



Connecticut River Watershed Council

2009 Annual Report





Annual Report 2009

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Annual Report

Writing: Karl Meyer, John Sinton &
Chelsea Gwyther
Editorial Advisors: John Sinton
Alan Ternes & Ed Gray
Design: Chelsea Gwyther

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shed Council. CRWC is a citizen
advocate for protecting the Con-
necticut River and its four-state
watershed. CRWC is a 501(c)3.
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Map: Trust for Public Land

John Reiff



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Many of my fondest childhood memories involve water. I grew up alongside the Huron River and spent afternoons exploring the streams and woods near my house with my friends and trusty dog, Grapes. There were lazy days in the summer spent cooling off at Halfmoon Lake. One year we took a trip to the Great Lakes and I spent hours gathering rocks in the frigid water until my lips turned blue. Now I work to ensure my own daughters have an opportunity for the kinds of experiences that defined my childhood.

Once you have rolled up your pants to walk barefoot through a stream, you have a deeper appreciation for why we need healthy rivers. But healthy rivers and clean water depend on people not only appreciating their importance but taking action and supporting our cause. And that's where the Connecticut River Watershed Council comes in.

Since 1952 CRWC has been the guardian of the Connecticut, as well as the Green, White, Eightmile, Ashuelot, Scantic, and all the other waterways of our 11,000 square mile watershed. As you will read on the pages that follow, we have held polluters accountable, collaborated to reconnect migratory fish pathways, and joined with our neighbors to clean up over 85 tons of trash fouling our waterways. Your help has made all of this possible.

I hope you have many opportunities to create your own lasting memories enjoying our wonderful rivers. Thanks for your support.

Chelsea Gwyther
Executive Director



"I teach a math and science enrichment group to 4th-6th graders, and I will use your "Vermont Yankee Thermal Pollution" article in our current events discussion this week." – Lou Maresca, W. Lebanon, New Hampshire

Al Braden

Vermont Yankee

Other than our Source to Sea Cleanup, nothing has generated more recent public interest in CRWC's work than problems at Entergy's Vermont Yankee nuclear plant at Vernon. While CRWC has been protesting tritium leaks from the plant, first reported in January 2010, the year 2009 was devoted to major appeals against the plant's thermal pollution of the Connecticut.

Since Vermont Yankee was first granted permission to increase water temperatures of the Connecticut River in 1991, we have witnessed a 99+% decline in the number of American shad that have used the fish ladder to cross over Vernon Dam. In 1992 the shad count was 37,000. In 2009 it was a paltry 19 (nineteen) fish.

In 2009 we teamed up with the Natural Resources and Environmental Law Clinic at Vermont Law School, Trout Unlimited, and Citizen Awareness Network to fight the hot-water discharge at Vermont

Yankee, beginning with a roll-back of the one-degree temperature increase the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) granted Entergy in 2006. The State Supreme Court ruled largely in Entergy's favor. We are awaiting a revised permit from ANR, which will allow us to address the underlying permit conditions, not just the one-degree amendment.

In this David vs. Goliath battle, CRWC has been blessed with significant financial support from the Canaday Family Charitable Trust and the Sarah K. de Coizart Article TENTH Perpetual Charitable Trust, as well as grants from the Lintilhac Foundation and the Conservation and Research Foundation. Their generous support will allow us to continue our work to hold Entergy accountable for their impact on the Connecticut River.

Contact David Deen at ddeen@ctriver.org or 802-869-2792 for more information.

FERC licensing projects

As a watershed-wide river advocate and stakeholder on the Connecticut River, CRWC and our Upper Valley river steward David Deen, in particular, faced a mountain of work in 2009, focusing on re-licensing proposals from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

Why the rush of projects? David has noted that whenever energy issues attain national attention, we get a new group of hydro-entrepreneurs who try to revive small hydro-electric dam projects. These are not simple projects, however, and if the entrepreneurs lack experience or capital their dams are in danger of not only having significant conservation impacts, but going bust and falling into disrepair. There are no penalties for abandoning what become “zombie” dams, and without vigilant oversight, we can expect this to occur over the next several years. These are several of the projects David has been tracking in Vermont and New Hampshire:



David Deen

Ashuelot River Dam

The owners of dams at North Hartland and Dodge Falls on the main stem and two Ashuelot River dams have requested “low-impact” certification from the Low Impact Hydro Institute, which would allow owners to get higher prices for the power they produce. We have asked that fish passage be required as part of that certification and that flowing water be returned to the stream bed at the North Hartland dam.



