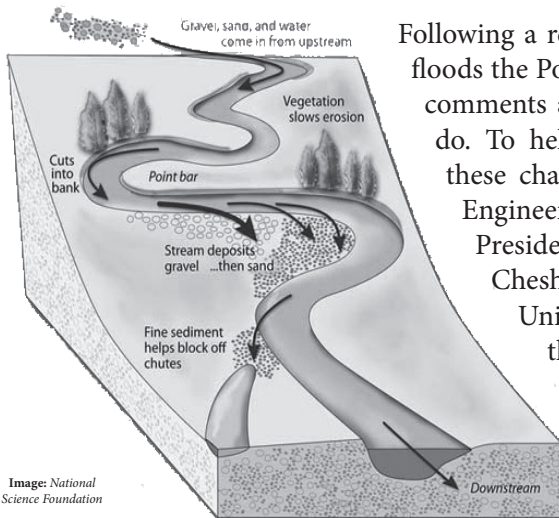


Come to River Dynamics 101 with Jim MacBroom
January 19, 2012 from 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Southbury Public Library



Following a record wet year, a year in which we received three of the five biggest floods the Pomperaug has seen in its 80 years of recorded streamflow, we've heard comments about changes in the river over the years. It has, of course. Rivers do. To help residents and local officials understand why and how some of these changes happen, we are pleased to have Jim MacBroom, Professional Engineer, lead a presentation on River Dynamics. Jim is a Senior Vice President at Milone & MacBroom, an environmental consulting firm in Cheshire, as well as a lecturer in River Processes and Restoration at Yale University. He will talk about how river channels can migrate across the landscape, how they transport sediment, and how they respond to rainfall. Jim will also touch on flood mitigation techniques and stream restoration during the presentation. We hope you can join us. Admission is free, but pre-registration is **required**. For more information or to register, please call 203-263-0076 or email events@pomperaug.org.

Streamflow Regulations Enacted into Law

Abbreviated from article by Margaret Miner, Executive Director, Rivers Alliance of CT
 For FULL story, visit <http://www.riversalliance.org/streamflowregulation/streamflowmain.cfm>

On December 12, 2011, regulations to conserve streamflows in Connecticut waterways became state law. The regulations represent a vital step forward in protecting rivers and streams: Connecticut has now taken the lead in New England and very likely in the nation in officially recognizing that naturally flowing rivers and streams are essential to life, health, and economic wellbeing.

To have water in the future, we must protect the water we have now. Draining streams dry for short-term convenience endangers the natural world and all its creatures (including us). For quality of life and economic wellbeing, there is no more valuable resource than water. It is liquid gold.

Connecticut has been trying to devise a fair, effective flow regulation since the 1970s. After several less-than-successful attempts, frustrated river advocates, including Rivers Alliance, Nature Conservancy, and Trout Unlimited, began a campaign in 2004 to persuade the legislature and the [regulatory] agencies to support a law to protect streamflows.

In 2005, with agreement from all major stakeholders, the legislature unanimously (!) passed An Act Concerning the Minimum Water Flow Regulations. From 2005 to the end of 2011, extremely difficult bargaining and politicking led finally to the regulation now in place. *(continued on Page 4)*



For information on
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The Pomperaug Watershed



Save the Date: 3rd Annual Evening by the River Saturday June 2, 2012

Mill House Antiques in Woodbury, CT

This summer, thanks to the generosity of Mill House Antiques, we will be having another wonderful fundraiser in the beautiful gardens along the Nonnewaug River! In preparation, we are currently looking for volunteers to serve on the planning committee. We are also seeking sponsors and in-kind donations of food, wine, and auction items. Please contact James at jbelden@pomperaug.org or 203-263-0076 for more information.



Pomperaug River Festival slated for August



We had so much fun at River Fest last September that we have decided to hold it again this year – just a little earlier. We are aiming to have River Fest in August when it is a little quieter. Family fun River Fest activities will again include live fish demonstrations, exhibits, games, arts and crafts, lunch, and much more! Anyone interested in helping to plan this year's festival can contact Carol at chaskins@pomperaug.org or 203-263-0076.

Annual Appeal Update & Spring Membership Drive

Thank you to the many generous donors who contributed to our all-important Annual Appeal. If you forgot to mail in your gift, not to worry – there is still time to make a contribution to this annual fund drive, which helps us sustain and expand our programming.

Looking ahead a few months, our Spring Newsletter will include something else that's very important--our annual Membership Drive. Over the past few years, our membership has bounced up and down around the 200 mark, but has generally been more down than up. Our goal for the spring drive is get back to a solid 200 members and after that to grow our current membership by 5% each year. Membership is at the heart of a grassroots nonprofit group like PRWC. It is the base support for the organization, generates our corps of volunteers, and creates a community of stewards. Increased membership numbers also improve our grant eligibility and strengthen the organization in its efforts to pursue policy on behalf of our watershed.

