

# UPPER MISSISQUOI AND TROUT RIVERS WILD AND SCENIC COMMITTEE

UMATR ---- You Matter to your local rivers!



## WILD & SCENIC SOJOURN

2019 had us celebrating 5 years of Wild & Scenic Rivers in Vermont! Congress added the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in December 2014.

To highlight this anniversary, the UMATR Wild & Scenic Committee held a week-long paddling event that traveled each of the 46.1 designated miles of our amazing rivers.

Often joined by members of the public, our intrepid paddlers enjoyed 7 days of exploring all the things that make our rivers unique and amazing. Visit our website - [umatrwildandscenic.org/wild-and-scenic-sojourn](http://umatrwildandscenic.org/wild-and-scenic-sojourn) - to learn more about the journey, and enjoy videos that will enable you to sample what paddling our rivers is all about!

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# 2019 WILD & SCENIC EVENTS

## Missisquoi River Paddle-Pedal and Richford River Fest

The Paddle-Pedal provides participants an opportunity to enjoy paddling the Missisquoi and cycling along the adjacent Rail Trail.



## River Explorers

Our River Explorers trip offered local youths age 11-14 a chance to spend 5 days canoeing and camping on and along the Missisquoi River. Guided by Montgomery Adventures, students learned paddling techniques, camping skills, basic first aid - and, overall, had a great time exploring our beautiful river!



## Wild & Scenic Gathering at Big Falls



Our Wild and Scenic Gathering at Big Falls brings people together to enjoy and learn about this wonderful riverfront property. We hope to see you at our 2020 Gathering in July.

## Snowshoeing Along the River

In 2019 we offered two snowshoe tours with our County Foresters. We love exploring the forests along our rivers!



## Paddle & Picnic

UMATR hosted our annual Paddle & Picnic, paddling from the Canadian border to Richford. Despite some inclement weather rolling through, we had a great time - the rain even paused during our lunch stop!

We had an amazing time celebrating our rivers with many events in 2019. Come enjoy and explore our local rivers with us at one of our 2020 events! (see Page 8)

## Montgomery River Clean Up

UMATR held a river clean-up in Montgomery; with the help of great community volunteers, we cleaned up our local swimming holes for the winter.



## Wild & Scenic Rivers Sojourn

To celebrate 5 years of Wild and Scenic Rivers in Vermont, we paddled the 46.1 designated miles of the Missisquoi and Trout rivers in June. It was great to experience all that these wonderful rivers have to offer!



# RIVER COMMUNITY GRANTS

## Missisquoi Headwaters Search and Rescue



As a way of increasing safety in the mountain headwaters of our rivers, grant funds were used to purchase a lightweight, portable rescue toboggan that can be readily used for backcountry rescue operations.

## Montgomery Recreation Snowshoes



The Montgomery Recreation Department has purchased 17 pairs of snowshoes and 5 sets of adjustable poles to encourage community members to enjoy winter activities in our region. Available free to the public, the

equipment is in a variety of sizes and can be signed out at Montgomery Properties on Main St.

## Encore West Teen Week on The River

During the summer of 2019, fourteen students from Lowell, Troy, Jay, and Westfield explored and enjoyed the Missisquoi River during a 5-day, 4-night canoeing adventure.



## Bug Works

The Missisquoi River Basin Association was able to provide Bugworks - an experiential educational program about aquatic ecosystems and water quality - 14 times in 2019, with over 250 participants.



## Montgomery Recreation River Trips



The Montgomery Recreation Department hosted 3 river trips for local youths this summer - two overnight trips and

one day-trip. Participants enjoyed learning about the river, as well as camping along it.

## Keeping Track Monitoring Program

Cold Hollow to Canada has long supported wildlife monitoring in our region through Keeping Track. Funds will be used to create a data portal where the information that is collected through this monitoring can be access by the volunteers who collect the data, planners and researchers, and the public. Part of this project will enable us to better know what animals are unitlizing our Wild and Scenic Rivers.

