

March 2013 Newsletter

Vermont River Conservancy

Conserving shorelands and access since 1995



Dear VRC,

Snow has blanketed our forests and fields this winter, and will soon fill our rivers and replenish our groundwaters with the endless cycle of water through our landscape. How we observe, respect and enjoy this continual flow is for each of us to decide: ice fishing, syruping, kayaking or watching out our window.

But let us do more than observe and enjoy the waters around us. In the small Vermont River Conservancy office in Montpelier we've been planning and preparing for protecting more of our riverlands and floodplains in 2013 - a more critical mission than ever:

- We had a successful [2012 Annual Appeal](#) - thank you so much to all who donated to help support this important work;
- We've collaborated with staff throughout the Agency of Natural Resources and at other land conservation organizations to continue developing a state-wide focus on improving Vermont's flood resiliency through conservation of prioritized riverlands;
- We've continued discussions with Towns and landowners about using FEMA funds to conserve properties flooded by Tropical Storm Irene;
- We've written and received many grants to continue expanding camping and access along the [CT River Paddlers' Trail](#) - and are exploring the creation of a [Winooski River Paddlers' Trail](#);
- And, we continue developing conservation projects around Vermont. Learn more about them in this newsletter!

The waters continue flowing, and we keep protecting public access to enjoy Vermont's waters, and conserving the vital ecological functions of our floodplains and riparian buffers.

Come visit us to learn more about our work, in person or [online](#).

See you soon,
Steve Libby, Executive Director



Now is the time to help protect public access to Journey's End!

The time is now to help protect permanent public access to [Journey's End](#), a spectacular swimming hole and waterfall on Foote Brook in Johnson.

With support from you, the 30 acres surrounding Journey's End will become a protected natural area instead of a private house lot. Together, we can protect this important habitat for deer, moose, bear and trout. This project will permanently protect nearly half a mile of superb fishing waters and guarantee public access for anglers of all ages.

The VRC has raised \$172,250 of the funds it needs to protect the 30-acre parcel. Help us raise the remaining \$50,880 by March 15. With your help we can keep this Johnson treasure a pristine nature refuge for people and wildlife alike as part of the Town of Johnson's recreational lands.



We cannot protect Journey's End without your help. The Vermont River Conservancy is accepting donations in any amount to ensure this project can be completed soon. [Please donate today.](#)

2 parcels just conserved on the Neshobe River!

Dilts

6 acres of the [Dilts](#) property was dramatically impacted by Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011, when the Neshobe River flooded these wooded floodplain forests.



This area functioned properly as a floodplain forest by collecting organic debris, sediment and slowing down flood waters, lessening floodwater impacts to downstream Brandon.

This parcel could have been cleared or developed in the future, but with the help of thoughtful landowners, VRC is ensuring the river will be allowed to move freely and the essential functions of the floodplain forest are protected.

Funded by the [VT Agency of Natural Resources Ecosystem Restoration Grant program](#).

Nop

After extensive flooding from Tropical Storm Irene, the Nop brothers found some of their crop fields were impossible to keep farming. The Nop brothers decided to protect the Neshobe River's natural meandering and flooding processes while protecting downstream infrastructure by conserving these 26 acres.

Located adjacent to the Dilts property, these two conserved parcels will help ensure the Neshobe has open land to flood so the river's energy can dissipate before entering the downstream village of Brandon.



Funded by the [VT Agency of Natural Resources Ecosystem Restoration Grant program](#).

Partnership creates Public Access on the Winooski River in Plainfield

Working with local volunteers and the tenth grade class from the Cabot School, VRC transformed the backyard of the Plainfield Coop into an official river access for paddlers to the [Winooski River](#).

The project, a partnership with the [Friends of the Winooski River](#), is part of an initiative to develop a formal recreation trail on the Winooski River. The Winooski River is becoming increasingly popular as a recreation destination, but many parts of the river lack adequate access. In addition, many portages around dams and rapids have not been developed or are in need of revitalization.

As part of a [Lake Champlain Basin Program](#) grant, VRC also will host a meeting of area

stakeholders to discuss forming a river-wide partnership focused on establishing a Winooski River Paddlers' Trail.



VRC & VLT partner with landowners to create riparian buffers on the Lamoille River

We are partnering with the [Vermont Land Trust](#) and willing landowners to create a more ecologically robust and [flood resilient Lamoille River](#) through riparian buffers. Creating riparian buffers upstream can help improve water quality downstream, including direct benefits for Lake Champlain. The former power company Central Vermont Public Service Corporation, now Green Mountain Power, is helping fund feasibility research into expanding naturally vegetated riparian buffers in areas impacted by their operations.

Initial mapping of the targeted area has identified over thirty high priority parcels for creating riparian buffers - many on farm land already conserved by the Vermont Land Trust.

Funding for this project is provided by [Central Vermont Public Service Corporation \(CVPS\)](#) through the [VT Agency of Natural Resources Ecosystem Restoration Grant program](#), and the [Vermont Community Foundation](#)'s Lake Champlain Tributaries Restoration grants.

Visit our conserved sites: online and in person!



page!

To make planning your next river trip even easier, we have redesigned our completed project pages to help you find swimming holes, paddling put-ins, and fishing areas near you! Check out our new [project list](#) page, listing all of our projects by project type, or the more user friendly interactive [map](#)

River Currents

- Float down the CT River Paddlers' Trail with VRC and host Willem Lange on NH Public television's [Windows to the Wild show](#).
- Watch [Bill Doyle's Interview with Stephan Syz](#) to learn more about VRC's mission and work.
- Attend the [Upstream-Downtown Symposium](#) to learn about planning and design practices that have built flood resiliency into communities across the globe and their relevancy for Vermont Towns. Monday April 8, 2013, 7pm. ECHO Lake Aquarium.

News from the Board of Directors



We are pleased to welcome [Jeffrey Nelson](#) to the VRC board! Jeffrey's extensive professional background in geology and civil engineering, and experience with critical water resources assessments, restoration and permitting matters will be a great asset to furthering our goals and enhancing environmental outcomes around Vermont.

Many thanks to Keith Jones for his 6 years of service on the VRC board and for providing exemplary support to our organization as board Secretary. Keith will continue to advance VRC's mission in his new position as an Advisor. Congratulations to the Jones family on the birth of their new son, Cole.

We extend a big welcome to Stephan Syz as the new Secretary of the VRC board. Stephan helped found VRC in 1995 and will continue to advance its mission in his new role. Thank you Stephan!

Get the latest new from Vermont River Conservancy!!

Now you can now find out about our conservation projects without delay: [Friend us](#) or [Like us](#) on Facebook, and [follow us](#) on Twitter.

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

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