If you are already a PRWC member, you might have noticed you didn't receive a renewal notice this past year. That's because, for simplicity's sake, we've modified our approach to membership and will be doing our big drive in the spring from now on. So, if you are worried that your membership may have lapsed, not to fear; we have extended your current membership through this spring.

If you are not yet a member, we hope that you will consider joining and help us make our goal to stay strong by growing our membership.

James Belden

Upcoming Municipal Convocation: Low Impact Development & Land Use Changes in the Riparian Corridor

In early March, PRWC will facilitate a half-day workshop emphasizing low impact development and land use changes in the riparian corridor. Studying the results of a recent poll, we found that our local officials have expressed strong interest in learning more about both topics. We are pleased to help provide them with information and tools to help them better protect our local waters.

The two topics complement each other, relating to how much rainfall runs off the land and flows directly into our rivers and how much soaks into the ground and recharges the underlying aquifer. They also relate to how clean that runoff is based on land-use practices and on pollutants from the land that the stormwater may pick up and carry into the rivers.

What exactly is Low Impact Development (LID)?

When parcels of land are developed or built on, there is often a change in the vegetative cover and in the characteristics of the ground surface material. Forests and meadows are replaced by turf or lawn; and natural soils become paved or turn to other hard, compacted surfaces. These changes to the land alter the hydrology: More paved surfaces result in less area where water can soak into the ground and hence more runoff. Likewise, a change from forest or meadow to turf or lawn can also increase the amount of water that runs off a site, in addition to adding contaminants.

Low Impact Development is an alternative way of building on a parcel of land so that it mimics the natural hydrology. A goal of LID is to capture rainfall that would run off from a traditionally developed site by creating places for it to soak into the ground. Rain gardens, pervious pavements, and green roofs are just a few examples of LID practices that can be implemented so rain can still infiltrate into the ground on a fully built parcel. Simply put, the goal is to control runoff close to the point of generation and retain more water on the site where it falls, rather than funneling it into pipes that drain into local waterways.



LID includes design elements like porous pavers and rain gardens that let water soak into the ground.

What is the Riparian Corridor? And how is land use critical to the function of riparian areas?

According to the Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) at the University of Connecticut, “Riparian, or streamside, corridors are environmentally important areas critical to stream stability, pollutant removal, and both aquatic and terrestrial habitat.” The length of the riparian corridor as it stretches along a river, and the width of the riparian corridor as it spans perpendicularly from the water’s edge are important elements in its overall health and performance. “Well-vegetated riparian areas (also sometimes referred to as riparian buffers) are the single most effective protection for our water resources... [they] filter out polluted runoff; trap sediment and debris; slow the velocity of runoff so that it can soak into the ground and have less erosive power; stabilize banks and reduce erosion with their complex root systems; provide habitat and food for wildlife both on land and in the water; and help absorb the impact of floodwaters.” As a riparian

corridor becomes more and more developed and the buffer width decreases, the benefits it is able to provide are diminished and eventually lost.

Thanks to a recent project completed by CLEAR, changes in the land cover within riparian corridors across the entire state of Connecticut over a 20-year span (1985-2006) can be viewed online at: <http://clear.uconn.edu/projects/riparian/index.htm>. If you click on the “Your Town” option, it will pull up a series of maps showing two different buffer zones (100 feet and 300 feet) and the land uses in those areas over of a range of years. It will also give you a summary map and table that shows the changes in the land cover – how much of the town lies in these areas, how much is developed, how much is vegetated, and how much the uses have changed between 1985 and 2006. We’ll be sharing some of this data during the upcoming convocation, but we encourage you to explore this tool in the meantime.

POMPERAUG RIVER WATERSHED COALITION, INC.

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Streamflow Regulations (continued from Page 1)

These are the regulation's good features:

- It affirms the public trust in water, which requires a balance between water consumption and water conservation.
- It applies to all watercourses and to all major water-supply reservoirs.
- It requires variable flows based upon the seasonal flows that are natural to streams.
- It creates a classification system for river segments, from high-quality water flows (Class 1) to poor-quality water flows (Class 4), thus enabling long-term planning.
- It sets a goal of 75% natural flow for high-quality rivers and fairly protective, variable releases for segments below water-supply reservoirs.
- It guarantees that water supplies will be adequate for public health and economic wellbeing.
- It is flexible, taking into account special needs in times of drought and special conditions faced by individual utilities.
- It provides for public participation in river classification and planning.

[Refer to full article available at www.riversalliance.org to review the regulation's weaknesses.]

The regulation was rejected three times in 2010-2011 by the General Assembly's Regulation Review Committee before finally passing unanimously in November 2011. You can view the regulation and its history at the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) website (www.ct.gov/deep); search "streamflow regulation."

The price of making the regulation work will be eternal vigilance, but the reward will be a unique state water-management plan that includes an allocation for the environment. Streamflow protection has been the top priority for Rivers Alliance since 2002, and we are delighted to have something to be vigilant about.

Margaret Miner, Executive Director, Rivers Alliance of Connecticut, December 2011