

Spring 2017

THE Voice

OF THE RIVER

& 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Shoring Up the River for 40 Years
by Rachel Schneider, Outreach Manager

Have you heard the news today? (Oh, boy...) It seems anytime opening a newspaper, turning on the evening report, or daring a glance at a news-feed, you're met with bad news. Certainly so for anyone who concerns themselves with nature, science and the environment. Under a deluge of threats, catastrophes and uncertainties, it can be hard not to become numbed or paralyzed into inaction. As our sea level rises, this particular sea of challenges continues growing at an alarming rate. What, against an oncoming current of problems, can one person do? As it turns out, one person can do a great deal. We are now in our fortieth year of operation and we've seen firsthand an individual's power for change.

Our strength is in those who are out in the community spreading the mission, educating and investing time and energy to help the river. As our Herring Count volunteers know, every fish that makes its way against the river's flow to reach spawning grounds counts. So does every action by every person. We cannot heap an expectation of world-shifting change onto one set of shoulders, but we also know firsthand the tremendous difference one person can make.



The individuals whom we've chosen to highlight and honor in this edition of our newsletter are changemakers. All of them came to the river and the organization in their own unique ways and have made their presence felt with their personalities and their contributions. While recognizing these exemplary people, know that they also represent many more volunteers and supporters. At Ipswich River Watershed Association we rely on our members, our volunteers and our community to inspire each other.

Volunteers William Holton and Don Ruzecki build a kiosk for the Peatfield Street Landing in Ipswich. By Fall 2017, we will have a network of 15 informational kiosks covering the most popular lands along the Ipswich River.



Karen Sawyer, Kim Honetschlager, Chris Thompson and Ed Crowley do battle with logs during a River Clean Up.

Our accomplishments and all our work are fueled, and made possible, by all of you.

For forty years, you've fostered a love for the river and its wildlife by bringing others out on the water and into the woods. You've strengthened our base of knowledge by monitoring the river and its wildlife. More recently, when plans for a pipeline threatened, you raised your voices against it. You stepped up again when the drought brought the river low.

There is more to be done. Our waters continue to be at risk from pollution: through expanding the reach of the *Greenscapes North Shore* program we aim to help communities with controlling polluted runoff and unnecessary outdoor water use. The drought's effects were wide-reaching: we need to continue our monitoring efforts and persevere in maintaining the river's flow. The future of the EPA is uncertain and the MA Department of Environmental Protection is underfunded: advocacy in the coming years will be key to ensuring our natural resources are protected.

We are lucky to have grown from a base of support filled with generous, passionate and ingenuitive people. That the Ipswich River is viewed as a gem of the North Shore is because people like those in the articles to follow have treasured it like one. (We hope that their care and stewardship will be taken on and magnified.) To all of you who have shored us up over these forty years, thank you. Together we are the Voice of the River.



40 Cheers to Our Boots on the Ground

As a small organization with a big job to do, volunteers have always been the real strength of our organization. We are proud to dedicate this issue to the many volunteers who have been working tirelessly to protect the river. From our founding members whose foresight created our association forty years ago to the more than 40 RiverWatch monitors who, with great care, faithfully test the river every month come rain or shine, we thank you. Our very existence is owed to these committed individuals.

Indeed, more than 100 of you hold regular volunteer positions here at Ipswich River. You do so much: counting fish, patrolling the river for pollution, serving on committees, helping with mailings, maintaining trails at Riverbend and everything in between. Along with our regular volunteers, many more of you help out from time to time each year. Without you, we couldn't possibly do our jobs and the river would be far worse off.

Perhaps more than anything else, our growing community of river protectors provides inspiration. Being part of such a large group of river advocates moves us all to work even harder. Your dedication, year after year, drives us to keep protecting the river for future generations. Thanks largely to our many boots on the ground the river is in good hands.

