



# Mystic Messenger

A Publication of the Mystic River Watershed Association  
Winter 2004

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## Good News for the Lower Mystic

An innovative settlement in an enforcement case is bringing much needed support for some important projects in the Lower Mystic. On January 30<sup>th</sup>, a settlement was announced involving the U.S. EPA, the U.S. Department of Justice and Exelon Mystic, LLC, owners of the Sithe Mystic Power Plant in Everett. The total settlement will provide \$6 million in funding for environmental projects, including the following three that are of particular importance for watershed open space and habitat goals.

*Mystic Crossing* is a collaboration among many local and regional groups. It's goal is to increase the vitality of the Lower Mystic Basin by creating continuous and accessible pedestrian and bicycle connections. The group's first focus is creating a commuter path link across the Amelia Earhart Dam, similar to the pedestrian and bicycle access already in place on the Charles River dam. The Earhart Dam is owned and operated by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (formerly the MDC), and connects Everett and Somerville. The dam crossing project will receive \$250K in funding from the settlement. Access across the Earhart Dam will connect Everett's Gateway Plaza development with Somerville's Assembly Square and Draw 7 Park, as well as connecting with other paths such as the proposed Bike-to-the-Sea path in Everett.

The *Mystic Crossing* group was first convened in the fall of 2002 as part of a Tufts University Environmental Law class student project. Three students investigated the potential for access across the dam. They spoke with interested stakeholders and scheduled a meeting as part of their final project. In the past year, many local groups expressed interest in working on this connection. Given this interest, we decided to convene the group to discuss the potential for increasing access to, across, and along the river. In addition to advocating for the dam crossing, the group is also interested in promoting all of the remaining crossings across the Mystic, including at Routes 28, 99 and 16, as well as improving fish passage through the dam. Information about the *Mystic Crossing* group is available at: [www.geocities.com/mysticcrossing2004](http://www.geocities.com/mysticcrossing2004)

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The **Mystic Messenger** is a publication of the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA), a community-based, private nonprofit, Section 501(c)(3) organization, established in 1970 to protect and restore the natural resources of the Mystic River watershed.

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### ***Letter from the Executive Director***

I have a “good news – bad news – good news” story for you. The good news is that there’s a lot of energy and excitement in the watershed right now, as this issue of the newsletter clearly shows. The energy and vision of many players – MyRWA volunteers, cities and towns, Tufts students and faculty, and local groups -- is creating real improvements in our water quality, habitat and open space resources.

Then there’s the bad news. MyRWA, like most nonprofits, is struggling financially. I hear the same story everywhere – times are tough for watershed associations and other non-profits, just when the cutbacks in state funding make the roles played by non-profits all the more important. Although the economy is reported to be rebounding, no one expects the state and foundation funding situation to get much better soon.

Happily, there’s some good funding news too. MyRWA has received a very generous challenge grant from Tufts’ University College. All individual and business memberships and donations received by March 20 will be matched by Tufts, up to \$15,000. Meeting this challenge will give MyRWA the time and resources we need to tackle our longer-term funding challenges. We are very grateful to Tufts for this concrete demonstration of their commitment to the Mystic and for their support of our work. The challenge grant has generated a great response and we are confident we will meet the goal. We have over 50 new members and many existing members have substantially increased their donations. Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far!

Meeting the challenge is just the first step, however. It is critical that MyRWA *significantly* expand our membership and donor base. Why is this such an important goal? First, because memberships and donations provide the unrestricted funding needed for our core advocacy and outreach programs. Government funding usually covers a specific project, but does not fund our core operations. Second, because MyRWA’s voice will carry more weight with policy makers, regulators and funders, with a larger membership. Our testimony on state funding for Mystic priorities would get more attention, for example, if we had 5,000 members (like the Charles River Watershed Association) rather than less than 500 members (as we do now.) Third, we are trying to do more work than we ever have before. We’ve tackled a lot of new challenges this year, and we need our members’ help to keep up the effort.

