



Currents

A Publication of the Saugus River Watershed Council

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Tennessee Gas Proposes 7.8 Mile Pipeline

The Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company has proposed constructing a new 7.81 mile gas pipeline through Saugus, Wakefield and Lynnfield. If implemented as proposed, the project would have a significant negative impact on natural resources in the Saugus River watershed. Overall the project would affect 28.8 acres of forested land, 25.3 acres of wetlands, and 19.4 acres of open land.

The project would have a significant impact on several important natural resource areas including the main stem of the Saugus River, Breakheart Reservation in Saugus, the Reedy Meadow National Natural Landmark, and the Golden Hills Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

The Saugus River Watershed Council will submit comments throughout the environmental permitting process in an effort to protect natural resources in our watershed. The Council recently submitted a comment letter regarding the Environmental Notification Form filed with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

One of the Council's primary recommendations is that Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company identify alternative routes wherever possible to reduce and/or minimize impacts to natural resources in the Saugus River watershed. As currently proposed, the project follows the New England Power Company easement and would significantly alter the natural resource areas noted above.

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Flooding Plagues Region



Photo credit: Curtis White, National Park Service

Shown here, the Saugus River expanded beyond its banks flooding portions of the Saugus Iron Works. Under normal conditions, the river runs in a channel adjacent to the trees shown in rear of this photo. May 14, 2006.

This May, New England faced one of the worst flooding events in history, with rivers and streams throughout the region expanding over their banks flooding roadways, homes and businesses.

In this watershed, the Saugus River, Walden Pond, and smaller streams, flooded out numerous roadways such as Route 1, the Lynn Fells Parkway, Hamilton Street, Water Street and Central Street. Flooding caused both short and long-term damage to many homes, vehicles, businesses, bridges and roadways.

With sewer and storm drain systems beyond their capacity, the Lincoln Avenue pumping station dumped sewage into the Saugus River for several days. In addition, local sewer lines in many communities backed up through manholes in some locations contributing bacteria to flood waters in roadways and homes.

While many local businesses were up and running days after the waters receded, some roadway and other infrastructure repairs will take months to complete. ❖

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Editorial: Recent Flooding Highlights Need for “Low Impact Development” (LID)

The recent floods throughout New England have raised significant questions about the reality of planning for major storm events during the environmental permitting process for development.

Debates will go on about whether the recent rainstorm should be considered a 100-year rain storm or something more. However it is defined, the May 2006 floods highlighted the need for local, state and federal environmental permitting agencies to be more vigilant in requiring developers to meet high standards for managing stormwater pollution and water volume.

Historic encroachment onto vegetated buffer zones along the Saugus River, as well as wetlands such as Reedy Meadow and Rumney Marsh, has decreased the ability of these areas to provide important flood storage capacity.

While it is difficult to go back and change already developed parcels, there is still ample opportunity within the Saugus River watershed to increase flood storage capacity associated with new developments.

For example, the 200+ acre property (current location of Sheraton Colonial Hotel and golf course) in Lynnfield and Wakefield has recently been sold and will be redeveloped over the next few years. The future development of this site is particularly important because it abuts the Reedy Meadow National Natural Landmark and the Saugus River. The site is also adjacent to the Lynn Water and Sewer Commission Dam and Hawkes Brook which transports water from the Saugus

River to the City of Lynn’s drinking water reservoir system.

Incorporating “Low Impact Development” (LID) techniques when planning for development of this and other major sites in the watershed would help alleviate flooding and enhance important buffer zones and natural resources in the Saugus River watershed.

Conventional development techniques often clear trees and valuable topsoil from a site and re-grade it so that all water ends up in a large detention basin. Resulting problems include loss of recharge, increased water temperature, decreased water quality and higher runoff volumes.

The LID approach, on the other hand, protects the natural ability of the site to capture precipitation, keep it clean and allow it to recharge the local water table. This is achieved by applying a suite of tools including: 1) planning to preserve and create natural features, 2) landscaping to enhance buffer zones and create natural filters, 3) using vegetation to slow runoff rates, and 4) reducing impervious surfaces.

