels, and natural area restoration. For a current list of NRPA’s Board members and their role in the organization, please visit narrowriver.org/nrpa-board-of-directors.

NRPA appreciates all opportunities to learn about private and public projects that are in early planning phases before applications are opened for public comment. With NRPA’s 52-year history, there is an extensive network and active web of communication between this watershed council and representatives

of municipal and state agencies. With sea-level rise and increased storm events facing all residents of the northeastern United States, NRPA is committed to working collaboratively and cooperatively with all key stakeholders in this coastal region.

For example, at press time, NRPA is scheduled to meet with Town of Narragansett staff to provide input on nascent plans exploring the best approach for dredging at the mouth of the Narrow River. This relates to the January 17, 2022, Nor’easter event which impacted the river mouth and tidal delta, when the sand spit at the mouth was over washed by waves, transporting a significant amount of sediment from the beach face into the river mouth, narrowing the channel. Natural changes like these are normal, yet there are valuable recreational functions certain stakeholders want to protect and NRPA looks forward to



Narrow River Mouth
by Dale Denelle
February 11, 2022

Mouth of Narrow River after January 17, 2022, Nor’easter.

engaging in these conversations.

For complete details of General Law of Rhode Island 46-28-8, which was passed in 1990 and resulted in the establishment of the RIRC, go online to webserver.rilegislature.gov//Statutes/TITLE46/46-28/46-28-8.htm. If you have questions about the RIRC or the responsibility NRPA’s state-designation carries, please contact Veronica Berounsky at vberounsky@uri.edu.

NRPA Celebrates Ken McShane's 25 years of Board Service

by Rebecca Russell, NRPA Program Director



Ken McShane smiling for the camera during his day volunteering support to NRPA's Road Race in May of 2019. Photo credit Veronica Berounsky.

Like rivers flowing into the sea, immense gratitude flows from NRPA to Ken McShane, for his dedicated volunteer Board service provided generously over the last 25 years!

After a quarter-of-a-century term as NRPA's Treasurer and Executive Board member, Ken McShane has retired from this officer post.

A talented mason professionally, those who know him well see Ken as a conscientious and humble person, dedicated to maintaining

the artistry of stone walls that define our local landscape and never wanting any of the limelight thrust his way.

Ken was introduced to the Narrow River through the URI Crew Team in the early 70's. A long-time resident of Wakefield, Ken joined NRPA's Board of Directors in 1996 and, shortly thereafter, became the Treasurer. He loves the Narrow River and his 25 years of dedicated service as Treasurer has been a testament to how much Ken values the importance of environmental stewardship, education, and outreach in his community.

The role of Treasurer is, in many ways, the more labor-intensive officer role within NRPA's Executive Committee. Paying vendor and contractor invoices, balancing the checkbook, building organizational budgets, filing financial reports to grantors and state agencies, year after year after year is a hugely significant volunteer responsibility. And yet that wasn't where Ken stopped giving to this organization and the greater Pettaquamscutt watershed community...

In addition to Treasurer duties and serving on the Board of

Directors, Ken regularly supported NRPA's events including the Pettaquamscutt Paddle, Environmental Awareness Day at Narragansett Town Beach, the Narrow River Turnaround Swim, and was a critical part of the Narrow River Road Race for decades. In 2019, he single-handedly constructed the nest platform that now houses the osprey nest and web cam overlooking Narrow River.

In October 2006, the W.E.R. LaFarge Memorial "Friend of the River" Award was presented to Ken for his then 10 years of dedicated service to NRPA. Now 15 years later, we again salute him, this time for his 25 years of volunteer service as NRPA's Treasurer - 50% of the time this small nonprofit organization has been in operation!

Moving forward, Ken plans to continue engaging with the Board, supporting the osprey nest platform and webcam maintenance efforts, as part of NRPA's Osprey Education Program.

We are thankful to Ken for all of his contributions. NRPA is stronger because of him.