Please help us meet both the Tufts challenge and our longer-term goal to increase membership. We need your active support. We’ll all benefit when warmer weather allows us to be out by the water once again!

Nancy Hammett

## Learning from Students: Mystic Learning 101

Lisa Brukilacchio, Community Engagement Specialist, Tufts University

This fall, a new position was initiated at the University College of Citizenship and Public Service (UCCPS) at Tufts. As the Community Engagement Specialist, I began work here with an initial focus on the community partnership with MyRWA. The mission of UCCPS is "to create committed community leaders who will take an active role in addressing the core problems of society through their lifetimes." University College is promoting an approach called Education for Active Citizenship at Tufts. The definitions of active citizenship from the department website ([www.uccps.tufts.edu](http://www.uccps.tufts.edu)) seem to be a good match for the interests and future aspirations of many Tufts students, as well as being modeled by the staff, members, and volunteers at MyRWA.

This past fall, almost 30 students from Tufts were engaged in research or community-based projects connected to the mission of the Mystic Watershed Collaborative (MWC), the official partnership of Tufts and MyRWA. I had the pleasure of working with most of these students, generally in an advisory capacity. The energy, enthusiasm and dedication of these students are remarkable. The results of their efforts are helping to support outreach and education about the Mystic and to increase scientific knowledge and greater understanding of environmental regulations important in our watershed.

Several Citizenship and Public Service Scholars from University College are working five to eight hours a week for the year with organizations in the watershed, including: Brooks Estate-Brooks Pond Study, MA Water Watch, MyRWA and MWC, and with Senator Barrios' office. Four energetic undergrads developed a short video encouraging citizens to get involved in watershed issues, focusing on current efforts to address the needs and potential of the Everett waterfront, as part of Roberta Oster Sachs' course "TV Production for Social Change." Engineering students are doing Mystic-related research projects. We look forward to their reports in the future. One of the most intensive course efforts addressing Mystic issues is the Environmental Law class, taught



Tufts students, Larry Mahl and Val Wen-cis, videotaping on the Mystic. Photo by Rusty Russell.

by Rusty Russell through the Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning Department. In the summer, a menu of research projects was co-developed that would provide information and analysis on a range of environmental law issues as they relate to community-identified issues in the Mystic. Students selected five to work on: Water Quality Protection in Designated Port Areas, Reconciling Affordable Housing and Urban Environmental Protection, Private Uses of Public Park Land, Implementation of the MA Environmental Justice Policy: Policy Health Issues Related to Fish Consumption and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Mystic. The full reports are now available in the MyRWA office and are already informing staff and board members.

Instructor Rusty Russell, an attorney and lecturer in the Tufts Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning, praised the university's growing commitment to service learning -- to building a connection between the intellectual mission of the academy and the daily, on-the-ground effort that leaders like MyRWA contribute to the Tufts community.

"Environmental law and policy is perfectly suited to the community classroom approach," Russell said. "Reading about regulation is not quite the same as struggling to determine how several regulatory programs overseen by several public agencies operating at several levels of government might or might not work together to achieve an enforceable environmental objective -- like properly balancing public access and industrial uses in the lower Mystic, or protecting communities of color from the risk of eating contaminated fish."

"This course gives students an opportunity to study the structure of environmental law, as well as its application -- while providing what essentially are consulting services to an organization that has an important mission and a pressing need for targeted assistance. And these efforts get results. For example, in 2002 a three-student team working on public access across the Amelia Earhart Dam between Everett and Somerville essentially jump-started a public-private collaborative that elevated this issue to public notice and a year later is intensely involved in trying to craft a solution that

*(Mystic Learning, Continued on page 6)*

## Too Much of A Good Thing: Nutrients in the Mystic

Julie Horowitz, Director, Mystic Monitoring Network

What limits life? We are all aware of checks and balances, “limiting factors,” in nature. Why does adding fertilizer make your plants grow larger? Protein found in plants and animals are approximately 16% nitrogen and phosphorus, and are required for photosynthesis (Schlesinger 1997). Undisturbed ecosystems typically have a natural balance of nutrients appropriate to their requirements. However, anthropogenic (human-made) additions of nutrients affect this balance, causing instability in the ecosystem.