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs has created an excellent on-line resource at www.mass.gov/envir/lid. The site provides case studies, sample local by-laws, and informational brochures. Incorporating these innovative approaches in our watershed could help prevent future problems similar to those caused by the May 2006 rainstorms.

Joan LeBlanc ❖

What is LID?

Low Impact Development is an approach to environmentally friendly land use planning. It includes a suite of landscaping and design techniques that attempt to maintain the natural, pre-developed ability of a site to manage rainfall. LID techniques capture water on site, filter it through vegetation, and let it soak into the ground where it can recharge the local water table rather than being lost as surface runoff. An important LID principle includes the idea that stormwater is not merely a waste product to be disposed of, but rather that rainwater is a resource.

Lobstermen’s Landing

The Town of Saugus is proposing major improvements to the landside facilities and docks at Lobstermen’s Landing in Saugus. The Saugus River Watershed Council submitted comments during the permitting process in support of the project, noting the need to protect the river channel from debris during construction work, and enhance interpretive information at Vitale Park about the natural resources and history of the Saugus River. ❖

Saugus River



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2006 Fish Monitoring Project



From left, Brad Chase and Matt Ayer of the Division of Marine Fisheries identify and measure fish from the Saugus River, March 2006.

This spring, the Saugus River Watershed Council worked in partnership with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries, the Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site, and the Corporate Wetlands Partnership to conduct the second year of our Saugus River fish monitoring project.

From 8 March 2006 through 19 May 2006, a fyke net was set in the main stem of the Saugus River. Staff and volunteers checked the net four days each week to identify and count fish. The fyke net sampling program is aimed at identifying the presence and size of rainbow smelt population in the Saugus River.

This spring, 1,412 rainbow smelt were identified, measured and the released back into the Saugus River. These results show a marked increase from 2005 when 138 rainbow smelt were caught in the river under a similar sampling regime. Rainbow smelt, which were recently designated by the state as a Species of Special Concern, are a diadromous species that travel up the Saugus River to spawn along gravel bottom portions of the river bed.

Although the sampling program is targeted toward catching and releas-

ing smelt, the project also provides some information regarding the diversity of species found in the Saugus River. This year's results continued to show that the Saugus River provides important habitat for a range of species including, smelt, white perch, alewife, American eel, fourspine and threespine sticklebacks, mummichog, yellow perch and white sucker.

In addition to the fyke net sampling project, an eel trap was used to assess

Saugus River Fyke Net Sampling Results

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
rainbow smelt	1,412	138
white perch	64	12
alewife	3	11
blueback herring	1	0
American eel	12	8
fourspine stickleback	243	185
threespine stickleback	95	65
mummichog	265	20
yellow perch	26	47
white sucker	37	37
redfin pickerel	4	4
golden shiner	1	0
crayfish	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Catch:	2,163	528

the population of juvenile (or glass) eels found in the Saugus River. That program will continue during June with results to be published in the summer newsletter.

Special thanks to all of the staff at the Division of Marine Fisheries, and the Saugus Iron Works for making this project possible. We also appreciate support from the Corporate Wetlands Program and contributions of many volunteers who assisted with field work. ❖



From left, SRWC Director Joan LeBlanc and Michelle Bles of the National Park Service check eel trap along Saugus River, May 2006.

Youths Learn About Watershed



Photo credit: Lisa Capone-Condon

With guidance from Bob Metcalfe, students from the Horace Mann School in Melrose build watersheds models, March 2006.

More than 500 youths have participated in the Saugus River Watershed Council's free environmental education programs this spring. Through a partnership with New England Discovery, wildlife expert Bob Metcalfe has conducted numerous classroom and field programs teaching youths about watershed concepts, local wildlife, the water cycle, and much more.

Students built watershed models, conducted hands-on water quality sampling, and went on field trips throughout the watershed.

Additional programs are scheduled for the month of June. Teachers or youth group leaders interested in scheduling programs for the summer or fall should contact the Saugus River Watershed Council at 781-233-5046 or srw@shore.net. Programs are available at no charge to schools and youths groups located within the Saugus River watershed.