David Deen

Canaan Dam

We want to secure fish passage at the Canaan Hydroelectric facility in Canaan, Vermont and are negotiating for it with partners Trout Unlimited and both states’ conservation agencies.



David Deen

Mascoma Lake Dam

A license application was filed for a hydro facility at the Mascoma Lake Dam in Enfield, New Hampshire.



David Deen

Townshend Dam

The owners of dams at Ball Mountain and Townshend on the West River in southern Vermont would like to install hydro stations at the dam sites. CRWC’s partners are the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Vermont Department of Conservation and the Windham Regional Commission.

Restoration

"Thank you for taking such a comprehensive and scientific approach to preserving our beautiful river." – Michael Zimmerman, Middleboro, Massachusetts

Manhan River fish ladder

After many years of effort, the Manhan River fish ladder in Easthampton, MA will come to fruition in 2010. This project will provide anadromous fish access to roughly 11 miles on both branches of the Manhan River, as well as spawning area available in the many tributaries that join the river within that corridor. The Manhan River is a tributary to the Connecticut River and runs from the Oxbow in Easthampton to Westhampton.

CRWC is contributing \$9,200 in grant funding from NiSource to the City of Easthampton for construction of the fish ladder. The fish ladder will be constructed on the right abutment of the Manhan River Dam in order to allow fish passage to spawning areas upstream in the Manhan River. An additional structure constructed adjacent to the fishway will be operational during times of downstream migration. Both structures will have mechanisms through which adequate flows can be maintained and controlled.

You can see a video about the project at www.ctriver.org (click on our Restoration Program page for the video link).

Scantic River feasibility study

CRWC has requested that the Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) consider removal of the Spring-born Dam as a viable option in restoring healthy anadromous fish runs to the Scantic. While CRWC was successful in providing engineering expertise and support that enabled the DEP to view removal as a viable option, soil contamination was discovered at the site and deemed to need expensive remediation prior to the dam's removal. Project partners applied for soil remediation grants but did not secure the necessary funding, making dam removal cost-prohibitive. CRWC will remain an active partner to ensure the best possible outcome for the fisheries impacted by this dam.

Ashuelot River dam removal

CRWC continues to work on the removal of the Homestead Woolen Mills Dam on the Ashuelot River in West Swanzey, NH. Once the dam is gone, 27 river miles will be newly freed to the benefit of species that include American shad, American eel, blueback herring, sea lamprey and a host of other inhabitants.

Mattabesset River fishway

Final design plans for a fishway at the StanChem Dam, pictured at right, on the Mattabesset River in Berlin, CT have been completed and a portion of the money required for construction has been procured. New grant requests will go out in 2010 to help bring this project to fruition. This will reopen the entire historic habitat range for American shad on the Mattabesset. It should also be a boost to migrating alewife, blueback herring, and sea lamprey, plus a host of other aquatic species.



Once the fishway is built, 16.5 miles of habitat on the Mattabesset will be restored.



Fuss & O'Neill

Above: Renderings of what engineers expect the Green River will look like post-dam removal at the Mill Street dam (left) and Wiley & Russell dam (right). Top: Photos of the Green River with the dams in place.

Green River Ecosystem Restoration Project, Greenfield, MA

The removal of two dams forming the first barriers on the Green River, as well as fishway construction on two upper dams, will ultimately restore 94 miles of habitat in Massachusetts and Vermont. Removal of the two barriers in Greenfield, MA could come as early as 2011. Sea lamprey, American eel, American shad, blueback herring, and Atlantic salmon will be the chief beneficiaries, but amphibians, turtles, and invertebrates will also benefit from the restoration work. Project partners include the Town of Greenfield, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin. (NOAA) Open Rivers Initiative, FishAmerica Foundation, American Sportfishing Assoc., US Fish & Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and Coastal Program, the Franklin Fund of the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, Massachusetts Environmental Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and American Rivers—NOAA Community-based Restoration Program.

At the January public meeting to review dam removal preliminary designs, some 75 people had the opportunity to comment and ask questions about sediment quality, fish passage, historical interests, erosion, and more. The preliminary design report and plans are available at the Greenfield Public Library, Greenfield Town Hall and at www.ctriver.org. Project partners are continuing to work to complete additional analyses as part of the final design.