Large additions of nitrogen- or phosphorus-based nutrients to aquatic ecosystems typically cause eutrophication, or accelerated algal growth. This added vegetation uses oxygen and can deplete the limited soluble oxygen resources shared by aquatic organisms. These oxygen depletion events, known as hypoxia, usually occur in the summer, when warm water temperatures and long daylight hours maximize photosynthesis and limit oxygen saturation. In serious cases, hypoxia caused by severe eutrophication can cause fish kills or massive die-offs of other aquatic organisms.

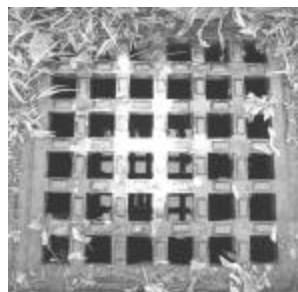
Currently, a large portion of the Gulf of Mexico is known as a “dead zone” due to severe hypoxia caused by huge amounts of fertilizer and other runoff carried by the Mississippi River and its tributaries. While not every watershed experiences situations this extreme, many waterbodies in the U.S. and around the world suffer from excessive nutrient loading.

Massachusetts has a water quality standard for the level of dissolved oxygen that must be present in the water (60% saturation). However, on hot summer days, the level of oxygen in many rivers, lakes and streams dips below the state standard. Nutrient loading is typically caused by nonpoint source pollution. As the name implies, nonpoint source pollution does not come from one specific location, but rather from a broad range of land use practices. While there aren't many farms left in the Mystic River watershed, there are many urban nonpoint sources of pollution containing nutrients. The primary sources of anthropogenic nutrient loadings in our watershed are lawn fertilizer, sewage, industrial discharge, and pet waste.

What is being done to counter this problem? Understanding and monitoring the problem is a first step. Our

Mystic Monitoring Network tests water for dissolved oxygen concentration, nitrite and nitrate (forms of nitrogen), and total phosphorus every month. Our results show that, in the summer, monitoring locations on Alewife Brook and on the Aberjona River in Woburn typically violated the state dissolved oxygen standard. There are no state standards for nitrite or nitrate; however, in a comparison with background levels found in Boston Harbor, our monitoring results indicated that the Mystic is probably a contributing nitrogen source to the Harbor. Average concentrations from six of ten baseline sampling locations exceeded the EPA guidelines for total phosphorus concentrations. Among the Mystic waterbodies that the state currently lists as not meeting water quality standards for low dissolved oxygen or having excess nutrients are the Aberjona River, Judkins Pond, Spy Pond, Chelsea Creek, Horn Pond, Wedge Pond, Malden River, Ell Pond, and the entire Mystic River (fresh and salt water.). Clearly, nutrients are a significant problem in our watershed.

State and federal agencies have established “Total Maximum Daily Loads” (TMDLs) for some waterbodies. These are regulatory limits on total loadings of a pollutant to a specific waterbody, along with allocations of the limits to different point and nonpoint sources of the pollutant. The goal of the TMDLs is to establish strategies for achieving water quality standards in waters that are currently impaired. Another approach, favored by the current federal administration, uses a market-based approach. A nutrient trading program (much like programs established for air quality) would not specify limits on individual sources, but instead would put a cap on overall loadings and allow sources to trade shares of the cap among themselves. Under certain conditions, trading systems can achieve the same overall pollutant reductions at dramatically lower costs.



*Stormdrain.*  
Photo by Roger Frymire

Tufts University is currently working on a large research project entitled the “Aberjona Nutrient Project.” The goal of this project is to promote more effective management of nutrients in the Upper Mystic subwatershed by (1) determining the mechanisms controlling sedi-

*(Nutrients, Continued on page 7)*

## Profiles of local groups in the watershed: this is the first in a series of articles highlighting the work of local groups in the Mystic.



