



IPSWICH RIVER
WATERSHED ASSOCIATION
The Voice of the River

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Make the Biggest Splash Ever for the River!

This spring, the Reading Ripples threw down the gauntlet and challenged their fellow Paddle-a-thon teams to a #PaddleRoyale. Challenge accepted! All the teams got in on the fun. Working as one great big team to save our river and streams, individual teams saw their fundraising totals rise and their standings improve, all while having a great time. That's what Paddle-a-thon is about!

LET'S KEEP MAKING WAVES FOR THE #ENDANGEREDIPSWICH RIVER THIS SUMMER.

Help us reach \$100,000 by July 31st. Sending a gift by mail? Give us a call to let us know it's on the way and tell us why you love the Ipswich River.

David Cotacachi, an indigenous environmental leader from the Andes Mountains in Ecuador, joins Director of Policy and Planning Patrick Lynch (foreground) and the Reading Ripples for a paddle on the Ipswich. We love expanding the Ipswich River community and welcoming new voices to speak up for the future of water.

DONATE TODAY AT IPSWICHRIVER.ORG/PAT2021



THE VOICE OF THE RIVER

Summer 2021 Newsletter



#EndangeredIpswich UPDATE

805
ADVOCATES TOOK ACTION
by asking their reps to support conditions on water registrations*

6
PAID YOUTH INTERNS
joined the Ipswich River staff this summer

138
PADDLERS, BIKERS, WALKERS
and river supporters of all kinds registered for Paddle-a-thon

\$95,000
RAISED SO FAR
by Paddle-a-thon Corporate Sponsors and Paddle Raisers

843
PEOPLE WATCHED
John Kerry speak about the plight of the Ipswich River

You Made a Big Splash and Ripples of Change

Ghiz Benzerdjeb, Social Media Manager

Now more than ever, the Ipswich River needs all the TLC it can get. Unfortunately, the river has landed on the list of top ten Most Endangered Rivers® in America. Despite the gloom that comes with this new status, neighbors, businesses, and friends of the river across the watershed are supporting our efforts to keep our river full and flowing.

Paddle-a-thon is a chance each year for our community to engage with the river and have fun. This year, a competitive spirit flowed through the water. The Paddle Raisers have been going full force with their fundraising efforts. Teams Long Haul and Reading Ripples, their team members hailing mostly from Ipswich and Reading, respectively, showed that amazing things can happen when our headwaters and coastal communities work together. They inspired each other to raise a collective \$10,000 and counting in the first-ever #PaddleRoyale!

Saving the #EndangeredIpswich will require an engaged audience large enough to turn the tide on water conservation. The Ipswich River team has been expanding our library of resources and materials. Digital and printed materials for neighborhoods, businesses, developers, and municipal staff aim to make resiliency and conservation easy and accessible. In addition to a slew of grant-funded videos and printed materials arriving this summer, the Ipswich River YouTube channel is gaining traction as a platform for the river's voice. Stories you can catch there include Carol Bousquet's first-ever annual Blessing of the River (complete with a children's choir) and Kathy Lindquist's historical tour of Topsfield. Did you know that tensions over the land surrounding the Ipswich river eventually led to the Witchcraft delusion of 1692?

The remaining six months of 2021 are critical. Decisions will be made at the state and local levels that will impact the river for years. Stay engaged with us by continuing to follow our weekly email updates, visiting us at Riverbend, and sharing your river stories with us on social media.

Grand Wenham Canal race spectators gather on the Topsfield rail trail where it crosses the Ipswich River upstream of the Salem-Beverly Canal. More than 136 Paddle Raisers are making waves for the #EndangeredIpswich by sharing their stories and love for the river.

*For more on water registrations, see pages 5 and 6.

Keep sharing your Paddle-a-thon 2021 stories, photos, and videos with us! Send a message to Social Media Manager Ghiz Benzerdjeb or tag us @ipswich_river.



Welcome Ipswich River's New Development Director: Amber Redmond

Amber, pictured below with husband Ryan and son Egan, brings 16 years of experience managing volunteers, writing grant proposals, and raising critical resources for education and youth-serving organizations. Her commitment to increasing representation and access for young people of color by helping remove barriers and increase access stems from her experiences navigating higher education, professional spaces, and the nonprofit sector as a woman of color. As the Director of Development and Engagement, Amber will oversee fundraising and communication efforts for the Ipswich River Watershed Association and help align the passions and interests of our members, donors, corporate partners, and foundations with our mission and the challenges facing the Ipswich River.



Summer Events

We enjoyed exploring all over the watershed in the first half of the year, but we can't think of a better summer spot than the river. Join us at Riverbend all summer long, and don't miss special events in our headwaters communities.