We expect to have final design and permits in place by this summer. Construction and dam removal are expected to take place in 2011 – 2012, depending on when funding is received. Once construction is complete, monitoring for water quality and aquatic species will follow for 3–5 years.

Contact Migratory Fisheries Restoration Director Brian Eltz by email at beltz@ctriver.org or by phone at 860-704-0057.

Outreach & Education

"I'm glad I have lived long enough to see the Great River so much cleaner and better protected, compared to its polluted condition when I first cruised on it in 1927."

– Ellsworth S. Grant, Bloomfield, Connecticut

A triumphant Source to Sea Cleanup: we wished the rains away

It was mighty murky as we went into final preparations for last October's Source to Sea Cleanup. Heavy rains were on their way and so were thousands of volunteers. The situation looked grim, but cancelling was the last thing imaginable. It just hasn't happened! Crossing our fingers we put our trust in the hands of dedicated volunteers and the weather gods. We sent out word we were going ahead—in the face of projected thunderstorms and a one-inch soaking—but we made it clear that volunteer team leaders should base their participation decision on safety, and what was happening with weather in their watershed.

In the end, over 2,000 intrepid, river volunteers turn out, rainy and damp as it was. And almost magically, most of those early morning rains subsided. No thunderstorms were reported and the bulk of the rain held off until most work was finished. From tributaries near the N.H. border with Quebec, to tidewater sites along the Connecticut's mouth, volunteers from 68 groups pulled in 85 tons of illicitly discarded machinery, debris and trash along the basin's riverbanks. That take included 597 discarded tires, and a set of dentures!

Save the date: October 2, 2010. Contact us at cleanup@ctriver.org or 413-772-2020 to learn how to participate in or sponsor the 14th annual Source to Sea Cleanup.



River songs hit community chord

On a lovely October afternoon, 150 people from up and down the watershed filed into the 2nd Congregational Church on Greenfield's Court Square, across from CRWC Headquarters. They'd arrived in the name of river music, fun, and to see who would claim first prize in the 2nd Living Along the River songwriting contest. Sparkie Allison of Chicopee, MA, performed "River Daze," the song reverie which was selected for the contest's first prize. Ms. Allison's songwriting broke through a crowd of some three dozen original entries, songs that had come from every state in the watershed.

Second place went to Charlie Conant for his nuanced ballad on the Connecticut's changing seasons, "Ice Out." Singer/songwriter and physician Russ Thomas took third place for his thoughtfully whimsical treatment of the predicament facing an endangered freshwater bivalve on the river, "Russell the Dwarf Wedgemussel," which also polled as "audience favorite."

Water Quality Testing Room

Community water quality testing has been a CRWC goal since 2005, when Executive Director Chelsea Gwyther began. This volunteer-based facility will be a central site where watershed organizations can bring water samples, have them processed, and quickly get critical water

quality information posted for the public and public decision-makers.

For the past several years CRWC has nurtured our home-grown Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program, using equipment on loan from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to do in-stream analysis of dissolved oxygen, water temperature, conductivity, and clarity. New this year is our partnership with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and University of Massachusetts Water Resources Research Center to continue and expand the bacteria testing work they started under an EPA Targeted Watershed Grant several years ago.

Thanks to funding from Mass DEP, CRWC and our partners will be conducting bacteria monitoring at sites on the Connecticut River in Massachusetts, and along several tributaries with suspected bacteria problems. These data will fill in big gaps in several watershed communities—offering them up-to-date information on whether a particular river or stream is safe to swim, fish, or paddle in.

Construction of the water testing facility and sampling is funded through generous grants from Northeast Utilities, Massachusetts Environmental Trust, the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, Massachusetts DEP, the Coca Cola Foundation, FirstLight Power, the Springfield Naturalist Club, and TransCanada.

Source to Sea Cleanup Photo Contest

Rich Tanguay of Enfield took top honors with his photo "Garbage Barge," pictured at left. As Rich explains, the barge was made by fastening two canoes together with plywood across the top. Michael Dynia's photo "Community Spirit" took second place.

The photo contest was held in partnership with the River of Words in the Central Connecticut River Valley, whose mission is to connect kids to their watersheds and their imaginations. Visit them online at www.riverofwords.org to learn more.

The River connects us

"Over several summers we kayaked the length of the river, stunned by its beauty and peace. Your guide to the river was our bible – thank you!"