Photo credit: Bob Metcalfe

Students studying environmental science at Wakefield High School participated in a field trip to Rumney Marsh to learn about salt marsh habitat, April 2006.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline

...Continued from page 1

The Council's other concerns about the project, include:

1) Installing a new gas pipeline in Reedy Meadow could pose a threat to the City of Lynn's drinking water supply.

2) The number of Saugus River crossings should be reduced and efforts are needed to maintain water flow and protect riverbeds and banks.

3) If possible the project area should avoid Breakheart Reservation, mitigation will be needed to ensure any impacted areas are revegetated.

4) The route of the pipeline should be relocated so that it does not pass through Reedy Meadow. Locating the gas pipeline in Reedy Meadow would have a negative impact on wildlife habitat, and could hamper ongoing efforts to improve hydrology and flood storage.

5) Plans are needed to ensure that no flood storage capacity is lost as a result of work conducted in wetlands and waterways.

6) The project proponent should ensure that smelt spawning habitat is not disturbed during river crossings.

7) Efforts are needed to ensure that the work area does not affect vernal pools in Saugus, Lynnfield and Wakefield.

8) Revegetating disturbed areas should result in natural areas that have similar or greater environmental value to those lost.

9) Large scale mitigation projects should be identified and funded to offset negative environmental impacts of the project.

10) Numerous sites with significant archaeological value are located in the vicinity of the project area. These sites must be identified and appropriate measures are needed to ensure that they are protected.

For a copy of the full comment letter regarding this project, please contact SRWC at 781-233-5046 or srw@shore.net. ❖

Around the Watershed

Lake Quannapowitt Walk

As part of a series of informational walks hosted on a monthly basis, Friends of Lake Quannapowitt will host a free walk for the general public on 25 June 2006 at 10:00 a.m. Participants will meet at the Gertrude Spaulding Park in Wakefield. For more information call Lee at 781-224-2490.

Biodiversity Days

The Department of Conservation and Recreation will host a series of events focused on identifying biodiversity in Massachusetts. Bat Bonanza Weekend will be held on 9 and 10 June 2006 at Breakheart Reservation in Saugus and Middlesex Fells Reservation in Stoneham. Participants will learn how bats are useful to people and their purpose in ecological systems. Pre-registration is required for these programs. Go to www.mass.gov/DCR to find out more about programs and registration details.

Bike to the Sea

Hosts Cleanup

Bike to the Sea will host a cleanup on Saturday, 17 June 2006, at 9:00 a.m. Volunteers will meet at Marshview Park on Boston Street (at the Lynn/Saugus line). Participants will remove trash from portions of the proposed multi-use trail along the Saugus River in Lynn and Saugus. For more information, contact Steve Winslow at 781-397-6893.

2006 Boater's Guide

The 2006 Boaters' Guide to Tides and Pumpout Facilities is now available from the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management. The wallet-sized pamphlet, printed on waterproof paper, contains information on the locations of pumpout facilities along the

Massachusetts coastline and a June-September tide chart. For a free copy, email your request and mailing address to czm@state.ma.us.

DCR Education Programs

The Department of Conservation and Recreation is offering free educational programs at the Camp Nihan Environmental Education Center. All programs are conducted by a DCR Park Ranger and are offered Wednesday through Saturday throughout the year. Topics will vary. Many of the programs will be held at Breakheart Reservation in Saugus. For more information, contact Matthew Nash at 617-727-1199 ext. 205 or matthew.nash@state.ma.us. Spring programs are available for schools or community groups through the end of June.

Thank You!

The Saugus River Watershed Council extends its sincere thanks to Raina's Hair Design Studio on 115 Broadway in Revere. This past April, Raina Morgan and the salon, which features Aveda natural beauty products, sold environmental products to raise money and promote environmental awareness for earth day. Proceeds went to support the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Saugus River Watershed Council. We sincerely appreciate Raina's efforts on behalf of protecting the local environment!

