



# BRASSnews

Newsletter of the Boquet River Association, Inc.

Summer 2019

## Nita's Notes

by Anita Deming, BRASS Board President

Since our newsletter last year, the Boquet River Association (BRASS) has been busy.

**It is membership time again and we hope you will be able to support our projects in 2019.**

Our 2018 membership campaign was very successful, and we made almost \$3,500. Thank you everyone.

Our Annual meeting was Aug 5 at the Lewis Fish and Game Club. Sharon and Owen Brown from Beavers, Wildlife and Wetlands presented a video on beavers and their habits. They have a wonderful web site that you can access to see them demonstrate ways to control flooding from beaver activities: [www.beaversww.org](http://www.beaversww.org)

Teamed with the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) to develop a homeowner Japanese Knotweed control program. Received \$250 from Patagonia to buy the injection equipment that is used to implement control. We are loaning this equipment and providing training to those wishing to manage Japanese Knotweed on their property along the river. See article page 4.

We also held 2 informational classes on Knotweed control. One was an open meeting in Elizabethtown at the Hand House where we had 25 people. The other was in the summer at the CCE building in Westport for the Master Gardener program, where we had 18 gardening outreach educators.

Gathered water tests at 13 locations in July and August. We have found over the years that if we might find problems on the river it will be in the warmer months. Also, we gather information regarding the river's safety for swimming. See article page 3.

The planned handicap fishing access project on the west bank of the Boquet just north of the old dam was cancelled. All the bids for the cleanup and construction were way over the budget. We never did do a tree planting after the dam was removed, because the banks were stable and there was no aesthetic need nor mud to stabilize.



Anita Deming presents the Friend of the Boquet River plaque to Alta Jo Longware for over 20 years of service on the BRASS BOD. See full story on page 2.



Victor Putman and Anita Deming removing sand and concrete after dam removal to prevent sedimentation downstream.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Anita Deming, *President\**
- Bob McGoldrick, *Vice President*
- Schell McKinley, *Treasurer*
- Amy Calkins, *Secretary*
- Matt Foley
- Kathy Linker
- Bruce Misarski
- Laura Newmark
- Vic Putman
- Susie Smith
- Betsy Tisdale
- Lucas McNally
- Tiffany Pinheiro

**TOWN REPRESENTATIVES**

(APPOINTED)

- Anita Deming - Elizabethtown
- Susie Smith - Essex
- Kathy Linker - Lewis
- Bob McGoldrick - Westport
- Vic Putman - Willsboro

BRASS Board Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 pm. Everyone is invited to attend. Call to confirm date, time and location monthly.

\*518-873-2178  
 Cell 518-586-1564  
 Fax 518-873-9156

**Our Mission**

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

The newsletter is prepared by Laurie Davis in collaboration with Anita Deming with written contributions from the Board and others. All pictures were taken by BRASS unless otherwise noted.

**Boquet River Association, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 374**  
**Elizabethtown, NY 12932**  
**info@boquetriver.com**

**“The River Connects Us”**  
**BRASS T-shirts and hats are available.**  
**See page 7**

**BRASS Farewells**

The Boquet River Association had to bid farewell to 2 of our long time Board members: Alta Jo Longware and David Reckahn. They were institutions at our Board meetings and really helped the Association tremendously. We held a dinner in their honor and provided a plaque for each of them as “Friends of the Boquet River”. Over 30 people were there to thank them for their generosity and support of BRASS’s mission.

Alta Jo was a technology teacher in AuSable Forks, and handled the newsletter, water testing, email, T – shirt and hat sales, and volunteered for our fund-raising events. She was our primary link to youth and school educational projects. She was on the board of directors for over 20 years. You may notice how late our newsletter is going out. This is because AJ was not available to help us. Fortunately, Laura Newmark has taken over the T-shirts and hats. Laura Newmark and Amy Calkins have taken over the membership data base. Anita Deming took on writing the articles for the newsletter. Anita Deming and Amy Calkins took over the water testing. We meet once a month usually on the 1st Monday of the month at 7 pm at the Wadhams library. If you are at all interested in volunteering, call Anita at 518-873-2178.