Ken McShane, seen here in March 2019 providing counter pressure to the osprey nest post while Nate Vinhateiro adds sticks to the platform. Ken built the nest post and platform that now houses NRPA's osprey nest and live webcam. Photo credit Alison Kates.



Ken McShane with kayak in tow, on the Narrow River near Sedge Island during Narrow River Kayaks Pettaquamscutt Paddle in 2011. The little shack on Sedge Island was later removed in 2016 by USFWS. Photo credit John McNamara.



Ken McShane in his kayak on the Narrow River, getting ready to head out as a safety spotter for swimmers in the June 2019 NRPA Turnaround Swim fundraiser. Photo credit Alison Kates.

Award Winning Science Fair Project of 2022

by Rebecca Russell, NRPA Program Director

On February 2, 2022, North Kingstown high school students presented their science projects at an after-school Science Fair event. Among many parents, friends, and family members in attendance, two NRPA Board Directors, Chris Hubbard (New England regional representative for Orange Flood Control and business development manager for PW Tech) and Nate Vinhateiro (Assistant Director, URI Coastal Institute), also attended this event. Chris and Nate were there on behalf of NRPA to select an award winner for NRPA's Science Fair Award. The award consists of a certificate, cash prize, NRPA membership, and recognition in this newsletter and at our Annual Meeting. There's also an invitation to present the winning project at one of NRPA's

Board meetings. After reviewing all the projects that night, Chris and Nate made their decision to award Aria Carnevale for her project titled, "Simulating Acid Rains Effects on Plants".

The purpose of Aria's science fair project was to test the effects of acid rain, as simulated by seltzer water, on herbaceous plants in comparison to rainfall, which was simulated by distilled water. To do this investigation, nine romaine lettuce plants were sprayed with distilled water while another nine romaine lettuce plants were sprayed with seltzer water over the course of seven days. Aria chose flavorless, colorless seltzer water as a substitute for acid rain because it has a similar pH of 4.0-5.0. Acid rain typically has a

pH around 4.2-4.4. Over time, she took both qualitative and quantitative data on the state of both sets of nine plants. This experiment showed that exposing plants to acidic solutions like acid rain would first weaken and eventually kill the plants, whereas plants watered with distilled "rain" water would continue to grow.

Aria's project illustrates a key matter affecting the world's waterbodies – acidification – and NRPA is proud to recognize Aria for her use of the scientific method and the relevance of her project to current environmental concerns. Congratulations again to Aria, and best wishes to her as she pursues higher education in the sciences!

My Passion for the Ocean: An Autobiography

by Aria Carnevale, North Kingstown H.S. student



NRPA Science fair awardee and North Kingstown high school student Aria Carnevale along Newport's Cliff Walk, with the Atlantic Ocean behind her. Photo courtesy of Aria Carnevale.

Growing up in Rhode Island, it's hard to imagine a summer without swimming, beach volleyball, or bridge jumping. Like every feel-good, coming-of-age movie, my friends and I have spent every summer since I can remember near or in the water doing a plethora of activities such as these. And although I didn't realize it then, these amazing experiences have helped shape me into the person I am today: a person who loves the wild beauty of an ocean.

Beginning in my middle school years in Lawn Avenue School in Jamestown, we frequently studied the habitat of Narragansett Bay. Rain, sleet, snow or shine, every Friday our 8th-grade class would take a trip to Great Creek, where we would collect a range of both qualitative and quantitative data on the environment. From this experience, I learned a lot about the relationships between the bay, the river, and the estuaries which make up Rhode Island. At the same time, I would return home on those hot, near-summer days and go swimming in my backyard with my friends or my sisters, or on weekends paddleboarding or sailing with my dad. It was here that I learned a lot about the marine ecosystem in our state as well, from seeing 7-foot-long Lion's Mane Jellyfish to diving for clams. Although I cannot credit one of these experiences alone, I'd like to think they each played a little part in igniting my passion for studying the natural environment. After starting my job at Cool Beans Cafe in Narragansett last spring, I have collected plastics which would otherwise be disposed of as trash and have managed to bring home over 100 trash bags full

of plastics to recycle. My friends, family, and I have also participated in multiple beach cleanups throughout the years. What I love so much about our state is the nature that surrounds us and makes living here feel like a vacation, all year round! Thus, when deciding what topic to research for my Science Fair Project, I wanted to explore a topic which had ties to the environment and the effects of human impact on local and global ecosystems- so I chose to explore acidification of water and those effects on plant life.

