

FWR 2009 Highlights



Volunteers at work in the Winooski!

Restoration & Protection: With our partners, we planted nearly a ½ mile of native trees and shrubs in the upper watershed & tributaries. Eight hundred feet of fascines to stabilize the banks were also installed.

The Friends helped the Town of Plainfield secure funding and to install a rain garden in the Village Center. The Town shared information on how rain gardens reduce & cleanse storm water runoff with neighboring communities.

The Friends continued to work with landowners to educate them and connect them with resources to improve streamside land practices. In addition to individual outreach, the Landowner Stewardship Assistance Guide is available for download from the Friends website.

We have initiated several culvert retrofit projects that will improve fish passage.

We worked with a commercial landowner on the Stevens Branch to correct a storm water problem that caused a severely eroded bank.

Monitoring and Assessment: With the completion of the Stevens Branch Corridor Plan, the Friends and partners have completed nearly 100 miles of corridor plans. These plans guide our restoration and protection efforts. In 2009, we also completed the few miles that remained to be assessed in Montpelier, East Montpelier and Plainfield.

Our water quality monitoring efforts were slowed down by the loss of State support due to budget cuts. However, the Friends and local volunteers were still able to do some basic monitoring in the Headwaters. We also continued to support the testing efforts of U32, Montpelier & Spaulding High Schools.

The Friends worked with the Montpelier Public Works Department to trace and correct several pollution sources.

Education and Outreach: 2009 was the second year for the Winooski River Sojourn, a six day paddling trip. We doubled the number of paddlers over 2008. Later in the year, the Friends partnered with the Richmond Land Trust on a family oriented paddle that highlighted the importance of riparian forests.

The Friends participated in a number of events to educate the public about the watershed including the Riverwalk Festival in Winooski, the Cabot Apple Pie Festival and the Growing Local Festival in Montpelier.

Organizational Capacity: The Friends believe strongly in partnerships and completed many of our projects with one or more of our partners. In 2009, we specifically worked to expand our relationship with various areas of UVM.

As an organization, we added a Communications Director, Linda Setchell, to support our outreach efforts. Emily Levin and Ryan McCall joined our Board of Directors in 2009.

Goals for 2010

- Install two additional rain gardens
- Complete the upgrade of three culverts to improve fish habitat and passage
- Complete 3000 feet of riparian and stream bank restoration
- Complete two storm water management projects
- Work with three landowners on specific practices to improve land stewardship
- Increase our presence and impact in the lower watershed
- Promote the use of the Landowner Stewardship Assistance Guide
- Produce a lay persons guide to geomorphic assessments and corridor planning
- Expand our partnerships with municipalities including co-authoring of grants and project management
- Redesign our website to engage and educate the public
- Expand our on water programs to increase appreciation of the Winooski River



Coits Pond, Headwaters of the Winooski

Photo by Colin McCaffrey