Dave Reckahn was the Manager for Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). He organized many erosion controls, livestock exclusion, and tree planting projects. Whenever a project needed matching funds or labor to help it get DONE, BRASS would provide some volunteers from our “Friends” list and finish off the project. Most grant projects require 15% to 20% match. BRASS was able to provide some match in the way of tree and grass plantings plus labor at \$15/hour/person. The first day I met Dave, I needed help building sediment traps for road ditch erosion control. Cornell Extension cannot build things as they are insured for educating, not construction. Dave said “Sure I will take that grant over.” I was so glad. From there, he worked with the Essex County Highway Dept. and Mark Buckley to develop varying-sized sediment traps for our local roads and ditches. Dave worked with us for many years, and finally joined the board of directors about 8 years ago. He was our engineering/grant guy for construction projects.

Both will be missed so much. Once again if you are interested in joining our Board of Directors to help guide and implement projects please contact Anita Deming at 518-873-2178.

Anita Deming presents the Friend of the Boquet River plaque to David Reckahn for coordinating tree planting and erosion control projects plus 8 years on the BRASS BOD.





## Water Testing

By Anita Deming, BRASS President

One of our longest running and most costly projects that we do every year is water testing. It costs us over \$3,500 every year. Since our funding is so scarce, we have reviewed our locations and tested our regime to develop a more streamlined and hopefully useful data set.

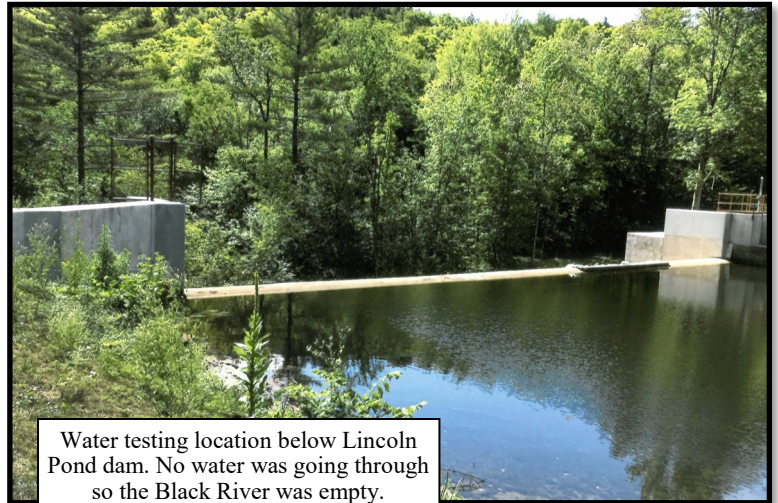
In 1983 when we first started, we worked with the 3 schools in our watershed, Elizabethtown-Lewis, Westport, and Willsboro- Essex 5<sup>th</sup> graders. We used Hach test kits and sampled: Nitrogen, Specific Conductivity, pH, Ortho-phosphorus, temperature, and suspended solids. We sampled quarterly: the samples were not taken on the same day as each school had a different schedule, winter samples were VERY cold and sometimes slippery, not all the data made sense, it was a little bit dangerous for the children climbing over the rocks, curriculums for schools became more restrictive etc. The kids and the science teachers loved it, but we decided to go with one-day testing quarterly and with trained adults.

In 1988, the Executive Director and a Board member began doing the testing all on the same day, quarterly, using the Hach test kits. The data accumulated. We were then told by DEC that they would not accept our results as they were not from a certified laboratory. We received a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) to pay for water test analysis at a certified laboratory. Then we had the great idea to buy the equipment for a certified laboratory and 5 years of funding for our testing program. We set this up at the Westport Wastewater Treatment Facility in Wadhams and Dennis Kalma and Laurie Davis ran the lab. We continued monthly testing underwritten by LCBP. Over the 5 years we picked up testing for several other Wastewater Treatment Facilities which ended up paying for our sampling regime which by now included 14 tests.