### Friends of the Mystic River

Mary Werowinski, President

Friends of the Mystic River is a Medford-based community group founded in 1995. Initially property-owners along the river started a group to:

- Improve water quality to meet the standard of swimmable water;
- Preserve and restore riverine wildlife habitat;
- Promote public awareness and community involvement in the river; and
- Improve access and create habitat-sensitive recreation opportunities.

From the onset a primary activity has been clean-ups of the river area in Medford. Twice a year in spring and fall we visit the river's edge with volunteers and collect chairs, televisions, car parts, shopping carts and indescribable plastic remnants. People who have lived along the river for many years agree -- the river is more beautiful because of our work. **Mark your calendar for our next clean-up scheduled for May 1.** Bring a friend! Everything else is provided. Meet us at the bandshell in the park off Rt. 16, near Rt.38 (Winthrop St.) in Medford.

Our winter activity is a birding walk guided by local expert Paul Roberts. The Mystic is alive in the coldest months and the walk provides a chilling experience. Winter brings out a variety of hawks, shorebirds and waterfowl to the Mystic lakes and river. This is great chance for beginners to experience the joys of birding.

Safe Passage Day is our summer boating day that has been on hiatus the last couple years. It would be great if someone good at organizing events were willing to re-energize this boating flotilla. It's a pleasure to paddle upriver and across the Mystic Lakes. We have lunch with a special presentation and a rest before heading back.

We have ongoing projects in attempt to control invading plants. In the river waters, we are removing the choking water chestnuts. This plant is a fierce competitor in the calm, shallow, nutrient-rich waters of the slow-moving Mystic River. Uncontrolled, it



*Japanese Knotweed along the Mystic River, Medford. Site of one FMR eradication project. Photo by Mary Werowinski.*

creates nearly impenetrable mats across wide areas of water. Each year that we pull out plants the regrowth is diminished.

Along the shores, we are cutting back the obtrusive Japanese Knotweed, a plant mistaken by many for bamboo. The roots cannot simply be pulled out; this would cause erosion on the banks. It requires diligent cutting over a 3-4 year period. The current hot-spot is down river of the Boston Avenue bridge in West Medford off Rt. 16. What was once a dense thicket of weeds is now clear and open. We have begun to seed the area and plant native species.

We hope to expand our invasive plant project to other areas along the river where knotweed, purple loosestrife and phragmites grow. This volunteer work is a great chance to make a visible difference in the landscape of the Mystic River.



See you down by the river.

## Members Make a Difference to the Mystic

**Our work would not be possible without the generous support of our members. The following are some of the members who responded to our Challenge Grant from the University College at Tufts University. We deeply appreciate the support of everyone listed here, as well as the countless other members who have supported our work throughout the years.**

Linda & Bruce Alexander	Alice & Arlan Fuller	Ted & Sheila Packard & Family
Molly Anderson	James & Patricia Gaffey	William C. Pisano
Fred Bamber—Solstice Capital	Robert & Elizabeth Goeke	Eugene E. Record
Sue & Henry Bass	Mary Haaga	Carolyn Ricker
Jack Beusmans & Sharon Guzik	Ingeborg Hegemann	Adrianne & Hartley Rogers
Black & Tan Planning, LLC	Eric Hersh	Sam Seidel
John Bunzick & Carol Parker	Jennifer Hill	Julia Blatt & Ken Siskind
Representative Paul C. Casey	Aleda Freeman & Brian Holdridge	Barry L. Solar
Raymond Castro & Rowena Hodges	Elizabeth Karpati	Terri & Bruce Stevens
Carolyn & Bob Cumings	Lewis & Margaret Law	Steven & Sandy Smith
Beth Debski	Ann LeRoyer	Ian Todreas
David Dettinger	Nancy M. Lincoln	Allan & Barbara Tosti
Christine Doyle	Tom Lincoln	Robert & Jeanne Vernazza
Kathy Foley & Michael Fager	Kathy & Walter Lind	David White & Mary Gilbert
Francis Franco, Sr.	Howard & Mameve Medwed	Nancy Williams
Friends of Fresh Pond Reservation	David Mussina	Elizabeth Wyld & Lance Drane
Diana Fruglietti	Frank O'Leary	Karen Zoeller
	Linda & David Olsson	


