



THE VERMONT RIVER CONSERVANCY

Conserving Shorelands and Access

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Executive Director

November 2011



Dear supporter,

A refreshing plunge into a local swimming hole on a hot summer day, canoe camping alongside the Connecticut River in the Northeast Kingdom, casting a fly into a riffle of a favorite trout stream, watching a flock of mergansers patrol a quiet backwater – all of these moments of joy are possible because of our shared concern and care for Vermont's rivers and streams. Over the past year VRC has partnered with landowners, watershed groups, towns and individual citizens to help conserve these special places.

And then, on August 28th, Tropical Storm Irene changed everything.

We witnessed the awesome power of flooding rivers, and have sadly seen the heartbreaking impacts on families, communities and livelihoods. **Now is the moment to focus on opportunities to redefine our relationship with our rivers.** We believe that "thoughtful adaptation" to changing climatic conditions can restore the important ecological functions of our rivers and enhance the long-term viability of our towns and villages along these rivers. VRC is actively exploring new conservation approaches that convert flood-threatened private property, sold willingly, to public open space for recreation and public access.

To help the Vermont River Conservancy move swiftly and effectively into this new world of post-flood conservation, an anonymous donor has offered an extremely generous proposition: **For previous contributors to VRC, the anonymous donor will match, dollar for dollar, any amount over your most recent contribution. If you double your most recent contribution, the donor will match the entire amount of your contribution. For new contributors to VRC the donor will match your entire contribution.**

This sum raised from the donor match will increase VRC's capacity to respond to new river conservation needs that have arisen since Tropical Storm Irene.

Since the inception of VRC in 1996, the threats to Vermont rivers have not diminished. Traditional swimming holes are up for sale. Access points for anglers and paddlers have been posted. Riparian habitat is lost to land-use changes. **There is much work to be done.**

Over the last year VRC has conserved these special places, among many others:

- Locke Farm Field in West Brattleboro was purchased to protect a critical floodplain, and is now a community garden and recreation site;
- Holbrook Point, a 10-acre parcel on the Upper Connecticut River in Lemington was conserved and a new paddlers' campsite was created;
- A critical parcel at the confluence of Saxtons River and Bull Creek in Rockingham will be protected by a River Corridor Conservation Easement to allow Saxtons River to meander freely and restore its riparian buffer;
- An extremely popular swimming hole in Chittenden County was put on the market in early 2011. The VRC has negotiated a purchase agreement with the goal of acquiring this parcel and ensuring permanent public access.

You can be assured that your support will lead directly to on-the-ground results. Our high productivity and low overhead operations will continue. Please consider a generous gift to the Vermont River Conservancy to help ensure that our rivers remain places of beauty and joy for everyone. **Your donation with the generous match will help us excel in conserving shoreland access and help Vermont recover from Tropical Storm Irene.**

Sincerely,



Steve Libby, Executive Director

P.S. You may wish to consider a recurring contribution on a monthly or quarterly basis to extend your partnership with VRC and accelerate the pace of our work. Please see the enclosed envelope or go to our website, www.vermontriverconservancy.org, to sign up.