– Peter & Christina Gibbons, Brattleboro, VT

CRWC 2009 Annual Meeting

Prior to the start of our 57th annual meeting, held on August 30th, supporters joined CRWC Trustee and *Boating Guide* co-author John Sinton, pictured at left, for a paddle on the Connecticut.



The weather, crowd, silent auction, hors d'oeuvres, and guest speakers all blended into

a lovely summer day on the banks of the Connecticut at the Greater Hartford Jaycees

Community Boathouse. As keynote speaker David Leff, author and past Deputy Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, told the attendees "When it comes to river protection, Connecticut River Watershed Council is more than just a name. It's a bold statement, a rallying cry, a strategy even." In all, we could not have asked for a better day, or a better group of CRWC supporters.



Elizabeth Farnsworth

Wendy Sinton

Upper Valley Events

The mid-June house party hosted by Nat Tripp, Reeve Lindbergh, and Howard Dean was a great success. Many folks took time out to celebrate our shared river and listen to stories and anecdotes pertaining to Nat's insightful 2006 book, *Confluence: A River, The Environment, Politics & The Fate of All Humanity*, with a forward by



Howard Dean. Signed copies of the books were sold to benefit CRWC.

Trustee Hooker Talcott, pictured below, and his wife Jane, hosted a gathering at the Waterford Springs Assoc. for their neighbors and friends. Presentations by River Steward David Deen and Director Chelsea Gwyther explored issues facing the Connecticut and the afternoon wrapped up with an engaging presentation about Moore Dam by CRWC trustee and Transcanada employee Ken Alton.



John Sinton

Richard Ewald

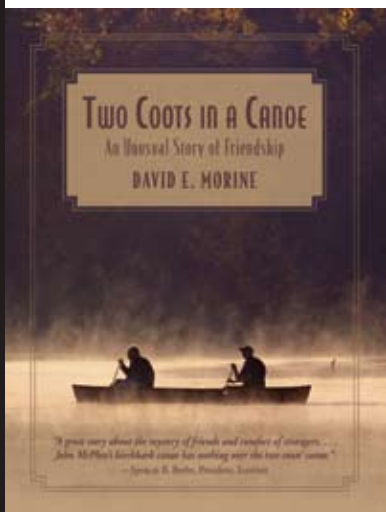
New Volunteer Program

Our new Upper Valley Eyes and Ears Program produced results in October when a trained volunteer discovered an intact rusted barrel full of liquid. David Deen called the state and escorted a Vermont hazardous materials specialist to the site. Ultimately, the EPA was called in and spent two days building a ramp to access and secure the container (see photo at right). EPA then double-packed the barrel to prevent puncture, and shipped it to a state-owned gravel pit where it was secured while tests on the contents were completed. The content analysis showed the barrel was filled with oil and seemingly mixed with



pesticides, a substance in a unique barrel that has never been seen before even by experts at EPA. Various EPA reports are at: http://www.epaos.org/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=5529.

David Deen



Two Coots in a Canoe: An Unusual Story of Friendship

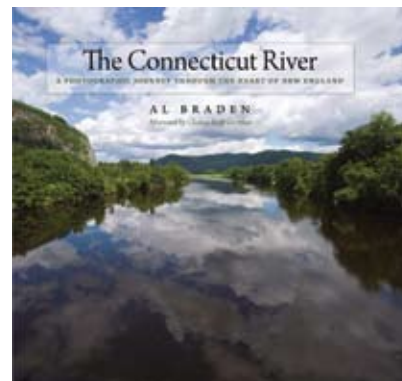
David Morine's account of his 2003 canoe run down the Connecticut with his old college buddy Ramsay Heard uncorks an array of riparian adventures. From the

outset they pledge to rely on the kindness of strangers to shelter them as they ply their way downstream. They turned to CRWC to spread the word and many generous hosts up and down river stepped forward to help the pair. What this brings about naturally is a series of encounters with the river's towns, its histories, wildlife, and many of the people deeply involved in its conservation. Ultimately, it leads the travelers, and those of us along for the journey, into a deeper understanding of a river's role in friendship and community.

The Connecticut River: A Photographic Journey through the Heart of New England

It's a feast for the eyes. On every page Al Braden spreads the riches of the Connecticut before you with the uncommon clarity of an artist's eye, rendered with the latest in print technology. Images of tranquil streams and lush northern forests greet the senses, photos of brimming tides, historic bridges, towns and farms, and the Connecticut River roaring in spring freshet, all await.