*(Mystic Learning, Continued from page 3)*

will allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross the dam."  
*(See our lead article for more on this project.)*

Dona Neely, Masters candidate in the Urban Environmental Policy and Planning program at Tufts, took Rusty Russell's course as a certificate student last year. "Rusty's class provides an incredible learning experience through lectures and also from the team projects. These assignments offer students the chance to apply their new knowledge, conduct research that strengthens understanding and gain real-life experience about how the legal process and how groups work to protect critical ecosystems like the Mystic Watershed," Neely commented. "For me and for many of my fellow classmates, the experience we had with our projects led to future involvement in related community and MyRWA initiatives. We were able to build and expand our level of activity and involvement via internships, other class projects and in some cases, career development. For me personally, the class and project experience influenced my decision to matriculate from the CES Certificate

Program to the UEP Masters Program."

Executive Director Nancy Hammett summed up some of the benefits for MyRWA, "I am very impressed by the quality of the research. The topics addressed are of immediate interest to MyRWA and I am actively making use of the results for planning and grant proposals. I particularly appreciated the students' effort to document sources, provide copies of important documents, and list contact information. All of this ensures that their work has lasting value to us. I was also impressed by the quality of their thinking and recommendations for actions MyRWA might take in the future."

The benefits of such educational efforts are multifaceted, with learning shared among the participants- the faculty, the students and the community. The high quality of work this past semester is encouraging and hopefully can serve as inspiration for more faculty and students to engage directly in community-based learning and service opportunities. Please feel free to contact me at [lisa.brुकilacchio@tufts.edu](mailto:lisa.brुकilacchio@tufts.edu) or 617-627-3076 to discuss opportunities. (Soon you can check the MyRWA website for a list of suggested research topics.) 

## Spotlight on Mystic Volunteers

Thalia Tringo

### Rowena Conkling, Cambridge

Early in the morning, on the second Wednesday of each month, Cambridge resident Rowena Conkling can be found at the bridge on Medford Street over the Malden River, pulling up buckets of water.


"Except when the river is frozen, as it has been for the last two months. We can't sample then." Like other volunteers in our water quality monitoring program, Rowena distributes the water into a series of bottles and whisks it off to MyRWA headquarters in Arlington. From there, Julie Horowitz, our Mystic Monitoring Network Director, delivers the samples to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority for analysis. Once the data from the new samples are received, Julie emails the results to Rowena, who enters them into a database. This database is critical for maintaining accurate records of changes in water quality throughout the watershed.

Rowena's involvement with MyRWA began two years ago, after she retired. Following a long career as an environmental lawyer, Rowena was looking for "useful things to do" with her time. She heard that MyRWA was looking for water collection volunteers and decided to offer her help. Water collection "doesn't really take that much time," according to Rowena, but her regular commitment, and that of other volunteers, is the key to the reliability of our data.

Rowena Conkling's career in environmental law included work as an enforcement lawyer for the federal EPA as well as environmental litigation in the private sector. She worked with the Conservation Law Foundation on the Boston Harbor lawsuit and wrote the water quality regulations for the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. "I am impressed by how much good MyRWA has been able to do [for the watershed] with a very limited budget," Rowena noted. Coming from someone with her professional background and experience, this is high praise indeed.