## Trout In The Classroom & Stream Monitoring

Students from the Lowell Graded School are learning about healthy streams. Grant funds were used to purchase chemical and biological monitoring equipment, as well equipment to participate in Trout In The Classroom; the students will present this experience at Town Meeting!



## Journeys End Privy Conversion

Our river are surrounded by mountains that provide vast recreational opportunities, including the Long Trail. Funds will be used to convert and obsolete pit privy at the northern terminus of the Long Trail. The new moldering privy will provide both an enhanced user experience and better protection for ground and surface water through improved waste management.



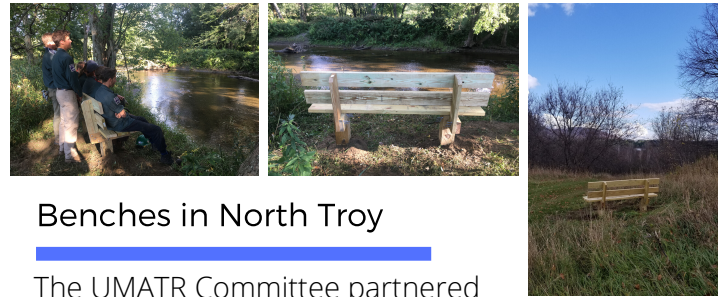
The UMATR Committee recognizes the important role that towns and local organizations play in the rivers' health and vitality; the goal of our annual River Community Grants program is to enable and support activities for these partners which will enhance and protect river resources and build strong local stewardship of the rivers. Watch for the announcement of our 2020 grant awards -

# PROJECTS

Along with the things funded by our River Community Grants, 2019 gave the UMATR Committee the opportunity to undertake several projects geared towards enhancing properties along our Rivers.

## Poison Ivy Control at Big Falls

The public lands (Village- and State-owned) below Big Falls provide access to a wonderful swimming hole. However, the paths are rife with poison ivy. Working with the State, the UMATR Committee got permission to experiment with knocking back the poison ivy using sheep. A local shepherd grazed her flock of 23 ewes along the paths to the river, which diminished the presence of poison ivy and improved access.



## Benches in North Troy

The UMATR Committee partnered with a crew from the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps this summer to build and install several structures along our rivers. On the Village-owned public property off Dominion Ave, four wooden benches were placed along the trail that runs from the Legion Ballfield down to the river. Go check them out - relax and take a seat between each bench, and enjoy what nature has to offer.

## Bridge Structures in Troy

The VYCC crew that we partnered with this summer also build several bridge structures on the Middleton Property - a riverfront parcel on River Road that is owned by the Troy School. These bridges will make the trail on this property more accessible, while also protecting the ecosystem from damage.



## Stone Steps on the Westfield/Lowell town line

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail once again helped the UMATR Committee install an improved access point for users to access the Missisquoi River. These stone steps will protect the riverbank and simultaneously enhance visitors' experience.

Partnerships are important to the UMATR Committee. Along with our partnership with the National Park Service, we also regularly collaborate with State and regional organizations. See pages 6 & 7 to learn more about our partnerships on both the national and local scale!

# MEET OUR COMMITTEE



Dan Seeley

Town of Richford UMATR Representative

Dan is our newest UMATR Committee member, representing the town of Richford. Dan arrived in Richford in 2016; he moved here to find a location with southern exposure good for growing food and to build a passive solar house. While enjoying retirement, Dan grows his own food, and works on a 40-acre woodlot with Cold Hollow to Canada to improve conditions for wildlife. Dan is also on the Richford Conservation Committee and a member of the Northern Frontier Section of the Green Mountain Club, where he assists Long Trail hikers by providing a free shuttle service between trailheads and their cars. Dan is very passionate about being outdoors. Activities including hiking, camping, and introducing his grandkids to the woods, fields, brooks, and rivers of Vermont. During his free time, he enjoys to be in the woods checking on his wild neighbors, by tracking them on snow shoes in the winter. As well as chasing solar eclipses - sometimes to far-flung parts of the globe. He hopes that he can help with efforts to preserve our area's natural state, and educate others to appreciate and see the need for preservation.