JULY 31 Harold Parker Walk

Saturday | 10:00 am | Andover

AUGUST 7 Mindfulness Paddle

Saturday | 7:00 am | Ipswich

AUGUST 21 Willowdale River Walk

Saturday | 10:00 am | Ipswich

AUGUST 28 Paddleboard Yoga

Saturday | 10:00 am | Ipswich

SEPTEMBER 18 Dog Day of Summer: Pet Gathering on the River!

Saturday | 10:00 am – Noon | Ipswich

Join us at Riverbend to get outside with your furry friends along the beautiful Ipswich River. We'll have fun guided doggie activities and you can ask the experts about protecting the outdoors for you and your pooch.

SEPTEMBER 25

Save the River Day at Riverbend

Saturday | 10:00 am – 5:00 pm | Ipswich

Bring a friend and introduce them to the river! We're opening up Riverbend to the public to celebrate an incredible summer full of new records, new projects, and lots of fun. Visitors can walk the trails, enjoy a picnic, go paddling with Riverbend's boats and enjoy a day full of discovery. Activities will include beginner paddling demos, presentations on ongoing restoration, and the dedication of Riverbend's Raw Art Works mural.

A full schedule of events is available at ipswichriver.org/calendar



Donate Now at www.ipswichriver.org

Name _____

Address _____

Town/City _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

You may make check payable to IRWA and mail to: **IRWA, PO Box 576, Ipswich, MA 01938**

Card # _____ Exp. Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Name on Card: _____ Signature: _____

Enclosed is my tax deductible donation of:

River Steward \$1000

Patron \$250

Friend \$100

Family \$50

Individual \$40

Other: _____

For: Paddle-a-thon Membership

In honor of _____

Understanding the #EndangeredIpswich Using our New River Health Index

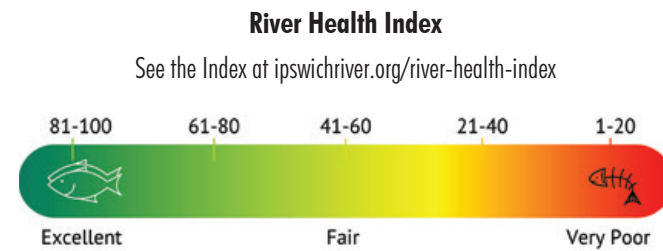
Despite an unusually rainy July, one of the main threats to the Ipswich River watershed remains chronic low flows in summer due to groundwater withdrawals. Water withdrawals deplete streamflow, causing a loss of critical habitat for aquatic life. Riverbanks and shallow rocky zones are among the most critical habitats for fish and other aquatic life. When flows drop below the channel margins, these are the first areas to dry up, after which point the river can be reduced to a series of pools. Fish and other aquatic life become stressed under these conditions and must either move to more suitable areas, if possible, or perish. Low flows, even for short periods, can have long-term impacts on the river's ecology.

We are using a River Health Index compiled from long-term and recent data on water quality and quantity in the Ipswich River watershed to evaluate the impact of our work. Indicators, including dissolved oxygen, water temperature, and streamflow, are combined into a single score for sub-regions of the watershed. The index is designed to compare these

measurements with optimal habitat conditions in a way that's easily understood.

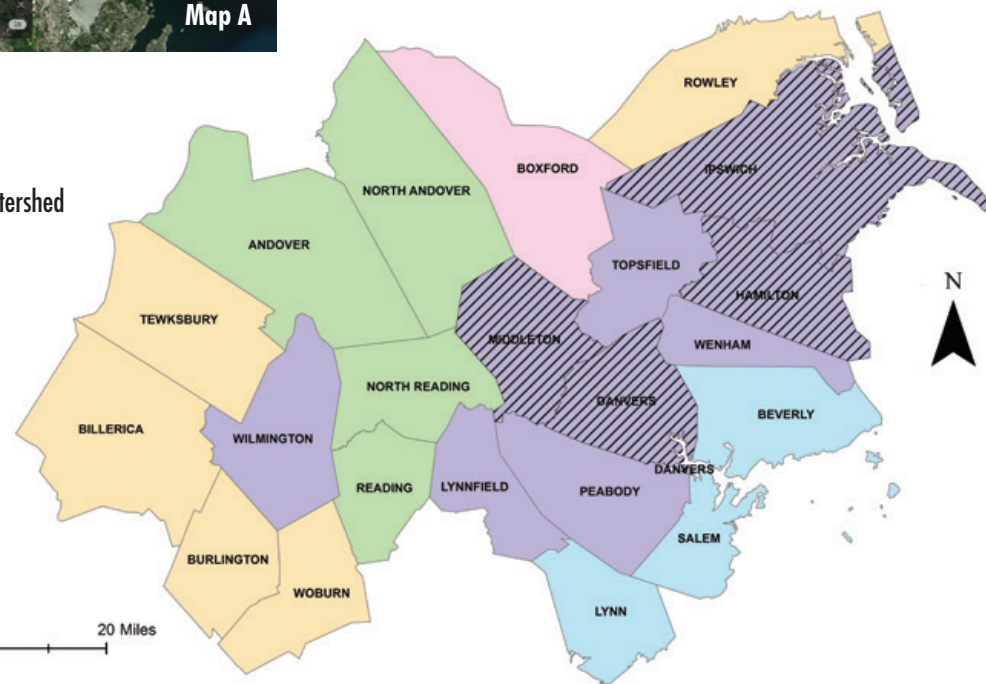
Shown here, the poor health of various Ipswich River watershed sub-regions during Summer 2020 are indicated using color codes. The map below shows the scope of water withdrawals and mandated state restrictions. This information will be combined into a story map to give a more comprehensive picture of river health.