*(Nutrients, Continued from page 4)*

ment-nutrient interactions, (2) developing receiving water models to accurately simulate nutrient-sediment-water interactions, (3) developing better decision-oriented optimization tools for managing nutrient loads to achieve multiple water quality objectives, and (4) effectively communicating technical information with stakeholders in the watershed. The project will develop a decision-support system that integrates scientific models of watershed nutrient loads and receiving water quality with a decision-making tool that allows users to define and prioritize nutrient management strategies. MyRWA is serving as one of the community advisers for the project. We expect that this project will help our communities develop effective nutrient control programs, and look forward to working with Tufts faculty and students on the project. In particular, we will be urging the state and EPA to develop nutrient TMDLs for our waters and will be investigating the potential for use of a trading system.

Development and implementation of nutrient "best management practices" by cities and towns are critical steps in reducing nutrients in runoff. Low impact development and redevelopment is providing new solutions for runoff reduction and infiltration. A very important piece of the solution is for each of us to change our practices. For example, don't fertilize your lawn, or do so sparingly, use non-phosphorus-based fertilizers, and watch the weather to be sure it's not about to rain when you apply fertilizer. Clean up your pet waste, and use phosphorus-free detergents and soaps, including when washing your car. Use a rain barrel, create a rain garden, and don't dump waste in catch basins. With some small changes in our everyday activities, we can all make a difference! 

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Schlesinger, William. 1991. Biogeochemistry: An Analysis of Global Change. pp. 169-174. Harcourt Brace & Co, San Diego, California

## WISH LIST

Are you looking for a new home for some old equipment?


- Picks or cultivators to pick up trash at cleanups
- Waders
- GPS unit
- Water quality testing kits for students
- Computer projector: new or used
- Video camera or microphone

## Environmental Justice News



### EJAM Summit Generates Energy and Challenges

Fifty people gathered in Somerville last November to participate in the *Environmental Justice Across the Mystic* (EJAM) project's final Summit. Participants from throughout the watershed worked in groups to refine lists of EJ problems that had been highlighted in earlier project forums, and then to identify actions to address those problems. Four groups considered issues related to (1) land use and transportation, (2) water quality, (3) communication and participation, and (4) exposures and public health. We also heard from Senator Jarrett Barrios, who discussed proposed legislation to make the state's EJ policy mandatory (*see gray box, this page*), and from Regina McCarthy of the state's Office of Commonwealth Development, the official responsible for developing the state's EJ policy. A panel of experts responding to the day's discussions included Regina McCarthy, Veronica Eady of Tufts University (and primary author of the EJ Policy in her former position with the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs), Paul Richard, Director of the state's Office of Technical Assistance, and John DePriest, Chelsea Director of Planning.

The wide-ranging and energetic discussions focused on ways to ensure that all communities in the watershed receive adequate environmental protection and enjoy the environmental benefits they deserve. We identified both specific projects and the need for institutional changes to ensure that EJ issues receive priority in attention and funding. The results of the Summit will be distributed in the next few weeks to participants and to EPA for their comments. MyRWA will then make the Summit report available on our website. The EJAM project has been funded by EPA New England and is a collaboration of MyRWA, Tufts University, the Massachusetts Environmental Justice Program, the former Massachusetts Watershed Initiative, and the Urban Ecology Institute. 

### Help Support Proposed EJ Legislation

Senator Jarrett Barrios is one of several state legislators sponsoring bills to ensure that low-income, minority and immigrant communities have access to a cleaner and safer environment. MyRWA supports legislation mandating that state agencies responsible for protecting the environment make environmental justice communities a priority. Please support Sen. Barrios' *Clean and Healthy Communities Act* (S. 1190), and the related *An Act to Promote Environmental Justice in the Commonwealth* (H. 2112) sponsored by Rep David Sullivan, by contacting your state representative (<http://www.state.ma.us/legis/memmenuh.htm>) and Speaker Tom Finneran, 617-722-2500, Boston State House, Room 356, Boston MA 02133.



Smokestacks. Photo by Rusty Russell.