Canoe Trips

The Saugus River Watershed Council will again host canoe trips in Rumney Marsh and along the main stem of the Saugus River this summer and fall. Watch the mail for a separate flyer highlighting dates and times for these

trips. Special thanks to long-time volunteer Fred LeBlanc of Saugus for agreeing to lead the trips again this year.

Environmental Expo

Friends of Breakheart and the Department of Conservation and Recreation sponsored an Environmental Expo at Breakheart Reservation on Saturday, 20 May. Organizations such as the Saugus River Watershed Council, Saugus Action Volunteers for the Environment, and many others provided information about local environmental issues. The Council sponsored two nature walks led by Bob Metcalfe of New England Discovery. Participants looked at signs of wildlife found at Breakheart Reservation.

SAVE Annual Meeting

Saugus Action Volunteers for the Environment will host its annual meeting and dinner on Wednesday, 14 June 2006 at the Sheraton Colonial Hotel and Golf Club, Colonial Center in Wakefield. The dinner costs \$22 per person. To register, send check payable to SAVE to Chuck Bocchino, 41 Great Woods Road, Saugus 01906. Also include choice of dinner – steak, chicken or schrod.

Festival by the Lake

The Wakefield Center Neighborhood Association is sponsoring its annual Festival by the Lake on Saturday, June 10 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The festival includes hundreds of craft exhibitors and numerous civic organizations including the Saugus River Watershed Council and Friends of Lake Quannapowitt. The event takes place on the lawn adjacent to Lake Quannapowitt in Wakefield. A raindate has been scheduled for Saturday, 17 June 2006. ❖

River Night 2006 a Great Success!



Photo credit: Dan Burgess



Photo credit: Dan Burgess

SRWC's 4th Annual River Night dinner and auction was a great success. Approximately 150 members and friends joined us at Spinelli's in Lynnfield on March 28th for a delicious dinner and exciting auction. This year's event included a live auction featuring a Maine sailing vacation for two, Red Sox seats in a luxury box, a BOSE wave radio and much more. Guests also participated in an exciting silent auction and a Saugus River "fishing derby".

Thanks to very generous contributions from hundreds of event sponsors, item donors and

guests bidding at the auction, we raised approximately \$19,000 to support our river restoration and environmental education programs.

Special thanks to the following River Night sponsors: General Electric, Pinney & Scofield, Inc., Spinelli's Function Facility, Weston & Sampson Engineers, Overlook Ridge, LLC, Onyx Environmental Services, GeoSyntec Consultants, Inc., Central Centerless Grinding, Giannelli Management and Development Corp., Peter Rossetti Insurance Agency, New England Church Restoration, Seyfarth Shaw LLP, ATP Environmental, Gomez & Sullivan Engineers, Jenkins Insurance Agency, John's Oil Company, Kane's Donuts, Saugusbank, and Saugus Federal Credit Union.

Special thanks also to our "Friends of River Night": Karen and Michael Benson (Indian Rock Stables), Captain Wolf Executive Car & Limo, Lisa and Will Condon, Committee to Elect Sean Grant, Dot and Joe James, Anthony

Lozzi (Lynn Beach Commissioner), Lynn Museum and Historical Society, Sue and Bob McFarlane, Bob and Terry McLaughlin, Meg Michaels, Mark and Debra Panetta, Joan LeBlanc and Bion Pike, and John and Laura Walsh.

River Night was made possible by the enthusiastic efforts of our benefit and honorary committees, auction volunteers, sponsors, item donors, staff at Spinelli's, and guests at the auction.

SRWC extends our sincere thanks to everyone who worked together to make this year's event such a great success! ❖



Photo credit: Dan Burgess

BJ's Wholesale Wharehouse, Revere

Earlier this year, BJ's Wholesale Club began the environmental permitting process for construction of a 121,635 square foot store and gas station on a 19.95 acre site in Revere adjacent to the Rumney Marshes Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

SRWC submitted comments regarding the Environmental Notification Form for the project, highlighting the following concerns:

1) The project proponent should consider on-site alternatives such as relocating all construction out of the ACEC and floodplain, moving the fueling facility away from the marsh, reducing the overall project footprint, and reducing the amount of parking area.

