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Spring 2014 Newsletter

# Vermont River Conservancy

Conserving shorelands and access since 1995



Dear <<First Name>>,

Happy Spring! As we endure what we hope to be the final burst of chilly temperatures, we look ahead with excitement to a new, warmer season. A season in which we can experience all that Vermont rivers have to offer as snow gives way to water and white landscapes fade to brown then become brilliant green. However cold, this has been an exciting time at VRC, with new faces here in the office and beyond! We welcomed Betsy Catlin to the Board of Directors, Richarda Ericson to the staff as our new Office Manager, and Ann Ingerson to Watersheds United Vermont as the Program Coordinator. You can read more about these new additions below.

We have wrapped up work on some important projects, and we look to the work ahead of us with a great eagerness to continue protecting access to beloved recreation places surrounding some of Vermont's most treasured rivers.

In this newsletter, hear about what we have been working on these past few months - and please consider supporting our ongoing efforts to protect more river lands in Vermont. Together, we can protect the rivers and lands we love.

Happy Spring,

Steve Libby

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## Welcome to the Board Betsy!

Welcome Betsy! The Vermont River Conservancy is happy to welcome [Elizabeth \(Betsy\) Catlin](#) to our Board of Directors.

Betsy brings with her a valuable professional experience solving environmental problems in ways that also encourage positive economic development, as an attorney with Dunkiel and Saunders.

She enjoys the farmlands around her home in East Montpelier, has a love of horses, and is committed to the preservation of our open river lands.

We are so glad she has joined our Vermont River Conservancy team!



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## Welcome to our new Office Manager

Richarda Ericson began her role as VRC's new part-time Office Manager in February. Richarda comes with a passion for land conservation and experience in sustainable agriculture, environmental education, and building strong local communities. She has led outreach initiatives for schools and non-profits including the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, The Land Stewardship Project, the Northern Forest Alliance and Businesses for the Northern Forest. Richarda holds a Master's degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana. She lives in Montpelier with her husband and three boys.

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## Welcome Ann Ingerson to Watersheds United Vermont!

The Vermont River Conservancy is pleased to announce the new Program Coordinator for Watersheds United Vermont, Ann Ingerson. Ann brings passion and professional acumen to all of her diverse environmental pursuits, including teaching, land conservation, and wilderness adventure.



Ann will help the Vermont River Conservancy and the WUV Advisors launch Watersheds United Vermont, with the primary goal of connecting community-based watershed groups in Vermont with the knowledge, tools, and networks needed to more effectively enhance and protect the health of Vermont water resources. As the Watersheds United Vermont Coordinator, Ann will focus on learning more about the needs of watersheds groups, state-wide water quality partners, and how Watersheds United can be of service. She will be responsible for facilitating and helping implement the collective vision for improved coordination and collaboration among watersheds groups and partners around watershed issues in Vermont.



## Join Us for Green Up River Clean Up!

**May 3rd is Green Up Day in Vermont!** You are invited to join VRC in cleaning up a portion of the VRC conserved property along the North Branch of the Winooski River in Middlesex and Worcester. Come when you can, stay as long as your schedule allows, and help keep this beautiful stretch of river clean and healthy. VRC will provide green garbage bags and maps, and you can bring a boat or just mud boots or waders.

Please RSVP to Richarda Ericson at [vrcc@vermontriverconservancy.org](mailto:vrcc@vermontriverconservancy.org) or call 802-229-0820.

## Watersheds United Vermont Commences

A new organization has started up in Vermont that will help local watershed organizations be more effective by working together, sharing information, and gaining access to technical and financial resources. Watersheds United Vermont (WUV) has been several years in the making, as representatives of local watershed groups have met together to talk about their challenges and how a state-wide network might support their work. Members of the new organization promote healthy waterways through education, water monitoring, and restoration projects such as planting tree buffers or controlling invasive species.

Severe storms like hurricane Irene create stresses for both river systems and volunteer networks, and unfortunately it seems that climate change could make those events the new normal. In addition, stubborn water quality problems - that stem from practices spread across the landscape rather than single wastewater pipes - are raising public awareness that Vermont's streams and rivers are not as healthy as we might wish. These are the types of issues WUV is collectively addressing, with the knowledge that issues of this scale will require collaboration and unified efforts.