But this is not just a call to enjoy our river's inherent beauty, it's a call to care for it. In the afterward, *This Place is Worth Defending*, CRWC Executive Director Chelsea Gwyther gives the context in which these inspiring photographs can serve to help protect the watershed. Both books, and CRWC's *Boating Guide*, can be purchased at www.ctriver.org.



Spotlight on People

Two Stalwarts from Connecticut: Sue Merrow and Raul de Brigard

Sue Merrow, of E. Haddam, and Raul de Brigard of Haddam, have anchored CRWC's efforts in the state of Connecticut since they joined our Board of Trustees, Sue in 2003 and Raul in 2002. Raul, who



John Sinton

will be given a President's Award in 2010 from the Rockfall Foundation, one of Connecticut's oldest environmental organizations, has worked most of his life to conserve land and enhance environmental quality in our watershed. Trained as an architect and land-use planner at UCLA and Harvard, he spent most of his career with Northeast Utilities, as head of land management in the 70's, then with hydro problems in the 80's and 90's. Meanwhile, he volunteered with many local and regional organizations, co-chairing the Connecticut Rivers Advisory Commission, where he spearheaded several river protection bills, and he's currently a member of the Connecticut River

Gateway Commission, the Connecticut River Assembly, and The Trust for Public Land's state Advisory Board. His most recent activity has been the land conservation project at the site of the decommissioned Connecticut Yankee nuclear plant.

Sue, who started out as a high school teacher in Bloomfield, after graduating from Tufts, experienced the 60's "back-to-the-land" movement first hand before she settled down in E. Haddam, where she found herself immersed in environmental affairs, so much so that she joined the Sierra Club, where she became local chapter head. She was elected to the national Board of the Sierra Club in 1985 and became the national president in 1990, after which she served for 12 years as head selectman of her town. In 1991, she wrote *One for the Earth: The Journal of a Sierra Club President*, with a forward by Al Gore. Among her most memorable successes in the watershed was helping gain Wild and Scenic River status for the Eightmile River in 2008. Sue currently lobbies at the Connecticut General Assembly for environmental groups and serves as co-chair of 1,000 Friends of Connecticut.

Welcome to New CRWC Staff Members: Jacqueline Talbot and Brian Eltz



Ann Kranmer

for climate change initiatives and fostering environmental leadership among youth. A long-time Connecticut resident, Jacqueline has also lived in the U.K. and Africa.

Jacqueline Talbot joins CRWC as River Steward for the Connecticut portion of the watershed. Jacqueline has recently worked with Rivers Alliance of Connecticut and the Shepaug River Watershed Coalition, and has built grassroots support

Brian Eltz joins CRWC as its Migratory Fisheries Restoration Director. Brian, who works part-time, is also a Conservation Assistant with the Town of Greenwich Conservation Commission. Brian has worked with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's Inland Fisheries Division and the Conte Anadromous Fish Research Laboratory. Both Jacqueline and Brian will work out of our Middletown, Connecticut office.



Ann Kranmer

Elisabeth Cianciola and CRWC Friends

We want to recognize Elisabeth Cianciola's special contribution to CRWC last year in her role as interim river steward in Connecticut. After steward Megan Hearne left for North Carolina, Elisabeth filled in as a part-timer, ably and with enthusiasm. Back in 2007, Megan hired Elisabeth to assist with Source to Sea Cleanup efforts, so she already knew some of the ropes. It's thanks to Elisabeth, for example, that a mass of invasive shrubs, chiefly Japanese barberry, was removed from CRWC's Spaulding Pond track with help of our partner, the Norfolk Land Trust, and three great volunteers from the University of Connecticut. Elisabeth provided insightful public comments on Connecticut water quality standards and streamflow regulations, and a proposed rail line. She also moved CRWC's Middletown office to a new space within the deKoven House. We wish her luck in the future.

Eric TeVelde, CRWC's Law Extern

In the fall of 2009, CRWC River Steward Andrea Donlon worked with extern Eric TeVelde, a Western New England College law student, to assess whether any governmental agency or nonprofit was monitoring pharmaceuticals and toxic substances that get discharged in industrial, municipal, and household sewage. Eric, whose day job is in pharmaceutical sales, wrote a research paper entitled "Connecticut River Emergent Contaminants and the Clean Water Act," in which he looked into pathways through which drugs and chemicals enter our rivers, and how we can legally address such discharges. Eric's conclusion was that, while no agency currently regulates the discharge of these emerging contaminants in our waste streams, we do, in fact, have legal regulatory solutions through three laws: the Clean Water Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and Toxic Substances Control Act. For more information, contact Andrea Donlon at adonlon@ctriver.org.



