



# BRASSnews

Newsletter of the Boquet River Association, Inc. | Fall 2014, Volume 29 Issue 1

---

## Letter from the President

---

By Anita Deming, New Russia

In November of 2013, BRASS lost our outstanding Executive Director, Julie Martin due to insufficient funds to sustain a payroll. Moving forward without a director has been an adjustment, but the Board of Directors is committed to our mission and has divided the duties to implement BRASS projects and to find more funding.

The BRASS Board has decided to use our non-profit status to find grant writers and contractors that would be willing and able to work on projects with us. This way BRASS does not have to maintain the expenses of a payroll. Unfortunately, some of the finer things that BRASS has traditionally maintained have fallen by the wayside, such as our regular printed newsletters. However, we do realize how important communication is to our members and we appreciate your support during this time of shrinking resources.

Below is a list of the projects that we are still working on this year or that have been completed. Several board members have written articles in this newsletter explaining more about some of the projects.

- Continuing work on the Boquet Watershed Planning Grant to inventory the Watershed resources and identify concerns. This grant was contracted out to Ann Holland of Willsboro, who has been fantastic getting us organized and talking. (See page 5)
- Celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of BRASS incorporation in conjunction with public review of the planning maps and input for the Department of State Planning Grant.
- Sampled and tested water at 15 locations along the Boquet. We are still working on interpreting the results, but we are happy to say, for the most part our water quality is good. A primary concern is fecal coliform in the Hamlet of Elizabethtown.
- Investigating the Wollastonite filter failure at the constructed wetlands located at the Willsboro Waste Water Treatment Facility.
- Studying dam removal impacts in Willsboro and providing support for needed erosion plantings to control sediment. (See page 2)
- Planted seedlings at four locations to provide stream bank stabilization.
- Monitoring and controlling invasive species with early detection and clean up.
- Conducted a culvert study to prioritize culverts that need replacing for flood resiliency and fish passage. (See page 2)
- Celebrated NYS Free Fishing Day with a River Fest at the Elizabethtown Fish and Game Club where we sponsored fly fishing demonstrations and other fun river oriented events. (See page 3)
- Leading “rambles” that interpret the environment in the Boquet Watershed to help residents learn more about water and river resources. (See page 4)



Ted Cornell

(Continued on page 7)

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Anita Deming, *President\**  
Bob McGoldrick, *Vice President*  
Schell McKinley, *Treasurer*  
Jeff Clock, *Secretary*

AJ Longware  
Tom Clark  
Matt Foley  
Bruce Misarski  
Vic Putman  
Kathy Linker  
Laura Newmark  
Daphne Hallowell  
Dave Reckhan

**TOWN REPRESENTATIVES  
(APPOINTED)**

Anita Deming - Elizabethtown  
*Vacant*- Essex  
Kathy Linker - Lewis  
Daphne Hallowell- Westport  
Jeff Clock - Willsboro

BRASS Board Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 pm. Members are invited to attend. Call to confirm dates and location.

\*518-962-4810 ext. 409  
c 518-586-1564

**Our Mission**

*BRASS is dedicated to enhancing the quality of water and life in the Boquet River watershed.*

The newsletter is prepared by AJ Longware with written contributions from the Board and others. All pictures were taken by BRASS unless otherwise noted.

**Boquet River Association**  
P.O. Box 374  
Elizabethtown, NY 12996  
info@boquetrivier.org

**“The River Connects Us”**

**2014 Project Updates**

**Town of Willsboro-The Future of the Dam**

By Victor Putman, Coordinator  
Greater Adirondack Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

On October 8, 2014 a public hearing was held at the Willsboro Town Hall to provide public input on the future of the Willsboro Dam. Numerous residents voiced support for removal of the dam as it no longer serves a direct financial or industrial use, and it is failing dramatically. If it goes during a flood or ice out, there could be serious safety issues downstream from the timbers with nails, plus the sediment would decrease aeration of the waters downstream. Others noted that the dam removal might help the local economy if fisheries were to be enhanced. Ideas suggested for improvement of the area include recognizing the past history of the dam with appropriate signage on the historical importance the dam and landscaping to enhance the downtown viewscape.

A letter from the BRASS Board was read where we supported the removal of the dam to enhance fish passage, and we offered assistance to the Town to improve aesthetics by new plantings along the stream bank.

After the hearing, the Willsboro Town Board noted that the deteriorated condition of the dam was a serious liability as sections of the dam were starting to be washed downstream creating safety concerns. A resolution was subsequently offered by Councilman Benway to remove the dam contingent upon available funding to cover dam removal excepting in kind efforts for which the Town of Willsboro could be responsible (ex. hauling debris), this resolution passed unanimously.