WAYNE

Wayne Castonguay
Executive Director



Where There's a Will

Many volunteers come to organizations drawn by a particular program. In the case of Butch Conary, the program came with him. For the past 26 years, Butch has been organizing and participating in River Clean Ups in his home-town of Reading. The effort includes surveying the area to define the pollution hot-spots, deciding the distribution of volunteers and arranging for everything from tools to food. "Most of the time," Butch says, "I was paying for it out of my pocket." Inspired by his dedication and example, we've been happy to take over some of the financial and time burdens in the last few years. Now our Programs Coordinator, Ryan O'Donnell and Butch work together to plan the Clean Ups. "I have found that it's tough," says Butch, "to get people out on a Saturday morning to remove trash and logs out of a river." Keeping the river and landings clean is a full time effort and we thank Butch for recognizing that and doing more than his fair share. If anyone is interested in helping, please meet at the Ipswich River Park Gazebo on June 3 at 8 am. As Butch says, "Bring saws, gloves, boats and enthusiasm for a great time!"



Butch Conary has participated in and led River Clean Ups for the past 26 years. Thank you, Butch!

Dynamic Duo

Like all rivers, the Ipswich River begins at the confluence of several smaller creeks and brooks known as the headwaters. These headwater streams are the most important part of any watershed since anything that impacts these sensitive areas will affect the entire river. That the Ipswich River is so special today is due in large part to Suzanne Sullivan and Martha Stevenson of Wilmington. These two have steadfastly protected the headwaters for more than 25 years. Suzanne and Martha together are an unparalleled force and have done as much to protect our river as anyone else.

Considering their importance, it is unfortunate that the headwaters of the Ipswich River are located in the most developed area in the watershed. The towns of Burlington, Wilmington and Reading have a lot of residential and commercial development and the region is crisscrossed by numerous roads and highways. This development has had a clear negative impact on the river. This means the headwaters need people like Suzanne and Martha more than any other section of the watershed. Over the years, Suzanne and Martha have defended the river against powerful forces. They kept the state from disposing of millions of tons of contaminated soil from the Big Dig in the headwaters. While bringing polluters to justice, they continued striving to protect the last undeveloped areas. On numerous occasions they prevented needless impacts to the wetlands and streams that make the river whole. Almost single-handedly, they've helped to keep the river out of harm's way.

Martha and Suzanne know that to have maximum impact you need to become a decision maker. Both have served on countless local and statewide boards and committees where they enacted policies and regulations to protect the river. Suzanne served on the Wilmington Board of Selectmen where she was instrumental in getting restitution during the town's fight against the Olin Chemical Superfund site for contaminating the town's drinking water. When asked about her years of dedication to protect the river, Martha said, "It's great to take a look back and celebrate all our hard work. Let's hope we can inspire a new wave of volunteers to keep the river alive and thriving into the future." Without local advocates like these our river would be a very different place today. What a team!

Suzanne Sullivan and Martha Stevenson shown here at Woburn Street in Wilmington have been volunteer Riverwatch monitors since the program's inception more than 20 years ago! Thank you Martha and Suzanne for all you've done to protect our River!



IPSWICH RIVER
WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
The Voice of the River

Portrait of a Successful Year

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Millions

Reached During National
Coverage of Ipswich
River Drought



1,011

Times People Used
Our Canoes
& Kayaks

ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

398

People Support First
Paddle-a-thon



BETTER TOGETHER

PARTNERSHIPS

159

Volunteers!



VOLUNTEERS

ADVOCACY

20

Years of RiverWatch
Monitoring



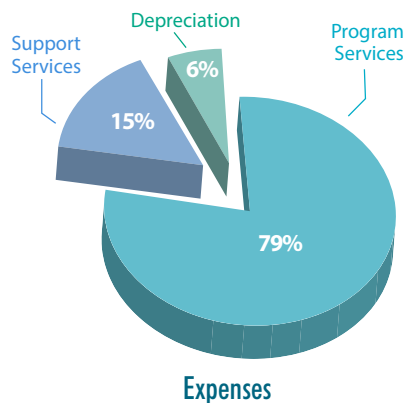
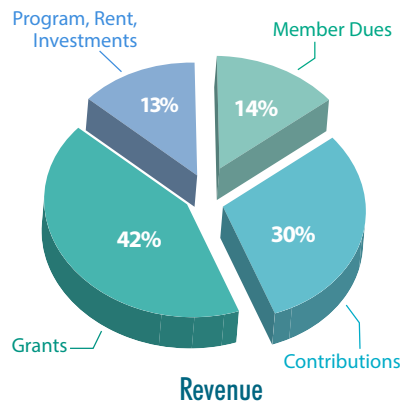
1