After a recent trip out to California, I have set my goal of attending a CA school for my college years. What I liked so much about being there was the direct experiences with wild nature available to so many citizens living there. Seeing whales, sea lions, elephant seals, and the views from the great Pacific Coast Highway really rocked my world! All and all, I am so thankful that I got to grow up on the East Coast and experience life along the Atlantic Ocean and Narragansett Bay. I will carry these experiences with me in my future as I continue to live close to the natural beauty an ocean provides.

Inaugural Navigating the Narrow Event

by Jim Vogel, NRPA Board Director



Panel of speakers with Harbormasters, NRPA Board President Richard Grant, NRPA Board Director Jim Vogel in center, RIDEM environmental police to the right of center with presentation screen behind speakers and participating audience in front rows. Photo credit Craig Wood.

NRPA's inaugural gathering of Navigating the Narrow: A Guide to Boating on the Narrow River, was held at the Mettatuxet Yacht Club on Saturday April 23, 2022. The event was co-sponsored by the Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA) and the Mettatuxet Yacht Club (MYC). General boating safety and specific boating challenges on the Narrow River were reviewed, followed by questions from the community to a panel of representatives from local agencies and organizations. The first NRPA educational boating video was also introduced to the public and viewed at this event and is now available on the NRPA YouTube channel at this link youtu.be/3h_Vz2KfPUA, and on the NRPA website.

Summarized below are the main themes of questions and comments received by event participants and answered by our panel of local experts, relating to boating, watercraft safety, and environmental responsibility in the Narrow River:

- Motorboat and Paddle craft interactions and maintaining a safe river
- Wake rules and enforcement including the definition of a wake
- Safe navigation of bridges/and bridge challenges
- Nighttime navigation and lighting requirements
- General marking in the river
- Docks and Moorings, including their permitting
- Options for removal of sand at the mouth of the river

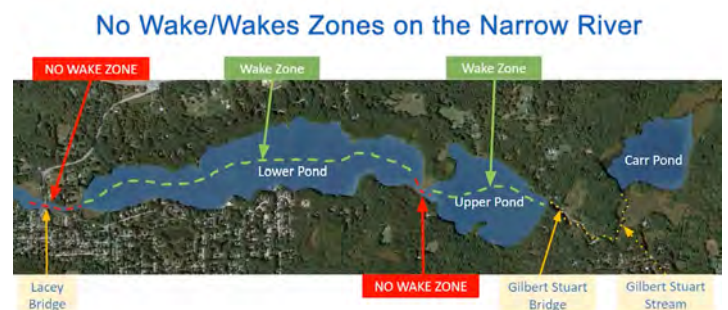
The questions and comments NRPA and local experts received leading up to, and during the April 23 meeting will be included, with answers, in NRPA's Navigating the Narrow webpage section 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQ) at narrowriver.org/boating.

In NRPA's ongoing effort to understand the needs and concerns of the local boating community, we continue to invite you to submit your boating and watercraft safety related questions to NRPA through an online form at the webpage listed above. On an annual basis, these questions will be addressed during an informational spring gathering, and later integrated into the FAQ section of NRPA's Navigating the Narrow webpage.

NRPA would like to thank the community, the "Stewards of Narrow River" for their participation, and the following organizations in making this inaugural spring event a success:

- Mettatuxet Yacht Club
- Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC)
- Rhode Island Department of Environmental Protection (RIDEM)
- South Kingstown Harbormaster
- North Kingstown Harbormaster
- Narrow River Kayaks

NRPA plans to make this a reoccurring annual event, so keep this informational gathering in mind for next Spring of 2023. Here's wishing everyone safe and happy boating this summer!