We used the Wadhams laboratory and helped several towns with low cost water testing until our equipment started to get old and we needed to replace it. After long and ardent discussions, we decided to get out of the water testing business and not unfairly compete with private water testing labs. So, for the last 8 years we are back paying for our water testing. We decided not to test through the winter as we never had any big problems then. In fact, we went to testing only in July and August as that is when the public swims in the water and comes in the closest contact with potential pathogens. It is also the only time we found elevated coliform and/or fecal coliform counts. We have changed our locations for testing to make it easier and safer for the samplers (Anita, I am way older now and Amy Calkins), and we are considering reducing the number of tests to save money. We may go to every other or third year for heavy metals, which have never been a problem for us.

Locations we test:

- North Fork – this is our cleanest location and easy to reach by road
- Kingdom Dam outfall – outflow from Lincoln Pond and up stream for Black River (we do not have a boat to take a lake sample)
- Rice or “Us” Falls – up stream for The Branch before Elizabethtown
- Elizabethtown Library parking lot – downstream on The Branch after most of Elizabethtown
- Maple St Bridge – Main Stem of Boquet River: after Elizabethtown and The Branch meet, before Wadhams (there is a flood water height measure on this bridge abutment).
- Trout Pond Rd - Cleanest spot for the North Branch
- Burpee Brook – out of old landfill which is closed now (considering moving to every 4 years)
- Spruce Mill up Wells Hill – cleanest for Spruce Mill
- DEC fish access on Co Rte. 12 Spruce Mill after Reber farms and before North Branch junction
- McCauliffe Rd – Main Stem after Wadhams and Before North Branch junction
- Spear Rd bridge – North Branch after farms and before junction with Main Stem
- Willsboro canoe launch – After Main Stem, North Branch and Willsboro– this last location is where the heavy metals test is done



Water testing location below Lincoln Pond dam. No water was going through so the Black River was empty.

Tests that we do in July and August: date, time, weather, water temperature, pH, Specific Conductivity, Total Dissolved Solids, Total Coliform, E.Coli, Fecal Coliform, Nitrate +, Nitrate as N, Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (organic nitrogen), Ortho-phosphorus, and Total Phosphorus, and Total Suspended Solids. For the most part the river is very clean. We are happy about this.

## Knotweed in Elizabethtown

By Anita Deming, BRASS President

Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) has been in the Adirondacks since before 1978 when I first moved here. As the local extension agent, I was regularly asked how to control this invasive weed from Asia. I was told by landowners that they had Knotweed growing up through their driveway asphalt, no herbicides worked, and mowing was useless. Some of this is true, but there is now an APA approved, labor intensive way to control this weed and encourage native plants to retake the area.

Knotweed is often on uplands, where it spreads slowly. However, there are at least 100 mapped infestations on Water St. in Elizabethtown along The Branch as it flows through town (Pix1). Therefore, it is likely to continue spreading downstream rapidly. The Boquet River Association (BRASS) and the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) are looking for help to manage this plant along our river (Pix 2). APIPP has a program to control Japanese Knotweed in upland areas. BRASS has a program to control them near water bodies.

The roots grow about 15 feet deep and 40 feet horizontally. They create a thick and intertwined mat. They break off in sections and float downstream. Each section can start another plant. When the plants break off, they often pull a lot of river bank with them, thus contributing to river bank erosion.