Pipeline
Shelved

CONNECT YOUTH TO RIVER

2016 Financial Summary

Thanks to the generosity of our members and individual donors, the Ipswich River Watershed Association ended fiscal year 2016 in a strong position. A successful Annual Fund and membership growth, combined with careful management of expenses, resulted in a positive bottom line for the year. A copy of the complete audited financial statement is available at the Riverbend office in Ipswich.



Revenue	TOTAL
Member Dues	81,296
Contributions*	172,499
Grants**	241,543
Programs, Rent, Investments	77,211
Total Revenue	572,549

Expenses	
Program Services	441,985
Support Services	82,115
Depreciation	35,091
Total Expenses	559,191

Change in Net Assets	29,319
* Does not include donated goods & services	
** Includes Fee for Services	

Balance Sheet	
Assets	
Current Assets	600,588
Property and Equipment	1,364,434
Total Assets	1,965,022

Liabilities and Net Assets	
Liabilities	14,365
Net Assets	1,920,657

The Ipswich River Watershed Association is the voice of the Ipswich River. Together, we work to ensure there is enough clean water for the 350,000 people and businesses that get their water from the river while protecting nature and providing places for people to connect to the outdoors in 18 cities and towns on the North Shore of Massachusetts.

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Leave a Lasting Legacy

Making a bequest to the Ipswich River is a simple way to protect the river you love. You can name Ipswich River Watershed Association as a beneficiary of your will, trust, retirement plan or life insurance policy. Anyone can make a bequest and no amount is too small. If you have already done so, please let us know so we can thank you properly.

For more information:
ipswichriver.org/leave-legacy
 or, email Trish:
taldrich@ipswichriver.org

Thank you.



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We are grateful for each and every gift you make.

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Each of these leadership donors provides \$1,000 or more in support through Membership, Annual Appeal or other gifts. Your leadership support makes a world of difference!

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Members of the Ipswich River Legacy Fund have our everlasting thanks for providing for the Ipswich River through their will or other planned gift.

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We are honored to protect the Ipswich River in tribute to these members of the river community.

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In memory of Linda Curtis
Patricia Cardena
In honor of Bob & Kathy Gravino
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In honor of Cynthia Ingelfinger
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Volunteers are vital to our strength and vibrancy. You are the caretakers of the mission and the catalyst for us to grow and sustain the river for future generations.

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Stream Teamer with Steam



Katharine Brown is a RiverWatcher and Stream Teamer from the town of Middleton. Sadly (for us), she'll soon be moving on to Rye, NH – leaving some very energetic shoes to fill.

Q: What first drew you to get involved with the Ipswich River and Middleton Stream Team?

Oddly enough, I saw a small ad in a local freebie newspaper, way back when such existed. It was a solicitation for the [RiverWatch] program. Then by chance I found out that Pike Messenger, my freshman high school biology teacher from Melrose High School, was also doing the monitoring, so that sealed it. I saw it as an opportunity to do something for an issue close to my heart that someone I valued was already involved in. It turned out to be a wonderful experience. It took very little time, got me outdoors in all weather and I felt like I was part of something important.

Q: What's something you volunteered on that you especially enjoyed?

I've enjoyed the creative aspect of lots of the Stream Team work. I think I enjoyed the first year of the Middleton Stream Team (MST) photo contest the most. Everything we did was new – contacting organizations, finding sponsors, finding judges. In addition, we had a fun paddle for people who wanted to get out to take pictures on the river.

The core MST group was unusual and perfect. If you had an idea they liked, they'd make it happen. Perfect from my point of view. I got the satisfaction without the work!

Q: What have you accomplished through your volunteer work that you're most proud of?

