



French River Log

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Welcome to the March 1, 2010 edition of the French River Log, the Newsletter of the French River Connection. You are receiving this newsletter because at some point you gave us your email address and we have been sending you meeting announcements, minutes, and other information. At the bottom of this newsletter there is information about how to unsubscribe if you wish.

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Spring is Just Around the Corner



It must be, because we are a week away from starting our sixth water quality monitoring campaign. This year we will monitor the same locations with the TROLL and colorimeter as we did last year, and will deploy our four temperature data loggers at locations on the main stem of the French. Thanks to a great response from previous and new volunteers, we have our schedule filled and are ready to go, and our Quality Assurance Plan has been reviewed and will be approved through 2012. Volunteers from 2008 and 2009 have been invited to an appreciation breakfast March 27 at Point Breeze, hosted by The Last Green Valley.

Another sign of spring is increased beaver activity, and we need some warmer days to go out and protect some trees. Target areas include both sides of the river at Perryville and Leovich Landing. There may also be renewed activity at French River Park. The hut at left, on a point of land near the Perryville Trace, is at least 5 feet high

Another Sign of Spring: Our Annual Meeting

This year our Annual Meeting will once again be held at the [Black Tavern](#) in Dudley, at 7pm on April 14. Our speaker this year will be Delpha Very from the Putnam Office of Economic and Community Development. We often wonder how Putnam did such a good job with their riverfront. Ms. Very will tell us.

Other items for the annual meeting include a very brief update on our progress, election of board members, and the kick-off of our bike raffle. And of course, enjoy something to eat and good conversation.

Once again this year we will offer half-price memberships to new members joining at the meeting only. So please, bring a friend and sign 'em up.

Shoreline Survey Published

One of the first projects the French River Connection undertook, way back in 2006, was a Shoreline Survey. This is a process developed by Massachusetts Riverways to identify the characteristics of a river corridor and use it as a guide for action. The river is divided into segments of a half-mile or so in length, and then paddled and /or walked and such features as adjoining land use, vegetation cover, animal life, bottom material, river depth, and others are marked on a data sheet. A summary for each section is written, including assets and threats and priorities for action. This was accomplished by volunteers, in most cases in pairs for each section.

After we had gathered our data, we found difficulty in publishing it in a form which would not require a lot of arduous mapping which would also be difficult to maintain, so we didn't finish the job, which as we all know, isn't really complete until the paperwork is done. We hoped for an electronic approach, and it arrived in the form of the "My Maps" feature of Google Maps. With this, we are able to use a google map very similar to the one you use to find your way, plot the river segments on it, and then link to our data and findings. The Google Map pulls it all together, and is easily maintained. All one need do is click on a colored river segment and links to the data appear in a pop-up. You can review our [Shoreline Survey](#) here.



Thanks to Tom Ryzewski and Andrew LaBonte for pulling this all together.

Bike Raffle



This year we will be conducting a bike raffle, kicking off at the annual meeting with the drawing at the Dam Trail Race August 7. The bike is a men's or women's Specialized Carmel 700 Hybrid donated by [Southbridge Bicycles](#) and Bicycle Concepts in Putnam. Suggested retail is \$390. The bike will be fit to the winner. Here's a [spec sheet](#).



What's included in French River Park?

- 1.66 acres leased by the French River Connection and the Town of Webster
- Removal of many of the trees
- Grading/leveling of the property
- Approximately 20 spaces in existing, repaired parking lot
- Three plastisol coated picnic tables anchored in concrete
- Seven plastisol coated benches anchored in concrete
- Two rain gardens for stormwater management
- Path, partly hardsurfaced
- Matting for erosion control
- Cartop paddling access
- Water Service to the site
- Electricity source
- All-night parking lot and path lighting on 16-20' poles
- Bike rack
- Grass surface
- Approximately 14 trees
- Approximately 400 shrubs, ferns, and perennials
- Boulder barriers





Quick Notes

The Dam Trail Race is growing. This year there will be a shorter race concurrent with the 11 mile course used last year. We expect many more runners as a result and hope to increase our fund-raising results accordingly . But we also need more race-day volunteers. So please consider setting aside the morning of August 7 to help out. It's fun!

Permitting and engineering is proceeding on Leovich Landing. We expect in the late spring or early summer we will need some volunteer work days. So please watch for announcements and lend a hand. Many hands make light work!

If you're not a current member of the French River Connection, please consider joining. Unrestricted membership donations are an important source of funds for us. Try as we might to get the expenses of our projects and programs specifically donated, we're not 100% successful, and we have expenses such as insurance and filing fees to cover. Go to our [Membership and Donations](#) page to get a mail-in form or use your credit card.

[Visit us on the web](#) or [visit our blog](#)

See you at the Annual Meeting, Wednesday April 14 at 7pm at the Black Tavern in Dudley

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