(This article is significantly condensed due to space constraints and will be printed in full in the next edition. The entire article is now available at [www.boquetrivier.org](http://www.boquetrivier.org))

**Culverts and Irene**

By Laura Newmark

Did you ever think there would be anything interesting to write about culverts? Until Hurricane Irene, I had no interest in the culverts in either Elizabethtown or Lewis. Unfortunately, during Irene several of our town’s culverts were overwhelmed as the ditches and brooks turned into rushing rivers.

Since then, I have become more aware of erosion concerns along our roadside ditches and the need for larger culverts. In our steep watershed a heavy rain will move downhill very fast and create “flashy” conditions, with water rising to flood stage rapidly.

The Boquet River Association recently partnered with the Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District, to review all of the culverts in the Boquet Watershed and to identify potential problem areas. Anita Deming and I surveyed Elizabethtown and several in Lewis, Schel McKinley surveyed Westport, Kathy Linker surveyed those on the Trout Pond Rd in Chesterfield, Bob McGoldrick surveyed several in Lewis, and Jeff Clock surveyed all of Willsboro and Essex. In total BRASS Board members located and inspected over 400 culverts.

We documented the size, material, and condition for most of the culverts that move water to the Boquet River from its many tributaries. Our local highway departments had done a great job repairing the roads after Irene. There are still 30 culverts that still need attention, but only a few are in critical condition. BRASS will continue to gather data to help raise money to replace the remaining damaged culverts.

## BRASS Events and Outreach

### Cookie Run Is A Fun Run

By AJ Longware

The BRASS annual Cookie Run held on Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> drew 19 runners from Elizabethtown, Keene, Westport, Wadhams, Lewis, and Port Henry. The rain didn't dampen the spirits of the runners, who all were eager to start the four mile round trip run. The group ran two miles up County Route 10 along the beautiful Boquet River, turned around and finished at the starting line.



*Pictured is overall winner Holly Butler.  
Photo by Lucy Misarski*

All registered runners and walkers received a warm cookie, freshly baked and donated by The Dogwood Bread Company. The category winners also received a homemade pie baked and donated by BRASS board members. In addition, the overall male and female winners took home a BRASS hat.

The run winners were: Overall- Holly Butler with a time of 31:37, Junior Male-Tom Palen (31:39), Junior Female-Charlotte Ward (39:06), Mid Male-Scott Woodward (34:18), Mid Female-Lynn Palen (34:43), Senior Male-Jeff Kelly (40:51), and Senior Female-Joan Lilly (34:05). The complete list of runner times is posted at [www.boquetriver.org](http://www.boquetriver.org).

BRASS gives a huge THANK YOU to the Dogwood Bread Company for donating the home-made cookies. Thank you to Jeff Kelly and the BRASS board members who made this event a success. And, to all of the runners - **Thank You** for supporting your river association!

### Artistic Trash

ALVIN REINER/P-R-PHOTO

BRASS (Boquet River Association) board members and friends scoured both sides of about 5,000 feet of the Boquet River in Willsboro as part of the association's campaign to clean a major tributary to Lake Champlain.

Among the most prevalent items were disposable diapers. Apparently, some citizens took the appellation seriously by wantonly disposing them; or perhaps they thought by lining the waterway, they would act as a protection from flooding by absorbing copious amounts of run-off. In all, four pick-up truckloads of refuse were collected.

As has been done in the past, at the culmination of their efforts, several members of the BRASS contingent stayed to create a sculpture utilizing found objects. Due to "contributions" of empty alcohol containers and several pots, the artists fashioned a work entitled "Still Life." The creation also featured a live trap, a dryer exhaust hose, a dolly, bicycle parts, and CO2 cartridges. Revenuers need not be summoned as the beverage producing icon was dismantled shortly afterwards.



*Vic Putman, Kathy Linker, and AJ Longware display their artistic trashy masterpiece, "Still Life." A nice collection of old pots and pans, bicycle parts and a live animal trap were used in the creation.*

*(Missing from the photo are Jeff Clock, Simon Cording and Amanda Cording who helped collect the media.)*

## Education and Outreach Events - Summer 2014

### River Fest A Grand Success!

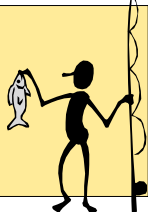
The 1st Annual Boquet River Fest was held on June 28th, 2014 at the Elizabethtown Fish and Game Club. (Actually, the first annual was scheduled for June 2013 but it was cancelled due to flooding.) The event was held in conjunction with the NYS Free Fishing weekend, so no fishing license was required.

About 60 local residents and visitors attended, which included both adults and children of all ages. We're not sure what the kids enjoyed the most... the fish printing on t-shirts, holding squiggling pollywogs, making fishy crafts, learning to cast, or just getting on the river and fishing. The adults were all smiles too, but also very serious about tuning up their fly fishing techniques. A great combination of education, fun and fishing!