WUV has been generously funded by Ben and Jerry's, the Lintilhac Foundation, and Vermont Community Foundation. We are excited about the work ahead of us and look forward to seeing what we can accomplish when we unite for healthier waterways. Please check out our new website at [www.watershedsunitedvt.org](http://www.watershedsunitedvt.org).

**WUV Contact Information:** For information or to offer suggestions, please contact Ann Ingerson, Program Coordinator, [watershedsunited@gmail.com](mailto:watershedsunited@gmail.com).



## Lyman Falls Celebration and Paddle

Saturday May 31st, Columbia NH

*12:00-1:00 Ceremony*

*1:30-3:30 Paddle*

On Saturday May 31st, the Vermont River Conservancy will be [hosting a gathering](#) at Lyman Falls in Columbia, New Hampshire, followed by a paddle on a scenic section of the Connecticut River. Join us to celebrate the conservation of this important riparian land, traditional fishing access, and waypoint along the Connecticut River Paddlers' Trail! Following a ceremony will be a group paddle among some of the most scenic waters along the river. For more information and to RSVP, e-mail [noah@vermontriverconservancy](mailto:noah@vermontriverconservancy)

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## VRC's Recent Project

## on the Missisquoi in Westfield

The Vermont River Conservancy and Ed and Margaret Kearney of Westfield recently worked together to establish a River Corridor Easement on 17 acres of the Kearney's former farm land along the Missisquoi River. This easement was completed in January, and has helped create a stable environment in which the river can establish a natural course, thereby creating a healthy river system up and down stream of this land.

Until August of 2011, the Kearney's grew corn on their land along the Missisquoi River. The rich agricultural soils had been formed by river flooding over thousands of years, and growing crops here was part of their farm operation. But Tropical Storm Irene changed the river's course, and the Kearney's ability to farm this land. Floods from Irene cut a new channel for the Missisquoi River, depositing sand and making more than half of the land inaccessible.

As this parcel transitions from agriculture to active river corridor, the movements of the Missisquoi River across the land can be seen. The old river channel is now full of sediment and the water has shifted to a new channel with good access to its floodplain. The banks along the new river channel will be planted with native vegetation to increase the stability of the banks, reduce erosion, and support a healthy Missisquoi.

This easement was an important step towards allowing the river to move the way it naturally needs to over time. VRC is pleased to have helped provide an opportunity for the land to slowly transition back to a floodplain forest, and we are grateful for a grant from the State of Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation to help fund this important work.



**ONION RIVER RACE**  
SAT. JUNE 7<sup>TH</sup>  
BOLTON-RICHMOND  
A RALLY FOR RIVER ACCESS  
AND RESTORATION

REGISTER AT: [WWW.ONIONRIVERACE.US](http://WWW.ONIONRIVERACE.US)

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INCLUDES SHUTTLE SERVICE  
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MAY 31<sup>ST</sup>

VRC FRIENDS OF THE *Winooski* UMIAK Outdoor Outfitters

## Onion River Race: Saturday June 7th

The 1st Annual **Onion River Race** will be held on Saturday June 7th! Join us on a ten mile race from Bolton to Richmond, through a scenic cut in the Green Mountains. Shuttle service will be provided. Open to experienced racers and the casual paddler alike. Recruit your family, friends and co-workers for a day of excitement, camaraderie, food, and fun! Proceeds from the race will support projects to improve public access and riparian land restoration in the watershed. For more information, to register, or to sign-up as a volunteer, visit [www.onionriverrace.us](http://www.onionriverrace.us). Participation is limited – sign-up today!

**Donate Now!**



Please consider making a donation to the Vermont River Conservancy. Every donation is critical in helping us continue to protect important lands along the waters of Vermont. Thank you!



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Vermont River Conservancy is a 501(c)(3); all donations are tax deductible.

29 Main St. Suite 11, Montpelier VT 05602 <http://vermontriverconservancy.org>  
802-229-0820