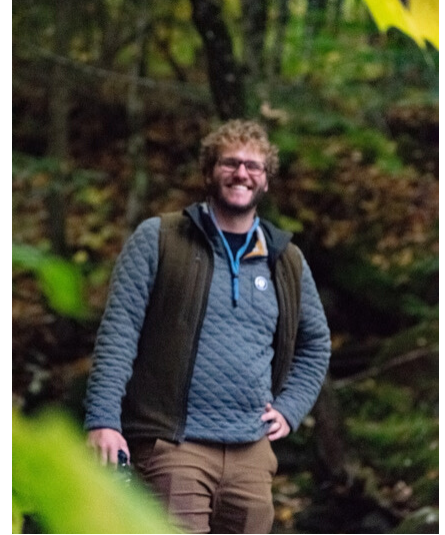


Looking for a way to take action in your community?

The UMATR Wild & Scenic Committee is seeking Committee Members in North Troy, Enosburgh, and Westfield!



Keep up to date with our Instagram and Facebook posts



Ranier Lucas

ECO AmeriCorps Assistant Coordinator

Ranier Lucas is serving with the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild & Scenic Committee for the 2019-2020 service year as a part of ECO AmeriCorps program thought the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.

Originally from Binghamton, New York, Ranier grew up living at the confluence of the Susquehanna and Chenango Rivers, causing him to develop a strong passion for the environment and water quality.

Ranier began his secondary education at Broome Community College, pursuing an environmental degree. During this time he was able to take two travel Ecology courses - one in the Everglades and the other out west, exploring five National Parks. After spending three weeks in places like the Grand Tetons and Zion National Park, he decided to continued his education at the University at Buffalo, graduating with a degree in Environmental Geoscience in 2018.

# Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers

The Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers were designated Wild & Scenic in 2014 under the Partnership model. This means that, while the UMATR Committee receives federal funds and federal support to manage our rivers, our local communities retain all control and attendant responsibility over these rivers.

Congress has specified in some Wild and Scenic River designations that rivers are to be administered through the National Park Service and in partnership with local governments, councils, watershed groups, and non-governmental organizations, generally through the use of cooperative agreements. In these 'Partnership' Wild and Scenic Rivers, communities protect their own outstanding rivers and river-related resources through a collaborative approach.

Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers share the following common principles:

- No federal ownership or management of lands.
- Administration and implementation of the management plan is accomplished through a council or committee.
- Land use is to be governed by local communities.
- Responsibilities associated with managing and protecting river resources are shared among all of the partners - local, state, federal, and non-governmental.
- Landowner participation and volunteerism is an essential element of the partnership.

## Goal

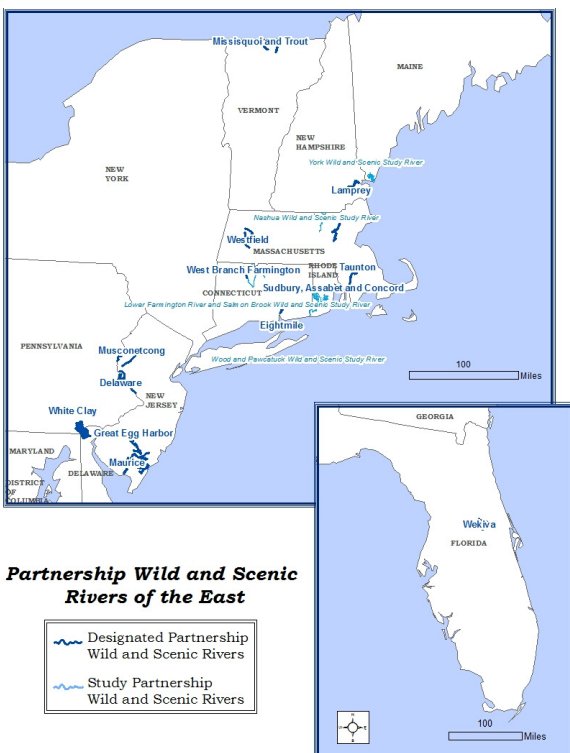
The goal of this Partnership approach is to maintain local governance and control of the rivers and their valleys; it does not involve federal acquisition or management of lands. The National Park Service serves in an advisory role and encourages the work to unfold as a grassroots effort.