Many thanks to the Friends of the Boquet, Cornell Cooperative Extension, 4H Club, Elizabethtown Fish & Game Club, Soil & Water, Ranger Rich, and BRASS board members and other volunteers who helped us make this event a success.



**Mark Your Calendar**  
**FREE\* Fishing & Fun Day**  
**Saturday, June 28, 2015**  
**E'town Fish & Game Club**



### 10th Great Adirondack Trail Run

*The Mountaineer* in Keene Valley hosted the annual Trail Run on June 14th. Event proceeds supported the AuSable River Association (AsRA) and BRASS. The main event consisted of an 11.5 mile run. There was also a 3.5 mile fun run. BRASS and AsRA board members team up each year to serve a picnic-style lunch after the race. Thanks to the runners and their families, *Patagonia* and *The Mountaineer* for their continued support.



### Summer Fun RAMBLES

BRASS schedules RAMBLES to encourage responsible recreation. These informal excursions are led by friends or board members of BRASS, are free and open to the public and are usually held on weekends. This summers' rambles included a Birding Watch & Walk with Becky Bosely and a Paddle on the Boquet, upstream from Wadhams Falls with Schell McKinley.

## Watershed Management Plan

By Ann Ruzow Holland, Ph.D. Consultant

At a public meeting held on August 4th at Floral Hall in Westport, over two dozen color maps depicting the physical condition of the Boquet River Watershed were on display. A brief orientation and instructions for *Walk About Show and Share* were provided by A. Deming and Dr. Holland. The purpose of the public meeting at this stage in the work was to “...solicit public input on the Watershed Characterization and to review and discuss water quality and watershed protection issues” (NYSDOS). The 29 attendees were provided with guidance on how to provide input and to discuss water quality and watershed protection issues that are locally important. They were asked to consider three questions:

1. *What aspects of the Boquet watershed would you like to see improved or preserved?*
2. *Have we forgotten something important in our watershed profile?*
3. *Are there recommendations you would like to contribute to the draft watershed study?*

For more than 30 minutes, attendees circulated in the Map gallery and provided 71 comments and suggestions on post-it notes. In a general open session 15 comments were made regarding water quality and watershed protection issues.

A second public meeting was held on August 26th, when the Boquet River Association met with the Westport Town Board to discuss the watershed management plan. Anita Deming presented the town and with an award for their support of watershed management. Ann Holland reviewed with the 14 attendees, which included town representatives and citizens, the current maps of the watershed and sought the town’s input on the management plan.



*CURRENT PLAN - includes a collection of data concerning the chemical health of water, analysis of surrounding land, an overview of watershed regulations, a list of practices to help local governments make improvements, and an assessment of management practices. Links to maps and data tables are available on the town website.*

*PHASE 1 DRAFT – Boquet River Association is seeking input from the board, along with any interested parties, before submitting the draft to the Department of State.*

*REPRESENTATIVE – Bob McGoldrick will act as a future representative between the Town Board and the BRASS.*

### **Summary of Public Comments: Generative Themes**

A total of 86 comments were generated from the walk about and general session, which included the following themes:

- *More information is needed about the Boquet River Watershed. BRASS needs to continue to collect additional data on existing conditions and trends either as part of the present study or as part of future work.*
- *Map Content and Formats requires some more attention in order to make the information more usable and accessible to the public.*
- *Citizens need help to understand scientific and demographic terms and topics.*
- *Citizen have some clear recommendations they wish to see included in the plan.*

**The maps and the full report including a transcript of comments are available at [boquetriver.org](http://boquetriver.org).**

## A New Look At the Elizabethtown Fish & Game Club

By Dave Reckahn

Over the past few months, SWCD, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Elizabethtown Fish and Game Club have worked together to restore a stretch of the Boquet River that was damaged from several flooding events. Four projects were completed on the river along the Elizabethtown Fish and Game Club property. Projects will be described from upstream to downstream.

The first section was severely narrowed by a point bar that had been gathering small rocks. Due to this restriction, the river was flowing extremely fast through the 30 to 50 foot channel. In stable areas upstream from this location, the river was around 70 to 90 feet. To address this issue, the channel was widened to about 70 feet by moving dropped sediment and rock along a bank to help stabilize it. The point bar, which was in the shape of a hump before, was redesigned into a bench. The bench will allow high waters to come up gradually while staying in the channel. This site has wonderful fish habitat now too! Deep pools were created when the channel was narrow, and a swift flowing run was also left in the center to continue the creation of deep pools.