2) The proposed fueling facility is not an appropriate use for the site, given the potential environmental problems associated with constructing a 20,000 gallon underground storage tank within filled tidelands as well as pollution associated with the proposed fueling operation.

3) Given historical uses of the site, soils should be analyzed for 21E classification to determine if hazardous materials exist on the site.

4) Vegetated buffer zones are needed to protect valuable salt marsh habitat from pollution associated with stormwater on the site.

5) Stormwater management plans should incorporate low impact development (LID) techniques, utilize vegetated filters, and address issues associated with high tidal conditions and flooding during storm events.

6) Development of the site should avoid altering wetlands wherever possible. Wetlands restoration projects should be implemented as mitigation for any disturbed wetlands.

The Certificate of the Secretary of Environmental Affairs for the project requires the project proponent to submit an Environmental Impact Report addressing the concerns raised by the Council as well as other commenters on the project.

For a complete copy of the Council's comments regarding this project, contact SRWC at 781-233-5046 or srw@shore.net. ❖

Saugus River Picnic & Children's Festival

Set for Tuesday, 27 June 2006



The Saugus River Watershed Council will host its annual Saugus River Picnic and Children's Festival on Tuesday, 27 June 2006 at the Saugus Iron Works, from 6:00 p.m. to dusk (Raindate: Wednesday, 28 June).

Members of the public are invited to bring a picnic supper and blanket or lawn chairs to enjoy a delightful summer evening of fun for the whole family. Free drinks and dessert will be provided.

At 7:00 p.m., Paul Erickson will present The Ocean Rocks - rock and roll music of the aquatic kind for

audiences of all ages. Get ready to dance with lobsters and sway to the rhythms of coral reefs. Additional music will be presented by Dave Simmons, Dick Lynch and friends.

Children will also enjoy balloons, and a variety of hands-on environmental games and activities. This year's event will also include a nature walk and exploration along the Saugus River.

Special thanks to the staff at the Saugus Iron Works for providing a great location for this event, and to Wild Oats Community Marketplace and REI for their support.

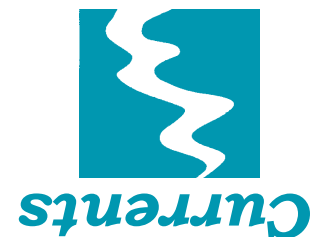
Directions: From Route 1, take Walnut Street exit toward Saugus/Lynn. Take right at first light onto Central Street. Follow signs to the Saugus Iron Works. For more information, please call 781-233-5046. ❖

Massachusetts Coast Guide

With summer fast approaching, now is an ideal time to get a copy of the Massachusetts Coast Guide to Boston and the North Shore. This spiral-bound, 10" x 6.5" guidebook is perfect for fitting in a backpack or a glove compartment. Developed by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, the Coast Guide's 80+ pages include 22 maps covering the coast from Salisbury to Hingham, highlighting nearly 400 sites open to the public, ranging from expansive parks to small public landings. Brief site descriptions cover general characteristics of the site, available facilities, and parking.

To get your free copy, e-mail your address to czm@state.ma.us, or stop by the CZM Boston office at 251 Causeway Street from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. CZM is on the 8th floor. Excerpts from the printed version of the guide are also available on-line at www.mass.gov/czm/coastguide. ❖

Saugus River Watershed Council
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Making a Difference

The Saugus River watershed stretches from Lake Quannapowitt to the Lynn Harbor / Saugus River estuary, encompassing all or part of eleven communities.

The Saugus River Watershed Council is a non-profit organization founded in 1991 to protect the natural resources of the watershed. Our priorities include restoring water quality, expanding public access, restoring habitat for anadromous fish and other wild life, and protecting critical resources such as Rumney Marsh and Reedy Meadow.

Please consider adding your voice, as a member of the Council, to our efforts to protect the natural resources and beauty of the Saugus River watershed.

Spring 2006

Join the Saugus River Watershed Council

Yes! I would like to become a member of the Saugus River Watershed Council.*

☐ New Member ☐ Membership Renewal

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