The MST offers creative opportunities. It is blessed with well-meaning, creative, committed, capable individuals. There's a lot that I'm proud of but not much I can claim for my own. I guess the display case in the [Middleton Post Office lobby] is the most physical evidence of my work. That project required negotiation with the building owner, raising money from local businesses, getting a good solid case built and designing a display which was the *raison-d'être* for the project. Greenbelt helped us get a National Geodetic Survey map delineating Middleton's subwatersheds [which required] hours of modifications. I put together a great display (in my humble opinion) illustrating how watersheds work and enabling anyone in Middleton to find their street on the map to see which stream was impacted by things they did on their property. The display case has continued to offer a place for the MST to make an impact on those passing through the lobby.

Q: Why would you recommend volunteering to others?

Volunteering can offer opportunities to be creative and to work with wonderful individuals.

Help the River

Make a life-time friend. Have an experience with nature that stirs you. Our 40th year will be full of great events and programs: and they're only made possible with your help! Whether you prefer going it on your own in the tranquility of nature, or being part of a group, there's something for everyone to try.

- **Paddle-a-thon:** volunteers needed for day-of!
- **Herring Count:** counters needed!
- **Beginners' Paddles:** paddle guides and instructors needed!
- **Estuary paddle:** paddle guides needed!
- **Garden Clean Ups:** gardeners needed!
- **River Clean Ups:** Help keep our river clean, beautiful and healthy. Grab a bag and walk a trail or hop in a boat. On the shore or in the water, let's keep the river garbage-free!
- **Interested in volunteering?** Contact Ryan O'Donnell rodonnell@ipswichriver.org or 978-412-8200.
- **To learn about more volunteer opportunities** visit our events page: ipswichriver.org/support/event-calendar

Every Fish & Counter Counts

Conservation efforts throughout the world have shown the impact the reintroduction or disappearance of one species can have. When the Ipswich was called the Agawam, runs of million of herring made their way up the river's course to spawn. Due to the blockage of dams and the repurposing of spawning grounds, those numbers have dropped to only hundreds today

We are working on restoring those numbers and the vitality that the herring give to the river, but to see where we're going we need to know where we are. That's where our Fish Counters come in. Lindsey Williams and other volunteers dedicate their time recording the herring's return to spawn. This offers valuable feedback on our efforts.

Lindsey has been with the program for the long haul, for which we are immensely grateful. The more watchful eyes we have out there, the more Lindsey, the more accurate our counts will be. As Lindsey says, "Doing fish counts is such a simple way to contribute to trying to keep the Ipswich River as healthy as possible. I really love doing fish counts because it's great to be outside and on the beautiful river and I get a bit of a thrill every time I see a fish come up the ladder." We are always looking for more counters to join us in this endeavor. Thank you to all our fish counters and may your time slots be blessed with sunny weather!

Former Executive Director Kerry Mackin presents the Golden Fish Award to Lindsey Williams for doing the most herring counts. Thank you, Lindsey!





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WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

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Raise a Paddle for Clean Water!

Join us at the Ipswich River Watershed Association's second Paddle-a-thon, **Saturday, June 17th** at the Topsfield Fairgrounds. The event starts at 9 am with an 8-mile Social Paddle. Afterwards partake in lunch provided by Baja Taco Wagon and liquid refreshment provided by Ipswich Ale Tapmobile. After lunch there will be kayak races, with \$150 LL Bean gift cards for the winners. Enjoy music by the Orville Giddings Trio and socialize while raising funds and awareness for the river.

Visit ipswichriver.org/paddle-a-thon-2017 to learn more, register to paddle, or volunteer!



Upcoming Events

Check our website for more event details: ipswichriver.org/support/event-calendar

APRIL 4/25 Boxford Earth Week
4/27 Annual Meeting
4/28 Riverbend Clean Up
4/29 Topsfield Arbor Day
4/30 Middleton Earth Day

MAY 5/13 Cask & Clam Fest
JUNE 6/3 River Clean Up
6/3 National Trails Day
6/22 Beginner Paddle

JULY 7/11 Beginner Paddle
7/25 Beginner Paddle
AUGUST 8/8 Beginner Paddle
8/22 Beginner Paddle