The River Health Index was developed with generous assistance from interns Kayla Dorey, Amanda Martinez, Luke Brogna, and Thomas Rua. Amanda and Thomas are analyzing data this summer, Kayla developed the web mapping application, and Luke will be evaluating flow data relative to specific water withdrawals. We are very grateful to them and the many volunteers who collect the data for this index to help the Ipswich River. This new tool would not be possible without them!



Map B: Water Supply Sources in the Ipswich River Watershed

- Summer Water Restrictions**
- State Mandated
- Water Supply Sources**
- Municipal Only
 - Municipal and Private Wells
 - Private Wells and Other Watershed Sources
 - Private Wells Only
 - Other Watershed Sources



It Takes a Village to Create an Army



Being declared one of the Most Endangered Rivers® in America (again) this year was admittedly a terrible blow. We've achieved some incredible successes over the years due to your support. My favorites? Turning the once infamous dry river stretch in Reading into

the wettest and re-opening clamming in the river for the first time in a century. But climate change, the explosion of new private wells, and other challenges continue to test our mettle. Coupled with the dubious distinction of Most Endangered are once in a generation opportunities to protect the river. We have an unprecedented chance to fix the river's problems once and for all. All we need is more of us.

We know what the river's problems are and what needs to be done to address them. Our #EndangeredIpswich campaign is an achievable nine-step plan for doing just that. State officials, town officials, and local residents all have a key role to play. More people must get involved and advocate for solutions at all three levels. As such, the most important aspect of the campaign is to multiply ourselves.

Here at Ipswich River, education and engagement have always been central to our mission. Specifically, we've been particularly proud of our youth engagement programs. They began in the old days with our annual river science conference at North Reading High School and have continued to grow. Now our 5th grade Keeping Water Clean program is held in just about every public school in the region, and our ever-growing Intern and Apprentice program has us at our fullest staff capacity yet this summer! Engaging the river stewards of tomorrow is more important than ever. And with the current generation—dare I say, the most concerned about the future of our planet than any before—this energy may help secure a brighter future for the river. Towards that end, I hope you will enjoy this issue in particular, with articles written by some of our hard-working youth activists. Please join me in celebrating their work!

WAYNE

Wayne Castonguay
Executive Director

Right, top to bottom: Friends of the river gather for the Paddle-a-thon party. Team Long Haul won the Biggest Splash Award for raising the most funds for the river, a staggering \$7,540! We had more new participants than ever before, including Alan Curley, pictured canoeing with Programs Coordinator Ryan O'Donnell. There were new teams as well, like Team Topsfield led by the winner of the Deep Waters Award, Kathy Lindquist, pictured here with the event's volunteer co-chair Amy MacNulty.

Top: In the Grand Wenham Canal Race, our own Wayne Castonguay entered the fray with paddling partner Dan Heiter and winner John Whittier.

Opposite left: Dylan Comb, who paddled with dog Kip and dad Dave, joined John in being crowned River Royalty.



A Classroom in Your Lawn

Jacob Garland, Summer Educator



Nature provides a classroom experience unlike any other. But for many of us, these lessons are thoroughly separated from our home life. For our children, they're often relegated to a class field trip or daytime summer camp, painting nature as a world we travel to instead of one we live within. But we can bring this classroom home in a way that benefits our children, our wallets, and our rivers.

It starts with our lawns: greenscaping is a form of lawn care that operates on three major principles: the use of rainwater instead of groundwater, the elimination of pesticides and chemical fertilizers, and the addition of native plants. Together, these components work to grow a lawn that's beautiful both on the surface and beneath the soil, which comes with a host of benefits.

Kids of all ages can help create a greenscaped lawn with activities like replacing Kentucky Bluegrass with native fescues, picking out the best spot for a rain garden, or helping to maintain a compost pile. By doing so, they'll help build an experiential classroom filled to the brim with lessons on native plants, pollinators, water conservation, symbiotic relationships, climate resiliency, advocacy, and so much more. And in a world where our Ipswich River has been declared one of the Most Endangered Rivers® in the country, this kind of education is crucial.