Al Braden

It's hard to imagine the Connecticut River without Al Braden's famous photos of the river flashing before one's eyes. Al's camera has captured the whole river from source to sea, its photos most recently published in his magnificent 2009 book, *The Connecticut River: A Journey through the Heart of New England*. His generosity has allowed us to use the photos on our website and in our publications, many of which are in our recently revised *Boating Guide*.

Though he now lives in Texas, Al's decades living in Vermont and New Hampshire brought him a love of this river and its landscape that is tangible in all his work. We are thankful for Al's longstanding work on behalf of the river and the Watershed Council. Al's life has been our gift.

Financial Statement

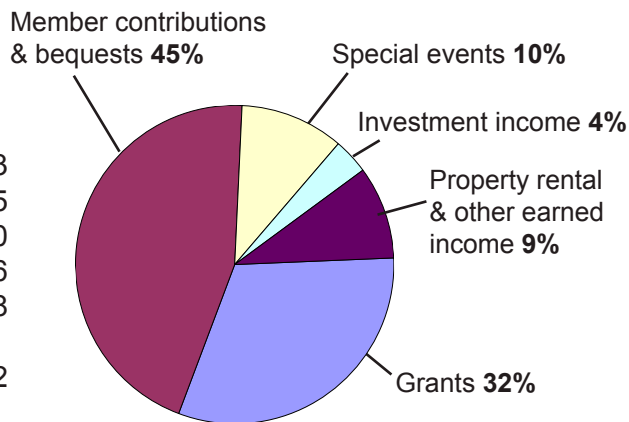


July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009

Income

Grants Awarded	202,673
Membership, Contributions & Bequests	287,915
Special Events	67,760
Investment Income	23,626
Property Rental & Other Earned Income	60,958

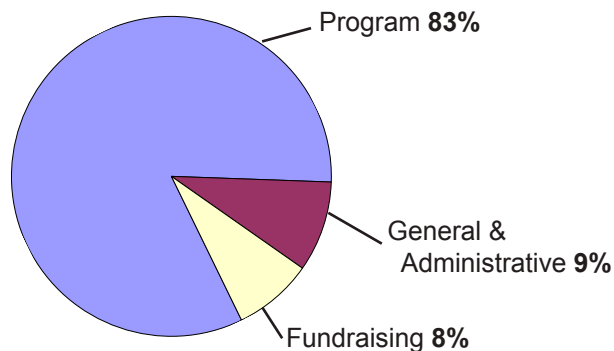
TOTAL INCOME \$642,932



Expense


Program	554,993
General Administration	61,735
Fundraising	54,125

TOTAL EXPENSES \$670,853



Net Assets beginning of year	1,789,526
Net Assets end of year	1,736,056

Connecticut River Watershed Council's complete audited financial statements are available upon request.

CRWC is a member of  EarthShare New England

Steve Shelasky aka shelshots

CRWC Supporters

Ann Krammer



CRWC staff gather in front of our Greenfield, MA office. From top left: Alan Morgan, Jacqueline Talbot, David Deen, Brian Eltz, Andrea Donlon, Chelsea Gwyther, Pat LaMountain, Richard Ewald.

The following individuals, businesses and foundations provided CRWC with leadership support:

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Alan & Janet Abel
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 Lee Badgett & Elizabeth Silver
 Bill & Kathy Baldasaro
 Gayle Blakeslee
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 Joan Burchenal
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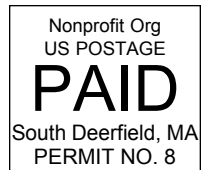
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 Conservation & Research Found.
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www.ctriver.org



Our Mission:

CRWC works to protect the watershed from source to sea. From alpine forests to tidal estuaries, rural farmlands to urban riverfronts, spotted salamanders to bald eagles, and mussels to salmon, the Connecticut River watershed unites a diversity of habitats, communities and resources. As stewards of this heritage, we celebrate our four-state treasure and collaborate, educate, organize, restore, and intervene to preserve the health of the whole watershed for generations to come. The river connects us.

Front cover: Rich Tanguay
Back cover: David Govatski