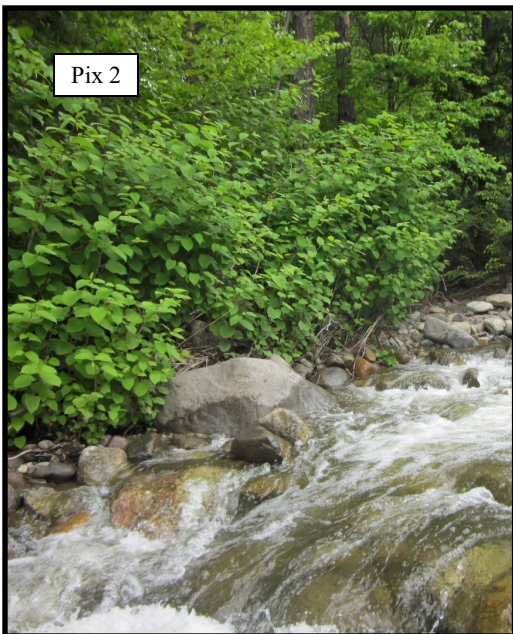
The Adirondack Park Agency has approved an environmentally sound practice for controlling knotweed by injecting 3 cc of 40% Glyphosate into the stem of the plant. This will reduce the stand by about 85% the first year, however you need to follow up for the next several years for continuing control. Mowing, covering, or digging work quite well on the few plants that are left. The best time for control is mid-July to mid-September. (Pix 3)

As you may expect there are paperwork and regulations that need to be followed. BRASS is offering to help you with the paperwork and steps to implement a control project on your property. We have injectors to lend out and will do the paperwork for the permits. Please contact Anita Deming at 518-873-2178 for more information and a fact sheet on what needs to be done. **We are having a training session in mid-September.**

Unique zigzag stem with heart-shaped leaves



Pix 2

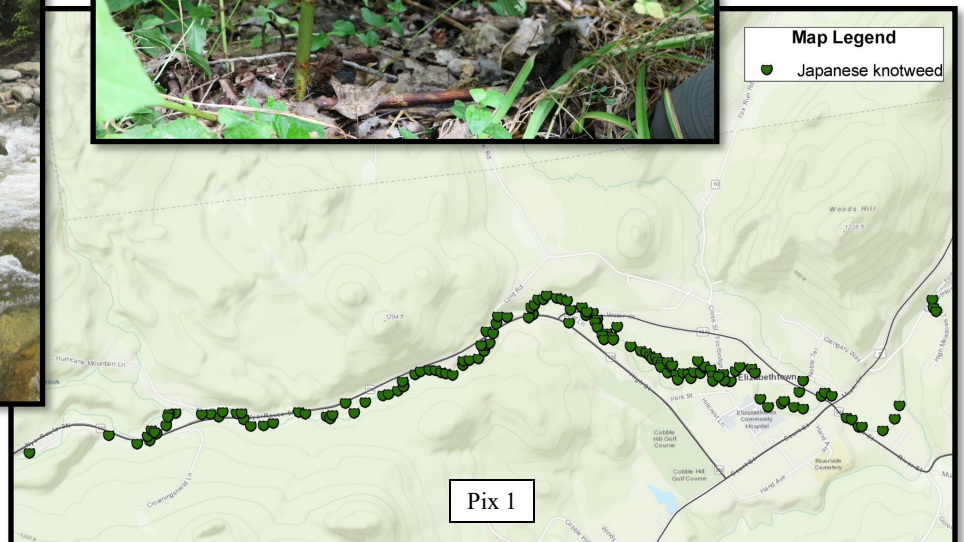


Pix 3



Map Legend  
● Japanese knotweed

Pix 1





## Baptism in the Boquet

*By Betsy Tisdale – Newest Boquet River Board Member*

“Hold your feet up! Hold your feet up!” My husband was yelling to me from shore over the rushing white water of the river.

On a cold gray April Easter Sunday afternoon, we had left a neighbors’ holiday lunch in Essex because the Boquet was open and up. On the tricky first bend below the ledges we hit a boulder and quickly tipped into the fiver in our homemade white-water canoe.

Now I could see the tips of my sneakers above the waves. I was actually enjoying this new kind of ride, although cold and wet. My Pentax was still around my neck, though thoroughly soaked. I was grateful for my life jacket.