As part of Ipswich River's Floating Classroom program, I'll be showing kids how they can help save the #EndangeredIpswich. But even the best of my programs cannot compare to the experience they receive through a greenscaped lawn. If your family believes in a standard of lawn care that benefits both you and the natural world, please pledge your support for the Lawn by Lawn campaign. All participants are asked to water gardens,

shrubs, and trees by hand (foregoing the watering of their lawns) and to cut out chemical use in their yard. If you are already taking these actions, take the pledge and let us know what else you will do this summer to reduce water and lawn chemical use in your community.

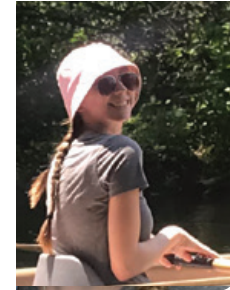
Together, we can help save our river while providing our children with an educational experience they'll never forget.



Phoenix School students study Riverbend's rain garden during the first in-person Floating Classroom program of 2021.

Green Solutions for a Greener Future

Sadie Woodward, Climate Policy Specialist



This summer, I am working to help our cities and towns take advantage of nature-based solutions. One big step is to review old bylaws. Local rules can help our towns use low-impact development when planning. These methods aim to make the watershed sustainable over the long term.

Ipswich River is partnering with Mass Audubon to bring their bylaw review training to the North Shore. Mass Audubon's team has helped communities in other parts of the state review bylaws. Bylaw review is a great way to make sustainable and long-lasting change in a community. It can help both our residents and our rivers.

A generous grant from Essex County Community Foundation's Land and Environment Initiative pushed this project into action. I am connecting with planning boards and conservation commissions across the North Shore to encourage them to join. Please help me spread the word and gather towns together for cooperative solutions.

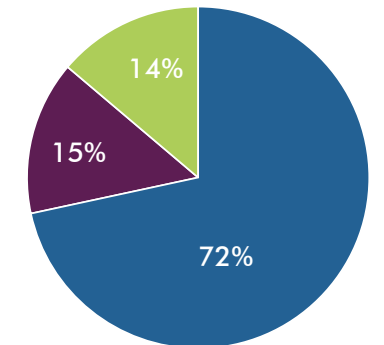
Another tool we're building out is the Recipe for Water Resiliency. The recipe involves researching and compiling a list of actions, resources, and tools. Mixed together, these tools are ingredients for the end product: a sustainable watershed. This recipe will be a helpful guide for towns that want to dive right in and become sustainability leaders. More and more, our local leaders understand that strong action now will benefit us in the future.

And now, Senator Ed Markey has joined our effort. I am passionate about keeping climate champions in Congress, which is why I worked for Markey's reelection campaign in 2020. This time around, I connected with our Senator in a new way, helping draft a script for his statement. Senator Markey will speak on the Ipswich River's recent designation by American Rivers as one of the top ten Most Endangered Rivers® in America.

We need help from all levels to create a sustainable future for our watershed. Thank you to Senator Markey for showing support for our efforts and to those working to make the North Shore a regional leader on climate. I hope you will continue to support these efforts.

Ipswich River Water Withdrawals & Registrations

The Massachusetts Water Management Act was passed in 1986 to regulate water withdrawals over a 100,000 gallon per day threshold. Registrations are water withdrawals that existed when the Act was passed, and any additional withdrawals must be permitted. Of the roughly 32 million gallons per day withdrawn from the river, only permitted sources are required to institute conservation measures. Consequently, nearly 90% of all withdrawals have no water conservation requirements under the Act.



Millions of Gallons per Day Amounts

- 23.34 mgd Below-threshold
- 4.5 mgd Registered
- 4.75 mgd Permitted

Bottom left: Board member Lauren Fitzgerald and Outreach Manager Rachel Schneider at the Riverside Romp in Ipswich, the day after Paddle-a-thon, with rain barrels and flyers for the Lawn by Lawn campaign. Outreach like this is a key component of the Recipe for Water Resiliency.

Bottom right: The river needs your voice and your stories. Social Media Manager Ghiz Benzerdjeb interviews lifelong river advocate Pike Messenger at the Paddle-a-thon 2021 party. Many thanks to all the river advocates who used their voices to support the new proposed conditions on water registrations.



THE GOAL

3,500,000 GALLONS OF WATER SAVED PER WEEK BY SPRING 2022

If all 350,000 people and businesses who use Ipswich River water each saved 10 gallons of water per week, we would reach our goal!

HOW WE'LL GET THERE

- 500 lawn signs in neighborhoods
- Participants in every Ipswich River community



THE PLEDGE

- I will not water grass.
- I will hand-water gardens, shrubs, and trees.
- I will cut out chemical use on my landscape and opt for natural alternatives.