Still image from NRPA's first educational boating video showing no wake & wake zones in the Narrow River between Upper Pond and Lacey Bridge. Image courtesy of Parker McGregor.

Spring River Cleanup

by Rebecca Russell, NRPA Program Director

In tradition with direct action environmental stewardship events in honor of Earth Day, NRPA and our partners Narrow River Land Trust, the Towns of Narragansett and North Kingstown DPW's, People's Credit Union, the Fly-Fishing Committee of RI Saltwater Anglers Association (RISAA), the Rhody Fly Rodders (RFR), and RI Trout Unlimited (RITU) again hosted watershed-wide cleanups on April 30.

NRPA Board Director and cleanup event chair, Kathy Byington, met up with RISAA, RFR, and RITU who collectively mustered over 20 members from their fishing groups and performed another deep cleanup around Sprague Bridge in Narragansett - a favorite fly-fishing spot for many. Staff from People's Credit Union, one of NRPA's lead sponsors, turned out to support cleanup along the beach in front of the Dunes Club leading up to the Mouth of the River. Additionally, 14 individuals from NRPA membership showed up with their family and friends to cleanup roadsides and public access trails around the watershed including Middlebridge Road bridge and shoreline southwest of the bridge, the public boat launch between Mitchell and Pollock Ave., Pettaquamscutt Rock park, the shoreline around Lacey Bridge, and roadside on Bridgetown Road.

This year, two trash grabber tools were purchased with funds awarded from NRPA's Honorable Mention for the short osprey film that showed at the 5th Annual RI Nature Video festival, which was hosted by the Environment Council of RI and RI Natural History Survey this past winter. Those new grabbers were put to good use!

Fishing club members wore their waders, so they were able to reach areas not being cleaned by other groups. In tradition, they also brought their fly rods and favorite springtime fly patterns to enjoy fishing after the cleanup. A subset of those with RI Trout Unlimited, traveled to another cleanup site along the Wood River, and performed another river cleanup off Route 165 on a segment of the highway that RITU sponsors, located near a RIDEM checkpoint and another popular fishing area in the Arcadia Management area.

NRPA gives big thanks to our cleanup allies and partners for their volunteer time and effort, and to the Elpus Family Fund at the Boston Foundation, for their grant support to NRPA in preserving the Narrow River!



Bagged trash collected from one of the sites around the watershed on April 30, 2022, in the back of a volunteer's hatch-back vehicle and on its way to proper disposal, ultimately at the state's landfill in Johnson. Gratefully, many NRPA volunteers were able to help properly dispose of the bagged trash collected-many hands truly make for lighter work! Photo credit Kathy Byington



Small group of cleanup volunteers getting ready to head out for trash collection along The Narrows, including co-organizer Susan Estabrook seen here holding two 5-gallon trash collection buckets. Photo credit Brian O'Connor.



Group photo of cleanup volunteers and fisher people at Sprague bridge on April 30, 2022. Photo credit Brian O'Connor.



Fisher people who are also NRPA cleanup volunteers, wearing their waders to search for wayward debris in The Narrows, before the mouth of the River. Photo credit Brian O'Connor.



Plastic bottle being fished out of the river, 'baited' by Ed Lombardo's famous shrimp fly. Photo credit Ed Lombardo.

Warm welcome to Kathy Byington, NRPA's new Board Member

by Rebecca Russell, NRPA Program Director



Kathy Byington enjoying a view of coastal waters. Photo courtesy of Kathy Byington.

At last summer's Narragansett Art Festival, Board President Richard Grant had the good fortune of meeting NRPA member Kathy Byington. It quickly became evident that Kathy, who was already a member of NRPA, was a great candidate to join NRPA's Board

of Directors. Richard seized the opportunity to invite her consideration of this advisory role and in the months that followed Kathy was introduced to and shared her interests with the entire Board. At the virtual Annual Meeting on October 5, 2021, Kathy was elected as NRPA's newest Board member.