Fortunately, a gravel bar eased me back into an upright position. My husband had the canoe and both paddles on the opposite shore.

“I’m all right! I’m all right! I’m all right!” I yelled back to him. We both knew people who had broken legs tumbling down rivers. I was strangely euphoric. Watching him ferry the boat expertly toward me, I realized my blood was coursing with adrenaline. He was grinning at me.

“Is that it for today?” I asked.

“No, we can’t get out of here. This is a little gorge.”

The canoe ground to a halt near me.

“Hop in.”

I climbed in the bow, pushed off with a grating of stones, we turned downstream and continued on our way, through the exquisite winding hallway created by the river.

“I think I know how to get through there next time.”

Silently, I wondered if I wanted to come along next time, but there was no time for conversation. We were both too busy reading the river, and pushing, pulling, and back paddling accordingly. Threading our way between the rocks trying to find the best route was consuming all our energy and concentration. There was no reference guide, we were writing it.

We passed the McAuliffe farm, then glided quietly around Big Bend, and under Morehouse bridge. An osprey surprised us by calling “Kew! Kew! Kew! Flying out of a big dead tree on the steep left bank. We could hear the steady hum of the NYCO plant.

Finally, we swept around a left-hand curve smelling raw sewage pouring from various pipes in Willsboro. This was 1973, thankfully that particular perfume is gone since a new treatment plant was built. Floating past the lovely red brick Methodist church to our right is a favorite sight. Gliding under the Route 22 bridge, then a pull to the right to take out by the school bandstand, our busy day was done.

We repeated that trip many times, never dumped again. And I even taught some of my Willsboro and Essex Girl Scouts from my Cadette troop to be bow paddlers on that run. They loved it.

Today, 45 years later, the Boquet is much cleaner and amazingly, the Willsboro Dam has been removed!

Oh! And my Pentax Spotmatic? The manufacturer declared it a total loss. However, very soon afterwards we met a wonderful man, Cyril Novoselec, at an Adirondack Mt. club meeting in Plattsburgh. He took the camera home stayed up all night taking it apart soaking the parts in rust-dissolving solution, drying it, “sanding” the pieces, oiling them, and reassembling everything. I picked it up on my lunch hour from work. He refused to allow me to leave until I tried the shutter at every speed and aperture setting. With joy in my heart I paid him \$30 and that camera took thousands more photos for almost 20 years. But I never took it along again for whitewater adventures.

Quite frankly, I am still amazed so many people have contributed money, time, muscle work, imagination, and dogged determination in cleaning up our river, the steepest in New York State. The paper mill in Willsboro closed in 1969. BRASS had not formed yet.



The Boquet between the McAuliffe Farm and the Morehouse Bridge. Photo credit Laurie Davis.

## BRASSnewsbites

**Tom Clark** passed away suddenly last month. He was on the BRASS Board of Directors for over 15 years. He rarely missed a meeting and was so wise about water chemistry and town water treatment issues. His advice was on point and helpful. He is sorely missed.

**Tree planting,** Thank you to Rich Redman and Trout Unlimited for planting trees along the County Rte 8, the Elizabethtown Wadhams Rd, just before the Fish and Game Club. There used to be many large trees between the river and the road, but many died due to old age and root restrictions. They planted 600 potted plants including: red pines, white pines, and swamp rose from DEC and we expect they will do well.



A rainbow in New Russia. Photo credit: Alvin Reiner

*(Baptism in the Boquet...Continued from page 5)*

At the request of a National Park Representative who moderated community meeting about the future of the Boquet River, I put together a slide show about canoeing the River and what could be seen along the way. Gradually, people saw a better future for our river. I also wrote an article and did photos for Adirondack Life about the Boquet River and again, people have shown they love their river. Old tires, plastic, rusty vehicle parts, and appliances have been removed by volunteers. Numerous trees and riparian shrubs have been planted to curb erosion. Amazingly salmon are jumping the falls at Willsboro, mostly at night, since the dam was removed. They are spawning upstream. The Boquet is once again a sparkling gem.

