



Dear Friends,

Our normally vast, 1,000-square-mile watershed, from Cabot to Lake Champlain, Stowe to Roxbury, Williamstown to Richmond, suddenly feels smaller and more connected than usual, as so many of our communities -- families, friends, neighbors, colleagues -- have been affected, directly or indirectly, by last week's flooding.

While our office in Montpelier was not flooded, we are nonetheless devastated by the destruction of our local businesses, the displacement of so many residents, and such heavy losses in our little City and throughout our watershed.

Our staff spent time last week working on the cleanup effort in downtown Montpelier, and we are making forays out to our project sites as we have time. So far, most of our stormwater and restoration projects seem to be in good condition, and to have done their jobs during the rainstorms.

We have been amazed by the amounts of sediment and debris that settled out of the Winooski wherever it had access to open floodplains. Our Dog River Park floodplain restoration project in Northfield resulted in a flood elevation in that neighborhood that was 6" lower than it would have been without our work, while also receiving plenty of sediment and debris. We visited a landowner in Plainfield this week whose floodplain forest captured a jaw-dropping quantity of sediment and debris, preventing all of it from moving any further downstream where it could cause more damage.

A lot of people have been asking us what we can do to be more prepared for the next flood. It's tricky, because we had different amounts of rain and different causes and types of flooding in different places. We'll have more information in the coming weeks to describe some of the dynamics of this event. Meanwhile, the effectiveness of connected floodplains and floodplain forests at reducing the potential impacts has reinforced our already-strong desire to do more work to protect and restore these critical areas, wherever we can find opportunities throughout the watershed.

For all of our Friends, everyone who volunteers with us, who donates to our mission, who supports us through partnerships and funding relationships, sharing your expertise and time to help us do better work, and sharing what you know about our watershed with friends and neighbors, you have all contributed to the health and resilience of our landscape. At this moment, it is hard to see all of the damages and not feel discouraged, but we hope to draw some of your attention to ways in which we have collectively made a difference throughout the watershed.

Please tell us how you're doing, how your land is doing, what changes you have seen in the river and the landscape. How are you? Are you feeling the impact of the flooding? Do you feel discouraged, or ready to take action to increase the resiliency of our rivers and communities? We hope you'll keep your sleeves rolled up over the long term to help us with post-flooding river cleanups, tree plantings, and river restoration projects. Once we finish cleaning out basements and tearing out drywall, there will still be a lot of work to be done to make our communities safer and our waterways healthier.

Check out Vermont Public's New Brave Little State Podcast

[Listen here](#) as Brave Little State journalists interview some of our friends, including Mike Kline, Rudi Ruddell, and Gus Goodwin, about ***Why Vermont streams have become more***

powerful — *and how that fuels devastating flooding*, a super timely conversation that might provide insight and understanding around the flooding.



Staff Lend a Hand in Montpelier

Friends of the Winooski staff spent two work days helping the Montpelier community with clean-up efforts. Together they worked alongside friends, neighbors, and new acquaintances to clean out homes and businesses so that Montpelier can start to get back on our feet. There is still much to be done in towns all across the state.

Vermont Public continues to update [their resource page](#) on flood relief and volunteer coordination efforts.

Lessons from the Floods

Following the flooding in 2011, our friends at the Lake Champlain Committee put together a great resource document, [Lessons from the Flood](#). These lessons continue to apply, and we would all do well to have them in mind as we work to respond to the latest floods.

Be Ready for Storms with Storm Smart

If you would like help managing stormwater on your land, sign up today for a Free assessment of your home and yard. We'll look at things like rain gutters, drainages, and driveways, and we'll send you a report with recommendations.

[Click here to fill out a request form](#) or just reply to this email, and we'll contact you to schedule a convenient time to visit your home.



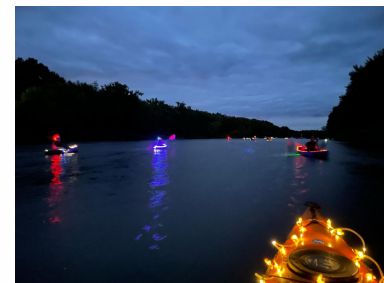
Stream Wise Event

Are you a stream-side landowner? Join us (and bring a neighbor!) on July 27th at 956 East Street (the Esser residence) in Huntington, Vermont by a tributary to the Huntington River. Together we will learn more about Stream Wise and how to help protect your land, water, wildlife, and community with naturally vegetated buffers. Co-sponsored by the Huntington Public Library, Huntington Conservation Commission, and Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.

River of Light Rescheduled

Due to the uncertainty around the completion of repairs to the flood-damaged sewer main that crosses the river on our route, we have decided to postpone the River of Light to the next full moon, on Wednesday, August 30.

Join the Friends of the Winooski for our 6th not-exactly-annual paddle by the light of the moon, the River of Light.



We will meet at the Heineberg Bridge Access (on the Colchester side of the Rt 127 bridge over the Winooski River) at 7:00 PM. Participants will leave their boats and drive their cars to the Colchester Point Fishing Access.

Please note: there is no shuttle service provided at this event. Participants are responsible for self-shuttling.

Everyone will launch at sunset and paddle the 2.5 miles to Lake Champlain as the full moon rises.

All paddlers must wear a properly fitted PFD. All paddlers must be facing forward or in the case of a row boat, there must be a passenger in the bow, facing forward.

NEW: Every boat **MUST** have lighting for the safety of all participants.

There is no pre-registration required. Participation is by donation to help the Friends of the Winooski River protect and restore the watershed. Avoid bringing cash by [donating online](#) ahead of the event.

2023 Events Update & Volunteer Opportunities

Stream Wise Public Event in Huntington: July 27

River of Light: August 30

Capital River Clean-up: September 9

Barre City Stevens Branch Clean-up: September 9

We always need volunteers to make the paddling and clean-up events possible. Please contact us if you're able to help out with jobs such as taking photographs, directing parking, shuttling paddlers between parking areas, selling raffle tickets, serving snacks: there is a job for everyone!

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Friends of the Winooski River | winooskiriver.org
working together for a clean, healthy, resilient watershed