*(Lower Mystic, Continued from page 1)*


The same settlement will provide another \$250K in funding for an important open space project in Chelsea – restoration of a one-acre urban salt marsh along Mill Creek, a tributary to Chelsea Creek. This is a project planned by the Chelsea Green Space & Recreation Committee and the Urban Ecology Institute. The restoration will provide coastal access, passive recreation opportunities, wildlife habitat, and environmental education for the residents of Chelsea and the surrounding communities. The project is an important part of the new *Chelsea Creek Vision Plan*. This plan was developed through an impressive community planning process involving Chelsea, East Boston and Revere residents, public officials and businesses, led by The Chelsea Creek Restoration Group. The result was a blueprint for transformation of Chelsea Creek into a valuable ecological, economic, and educational resource.

Still another project, receiving \$119,000 in funding from the settlement, is a study of restoration alternatives along the Malden River. The Malden is highlighted as a potential mixed use and passive recreation district in the recent *Everett Waterfront Assessment* (available at <http://www.ci.everett.ma.us/>.) The river offers opportunities for kayaking, canoeing and sailing, and is already home to the Tufts University crew team. Accomplishing Everett's vision for the Malden will require dealing with poor water quality, contaminated sediments, degraded habitat, and lack of

access to the waterfront. The environmental assessment and feasibility funded by the settlement will build on work already being done by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Mystic Valley Development Commission. The study will identify possible restoration options along the river, including projects to restore or replicate wetlands habitat.



*Amelia Earhart Dam, Photo by Janet Kovner*

*Mystic Crossing*, the Mill Creek restoration, and the Malden River assessment projects will all contribute greatly to revitalization of the waterfront in the lower Mystic watershed. Their success is a testament to the power of a vision and the great things that can happen when residents get together to advocate for their local resources. MyRWA congratulates everyone who has worked on these projects, and we thank EPA for their help in negotiating this funding. 

### ***Get Connected . . .***

- ◆ ***Visit our website:*** [www.mysticriver.org](http://www.mysticriver.org)
- ◆ ***Join our listserv and discussion forum.*** It's a great way to learn about activities, issues and developments in the watershed. Send a blank message to: [mystic-river-subscribe@topica.com](mailto:mystic-river-subscribe@topica.com)
- ◆ ***Call our office*** (781-316-3438) to find other ways to get connected.

### ***Thanks for continuing support to:***

*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
MA Department of Conservation and Recreation  
MA Department of Environmental Protection  
Massachusetts Environmental Trust  
Massachusetts Water Resources Authority  
Altria  
Tufts / Mystic Watershed Collaborative  
Anonymous funders  
Organizational and individual donors  
All the photographers contributing to this issue*

## 4th Annual Winter Speaker Series

Don't miss the last two talks!

**Wednesday, Feb 25<sup>th</sup>, 7pm. Winchester Public Library (80 Washington St).**

**The Mystic Lakes - Studying Environmental Processes and Aquatic Pollutants in a Natural Laboratory.**

Join **David Senn** for a presentation on the Mystic Lakes. This talk will give an overview of the history of pollution and water quality in the lakes and what has been learned through a decade's worth of research there.



**David Senn** is a Research Associate and Lecturer in the Department of Environmental Health at the Harvard School of Public Health.

**Wednesday, Mar 24<sup>th</sup>, 7pm, Community Room, Robbins Library (Arlington)**

**Ornithological Gothic: John James Audubon & the Tale of the Golden Eagle**

**Professor Gregory Nobles** will present a talk that focuses on one of Audubon's most dramatic images, his painting of the Golden Eagle. Professor Nobles will explore the personal and cultural significance of this tale.



**Gregory Nobles** is a Professor of History at the School of History, Technology, and Society, Georgia Institute of Technology, specializing in early American and environmental history.