*(Nita's Notes...Continued from page 1)*

Taught 5 classes for the Willsboro Methodist Church Bible Camp on water quality, volunteering, fish habitat, aquatic insects, non-point-source pollution, and how to spin cast. I was so impressed with the children's energy and excitement for wanting to protect water quality. We believe it is critical to teach the next generation. The children donated \$125 of their own money to the BRASS.

We partnered with the Elizabethtown Days in 2018 and 2019 where we had a tent with activities for adults and children. We had spin casting and fly-casting lessons, water non-point-source pollution model, and aquatic insects for identification. Hundreds of people stopped by to talk with our volunteers: Kurt Olbeck, Bob McGoldrick, Anita Deming, Amy Calkins, Laura Newmark and rotating parents helping with the spin casting which was very popular.

Noel Merrihew and Anita Deming attended a meeting of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMSA) to talk about flooding problems. We explained the need for new flood maps and possible remedies for the flooding over Rte. 9 south of Elizabethtown and in Whallonsburg.

In 2018, we filled the large log lean-to in the conservation area at the Essex County Fair with Water Models that Robin Ulmer created with a grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program. All our brochures were picked up, but we have a reprint if you want one, just let me know. In 2019, we had a static display in the conservation area with photos of BRASS projects and our brochure.

Clean up projects were done at Rice (Us) Falls and Split Rock Falls. We took a pick-up truck full of trash from each location to the Transfer Site in Lewis.

We were very concerned about sanitary conditions at Split Rock Falls, so we started a letter writing campaign to encourage NYS to put in a porta-potty. NYSDEC has installed a wooden "out-house/port-a-potty" so hopefully conditions will be more sanitary at this popular location in the future. We need to get a bigger toilet paper roll, so bring your own to be sure. It is cleaned weekly. We thank NYS DEC for their help with this project.

We received a \$3,000 grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program and the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC) to improve our Internet presence.

**I would like to thank everyone for your generous donations that keep us solvent.**



**BRASS Hats and T-shirts are available for \$15 each or \$25 for both when purchased together.**

Contact: Laura Newmark at  
 PO Box 392, Elizabethtown NY 12932  
 518-873-6557

**We ship USPS for only \$5.**

**Membership reminder:** We make an annual plea for membership of our supporters and friends. Without your help we will not exist. Our Budget is small about \$10,000 dollars which covers: Water Testing (about \$4,000), liability insurance (about \$2,000), contract help (about \$2,000), printing our newsletter and office costs (\$600), mileage, tree planting, river clean up, public outreach, and matching funds for grants. Our towns provide about \$2,000 annually, plus we have several fund raisers, but most of our money comes from generous donors like you.

Thank 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 \$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.**

Complete and return this form to: Boquet River Association, P.O. Box 374, Elizabethtown, NY 12932

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

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



Wadhams pumphouse. Photo credit: AJ Longware

# Alert: BRASS has lost its email and website!

We are opening at new one: [www.BoquetRiver.com](http://www.BoquetRiver.com) and [info@boquetriver.com](mailto:info@boquetriver.com). The old .org address will take you to a Japanese company that will try to sell you something. We are so sorry for this disaster. Fortunately, we have received a \$3,000 grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program and NEWIPIC to hire Ken Hughes of MacMan to help us create a new and better website and Internet connections. We hope to be up and running by September.

We are very sorry to have to change our internet contacts, but hope this will eventually be a better resource for all.

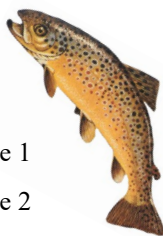
The fastest way to connect to Anita Deming (the BRASS email reader) is to call 518-873-2178 or email [anitaldeming@gmail.com](mailto:anitaldeming@gmail.com)



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**Boquet River Association, Inc.**  
**P. O. Box 374**  
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