With a BS in Biomedical Engineering from Boston University and a MBA in Finance and Accounting from Northeastern, Kathy provides finance and administration consultancy services for institutions of higher education, through her business KBYInsight Consulting. Having grown up in the Mettatuxet neighborhood of Narragansett, she is familiar with the Pettaquamscutt Estuary and Watershed and its associated land development and sea level rise issues. A former crew team member, including with the US National Rowing Team World Championship of 2013, Kathy lives along Middlebridge Road in Wakefield and can be found sculling

in the Narrow River some early mornings and weekends.

To pick up where Ken McShane wrapped up his 25-year term of service in the officer position, Kathy was elected as NRPA's new Treasurer at the Board's February 2022 monthly meeting. As NRPA's Treasurer, Kathy oversees NRPA's financial accounting, organizational budgeting processes, and provides her professional knowledge and financial planning expertise to advise the Board as needed.

In addition to her new officer role with NRPA's executive committee, Kathy also leads NRPA's Narrow River Cleanup events in the spring and the fall. The entire NRPA Board feels fortunate to have aligned with Kathy's advisory interests to support NRPA's mission and programming at this time. Please join us in welcoming Kathy and wishing her a successful term with NRPA's Board!

Thanks to NRPA's Family Foundation Donors

In addition to members and business sponsors, NRPA is beyond grateful to receive the generous support of local Family Foundations, who also share a stake in the quality of life in the Pettaquamscutt Estuary. Special thanks go out to these foundations supporting our watershed preservation efforts in 2022:

**ELPUS FAMILY FUND AT
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MANY THANKS TO NRPA's 2022 SPONSORS!



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Mary Phelan,
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South County Pediatric Group
Ann Walsh
Rob Wolfgang

52nd Annual Meeting

Save the date for October 7 for an in-person Annual Meeting at URI's Coastal Institute. The public and members of NRPA are encouraged to attend. NRPA Directors and participants will:

- Review the past year of stewardship, outreach, and educational activities in the Narrow (Pettaquamscutt) River and Watershed,
- Provide updates from our River Watch program now in its 32nd year of operations,
- Present the W.E.R. La Farge Memorial Friend of the River Award and other Environmental Appreciation Awards,
- Engage in a membership-inclusive vote for the elections of the Board Directors and Officers
- Draw the winning Kayak Raffle ticket and announce this year's raffle winner

We encourage folks to join us at Studio Blue located at URI's Coastal Institute, for the Gallery Opening and Silent Art Auction event happening the same evening, just before the Annual Meeting. Please note voting is reserved for dues-paying members and contributing sponsors, a.k.a. organizational members. Feel free to email nrpa@narrowriver.org to confirm your current membership or sponsorship status.



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See this issue in FULL COLOR at
narrowriver.org/narrow-river-notes.

Event details at NRPA's website narrowriver.org



Upcoming Events



What Lives in the River

Family science exploration event.
95 Middlebridge Rd., Narragansett.

SATURDAY JUNE 11, 9-11AM

Juneteenth Celebration & RISHM Dedication

Free admission featuring live performances.
Casey Farm, Saunderstown.

SUNDAY JUNE 19, 12-4PM

Turnaround Swim

A one-mile swim to benefit NRPA.
La Farge Point Park, North Kingstown.

SATURDAY JUNE 25, 9AM-12PM

Pettaquamscutt Paddle

Guided sunset paddle at Narrow River Kayaks.

FRIDAY JULY 29, 5-9PM



Art on the River

Art for all ages along the Narrow River.
95 Middlebridge Rd., Narragansett.

SATURDAY AUGUST 6, 9-11AM

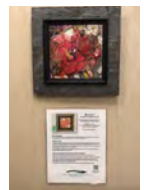


What Lives in the River (9-11am) and
Narrow River Land Trust Trail Hike (10:30am)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 17

Gallery Opening and Silent Art Auction (5pm),
Annual Meeting & Kayak Raffle Drawing (7-8pm)

FRIDAY OCTOBER 7



Details for all events at narrowriver.org