*This Winter Speaker Series is sponsored by the Mystic River Watershed Association.*

**All talks are free and open to the public.**  
(Voluntary donations are welcome.)

Contact: 781-316-3438, [janet@mysticriver.org](mailto:janet@mysticriver.org)  
Or visit: [www.mysticriver.org](http://www.mysticriver.org)

## Activities in the Watershed

**Sat. Feb 21<sup>st</sup>, 2-4pm. Bird Walk with Stew Sanders.**  
Meet at the White Hen Pantry on Brighton St. near Concord Ave, Cambridge. Stew Sanders, author of *An Alewife Area Ecology Guide*, will look for wintering birds and shore birds at Blair Pond. Stew gives walks for FAR, Brookline Bird Club, Audubon and others. Call 617-489-3120 for more information. Wear gear for rough terrain and slush. *Sponsored by Friends of Alewife Reservation.*

**Sun, Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1-3pm. Animal Tracks at Fresh Pond.**  
Maynard Ecology Center, Basement of Neville Place, 650 Concord Avenue, Cambridge. For Adults without Kids and Families with Kids 5-11 years old. Learn to read the stories that animals' footprints tell. We will look at tracks inside and outside and will focus on identifying and reading tracks and other signs left by animals that use the Reservation. Dress for the weather, with boots for walking in snow. Please register: e-mail [friendsoffreshpond@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsoffreshpond@yahoo.com) or call Chief Ranger Jean Rogers at 617-349-4793 and leave your name and phone number. *Offered by the Friends of Fresh Pond Reservation and the Fresh Pond Ranger Program.*

**Sat, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 9-11am. Over the River & Through the Woods: Exploring the Mystic River Watershed.**  
Meet other watershed advocates as we look for early signs of spring along the Mystic Lakes. Help us find any early spring migrants that may have flown in, or any winter birds that are hanging around. Meet at the Mystic Lakes Dam parking lot, off of Mystic Valley Parkway, West Medford. Wear warm clothes, and boots appropriate to muddy surfaces. For information or directions, please call Janet @ 781-316-3438 or [janet@mysticriver.org](mailto:janet@mysticriver.org) *Co-sponsored by the Menotomy Bird Club and the Mystic River Watershed Association.*

**Brooks Estate Guided Walks, Medford.**

**Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 8am. Beginner Bird Walk.**

**Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 8am. Beginner Bird Walk.**

Guided by Audrey Stanwood. For either walk: meet at the Green Gate (pedestrian entrance) to the Brooks Estate on Grove Street. .8 mile north of High Street, Medford. (Do not park in the Oak Grove Cemetery) For more Brooks Estate information, go to [BrooksEstate.org](http://BrooksEstate.org) or call 781-396-3001. *Sponsored by Medford-Brooks Estate Land Trust (M-BELT).*

**Visit [www.mysticriver.org](http://www.mysticriver.org) for a complete list of Activities in the Watershed. We update it regularly.**

## MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED

**The Mystic River Watershed Association** depends on the support of its members to achieve its goal of restoring, preserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Please consider a tax-deductible membership, if you have not already done so.

*Thank you for your support!*



**Won't you help us? Join the MyRWA today! or, Please renew your support!**

*YES! I'd like to support the MyRWA in its work to protect, conserve and restore the natural resources of the Mystic River watershed. Enclosed is my tax-deductible membership contribution:*

\$25 Individual     
  \$45 Family     
  \$60 Non-Profit     
  \$100 Friend  
 \$250 Patron     
  \$500 Sponsor     
  \$1000 Guardian     
  \$5000 Angel  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other     
  **I'd like to volunteer. Please send me information.**

**Add my email to MyRWA's listserv.    May we thank you in our newsletter?    My company has a matching gift program.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail your tax-deductible donation, payable to MyRWA,**

**To: MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION  
20 ACADEMY STREET, SUITE 203  
ARLINGTON, MA 02476**



## JOIN THE CHALLENGE!

Contribute to the Mystic River Watershed Association between Dec 20<sup>th</sup> and March 20<sup>th</sup>, and double the value of your contribution. We deeply appreciate the generosity and support of the University College at Tufts University for this Challenge Grant!

**Save the Date . . .**

**Mystic Herring Run Festival**

**Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1-5pm,**

**Blessing of the Bay Boathouse, Somerville**



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