*First section bench*

The second section is located at the beach area along the Elizabethtown Fish and Game Club. Prior to any work, the beach, a point bar, was very steep and prevented the river from coming up during high water events. This caused lots of issues upstream and along the opposing bank. The opposing bank, which didn't allow for overflow either, was quickly eroding and dropping lots of sediment into the Boquet River. The beach, similar to the first section, was turned into a bench, which will gradually allow the river to come up during high flow events. This will also be nice to the Club's beach goers as access to the river will be much easier! The opposing bank looks completely different now. Instead of bare, exposed soil, a toewood structure using root wads gives the bank a fish friendly appearance. The bank height was also reduced to allow for overflow, which will take pressure off other nearby areas of the river. The toewood structure will help to stabilize the bank by slowing the pressure from the river before hitting the bank. An added benefit is that fish love the root wads for shelter!



*Working on the toewood structure*

The third section, located just downstream of the beach, was very similar to the first section. The river's channel was greatly restricted due to a high point bar. This point bar was reshaped similar to the first section. The bench was cut back to allow at least 50 feet of the river to use the channel during normal flows.



*River flowing well after restoration*

The fourth section, a center bar, was forcing the river to split into two channels for about 180 feet. This was causing a lot of erosion on the two banks that were being affected. To resolve this issue, the center bar was relocated to provide stabilization to the banks. Log vanes were also added to further protect the banks using trees that had fallen into the river.

## The River Connects Us

We truly appreciate your support of our projects as we work to implement the following goals:

- Improve quality of life for those living in the Boquet Watershed, by supporting a clean, fishable, swimmable, and scenic watershed.
- Help our residents recognize the impact of quality of water (pollution) and quantity of water (flooding) in our communities.
- Increase fish populations in the river and its tributaries
- Decrease the impact of flooding in the watershed.
- Decrease e. coli found in the waters.
- Decrease phosphorous levels in the waters that contribute to algal blooms in Lake Champlain.
- Support the Boquet River Land Trust to allow continued use of swimming areas



**BRASS hats are now available for only \$15.**

Kathy Linker now coordinates a group called “The Friends” to help plant trees, clean up the litter in the river, and assist with grant projects. If you have any interest in being a friend (and getting an email when we need help) please contact Kathy at sneezebeez@yahoo.com or call me at 518-962-4810 x 409.

THANK YOU for your membership and contributions to BRASS. We couldn't do what we do without you.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**    Select:     New member     Renewed member     Updated info     Gift Membership\*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you wish to receive your newsletter by email.

**Alternate Address (  Summer/  Winter)**

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Life Membership \$500

Full Creel \$100

Brown Trout \$35

Minnow (student) \$10

Atlantic Salmon \$50

Speckled Trout \$25

Additional Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*If this is a gift membership, please let us know if you would like us to send a gift card in your name:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to the Boquet River Association.**

Please complete and return this form to: Boquet River Association , P.O. Box 374, Elizabethtown, NY

**You can join BRASS, renew your membership and/or donate to BRASS online at [www.boquetriver.org](http://www.boquetriver.org)**

In most instances, your membership and donation is fully tax-deductible as a charitable contribution.

## Will Salmon Be King Again?

By Vic Putman

The salmon were running the Boquet River from the mouth at Lake Champlain by early October. Within the first few days of the run, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation counted 22 salmon at the fish ladder located at the dam in Willsboro. Meanwhile the US Fish and Wildlife Service netted 24 salmon and put transmitters in them to see if the fish would go up through the fish ladder and/or how many attempts they make to do so.

Another salmon study is also in progress and is spearheaded by the US F&WS in conjunction with Concordia University in Montreal. Andrew Harbicht is the Grad Student who is implanting salmon with transmitters to determine how successful the fish are at traversing the rapids into the fish ladder and how many attempts they have made. Andrew has tagged and released 24 salmon so far and the antennae mounts at the fish ladder and below the large fishing pool monitor fish activities. Thus far Andrew says 3 have gone back into the Lake, one was caught and returned to the river and another is situated next to the fish ladder in the staging pool. Look for more information on this research in the next issue of the BRASS Newsletter.



*The photo above shows one of the Landlocked Atlantic Salmon which was captured entering the NYS DEC Fish Ladder this Fall. To date (10-23-14) NYS DEC staff have captured 38 salmon that have traversed the rapids and gone through into the fish ladder. It was noted that the majority were males looking for the best spawning habitat. The males have a much more pronounced hooked jaw as seen in the photos.*



## **BRASS**news

Boquet River Association,  
Inc.

P.O. Box 374  
Elizabethtown, NY 12932

*BRASS is dedicated to enhancing the quality of  
water and life in the Boquet River watershed.*

What's Inside:

Letter From the President

Willsboro Dam

Culvert Assessment

Cookie Run Results

Trashy Art Event