

Otter Creek Basin Planning Update May 2008

Contact:

Ethan Swift –Watershed Coordinator
430 Asa Bloomer State Office Building
Rutland, VT 05701
802-786-2503
Ethan.Swift@state.vt.us

Draft Basin Plan and Planning Process

The *draft* Otter Creek Basin Plan is anticipated to be available for review this fall 2008. Independent sections of the plan have been developed and reviewed as white papers (issue papers) with partner collaboration and input. A few remaining sections are anticipated from partners (such as the AG section of the plan). Once the initial draft has been reviewed internally for adherence to ANR policy and procedural considerations, it will be released to all partners for review in order to initiate the public process for approving the Plan.

Upper Otter Creek AG Basin Plan

Ethan gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Rutland NRCD Board and Rutland USDA-NRCS staff regarding the content and process used to develop the Upper Otter Creek AG Basin Plan. The overview featured Farm Data & Trends, Impaired River Sections, Conservation Practices, Recommendations, Partners & Programs, and the process of the Otter Creek Agricultural Work Group.

Working with Watershed Organizations and Towns in the Basin

Addison County River Watch Collaborative – Outreach and Education Project

Ethan met with Addison County RPC and RiverWatch Collaborative representatives to develop municipal and landowner outreach materials based on the ACRWC data analysis recently completed for sub-watersheds sampled by the Collaborative since 1992 (in some cases). Using DEC Watershed Planning Assistance funds, these materials will be developed, printed, and distributed to all towns within these sub-watersheds as well as landowners and other special interest groups and schools. Ethan developed ACRWC introduction to outreach materials to provide an overview of the Clean Water Act and the VT Water Quality Standards.

Middlebury River Corridor Planning

The goal of the Middlebury River corridor planning process is to utilize stream geomorphic assessment data to determine the river's current degree of departure from the reference equilibrium state and to identify existing constraints to the river evolving back to equilibrium. The analysis results in a prioritized list of restoration projects that may be implemented over the long-term by individuals and organizations interested in reducing expenses related to flood and erosion hazards, reducing sediment pollution and in improving aquatic and terrestrial habitat within the watershed. Partners and town representatives in the project met to discuss the initial steps in the corridor planning process.

Upper Otter Creek Water Quality Monitoring Program

Ethan provided a refresher training for volunteer monitors on proper water quality sampling methodology and techniques for volunteers in the Upper Otter Creek water quality program.

Low-Input Lawn Care Project for the Moon Brook Watershed

Ethan met with the newly hired intern and Lake Champlain Sea Grant staff to discuss initial phases of the Moon Brook Low-Input lawn Care project for this stormwater impaired watershed in Rutland City, Rutland Town, and Mendon. The intern will be targeting property managers and commercial lawn care providers.

Better Backroads Site Visits and Project Development

The ANR Watershed Coordinator assisted the Town of Goshen prepare an EPA 319 NPS Implementation Grant to fund a “**Safe Roads and Clean Water in Goshen**” project proposal. This municipal project would seek to decrease maintenance of roads and improve water quality and trout habitat where a back road is evidently affecting water quality in the North Branch of the Neshobe River.. Ethan also assisted the Better Backroads technician to visit a better backroads project underway in Shrewsbury where Ethan had provided assistance to the project applicants.

Skidder Bridge Workshop

A skidder bridge workshop was held last in Rutland for area loggers that demonstrated the building of these portable skidder bridges for use on logging jobs to minimize impacts to water quality at stream crossings. Four loggers and several students from the Stafford Tech Forestry Program attended this workshop sponsored by ANR and the Rutland NRCD. Ethan assisted and covered the rental information as well as bridge building in the rain.



Gary Sabourin lines up a student of the Stafford Tech Forestry Program