## Partners

- National non-profit partners: American Rivers, River Network, River Management Society, American Whitewater
- NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program
- Interagency Wild & Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council (Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife)
- Landowners, local businesses, farmers, students, and stewards

**Wild & Scenic** organizations focus on: encouraging good stewardship of rivers, promoting education and outreach, management of invasive species, and water quality monitoring.

Sixteen Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers span from the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers in Northern Vermont, to the Wekiva River located in Central Florida.



## Rivers

- Lower Delaware River, DE
- EightMile River, CT
- Farmington River, CT
- Lower Farmington River & Salmon Brook, CT
- Great Egg Harbor River, NJ
- Lamprey River, NH
- Maurice River, NJ
- Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers, VT
- Musconetcong River, NJ
- Nashua River, NH/MA
- Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers, MA
- Taunton River, MA
- Wekiva River, FL
- Westfield River, MA
- White Clay Creek, PA
- Wood-Pawcatuck Rivers, CT/RI



## LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering with organizations - locally, regionally, and also with State and National agencies - is an important aspect of our Wild & Scenic community. Our partnerships enable us to be more effective stewards for our rivers, and our partners increase our reach, our skillset, and our efficiency. We look forward to future collaborations with the below groups, and with our numerous other partners.



### Vermont Youth Conservation Corps -

The VYCC provides assistance with farming and conservation work, while teaching young adults personal responsibility through meaningful work which connects them to the land, community, and one another. Crews gain professional experience, leadership and teamwork skills, and improve Vermont by planting trees, doing trail maintenance, harvesting crops, and more. This year the VYCC helped the UMATR Committee by building benches, bridges, and several other trail structures on public properties along the Missisquoi River, and we appreciate their hard work!



### Missisquoi River Basin Association -

The MRBA's mission is to restore and maintain the ecological integrity of the Missisquoi river system. The MRBA offers educational programs to teach stewards about the importance of water quality, and works with landowners to implement practices that will protect and improve that quality. Our designated river reaches are also overseen by the MRBA and we are forever grateful for their partnership - it was MRBA members who got us started on the path to Wild and Scenic designation!



### Northern Forest Canoe Trail -

Spanning 740 miles from Old Forge, New York, to Fort Kent, Maine, the NFCT promotes and protects this amazing trail that shares some of it's miles with our wonderful Missisquoi River. The UMATR Committee greatly benefits from this partnership: the NFCT summer Stewardship Crews have been instrumental with improving access to our rivers. This year the Crew built us a lovely set of stone steps to access the river at the Westfield/Lowell town line.

### Local Communities -

The UMATR Committee relies on our local partners: our volunteer Committee members, the town conservation commissions, town administrators, and the landowners along the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers. We work intimately with community members from Westfield, Troy, North Troy, Richford, Berkshire, Enosburgh, Enosburg Falls, and Montgomery, and we could not do it without these connections.

### Volunteers -

Most important is our partnership with our volunteers. We want to thank you for all your help in the past and look forward to great things from this continued partnership in the future.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

Join us for the fun events that we'll be hosting in 2020, including:



## Guided snowshoe

Join us in Troy on **February 22nd** and explore the beauty of school-owned land along the river.

## Annual Gathering

Join us at our Wild & Scenic Gathering on **July 26th**. Learn about some of the amazing features that make our rivers so special.



## Paddle and Picnic

We are offering our annual Paddle and Picnic on **June 6th**. This year, we will explore the Trout River, and enjoy a provided lunch at one of the many beautiful spots along the way.

## Missisquoi River Paddle-Pedal

Join our partners, the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, on **June 20th** to enjoy a combined 6.5 mile paddle and 4.5 mile cycle.



## Wild & Scenic Film Festival

We will be hosting our next Wild & Scenic Film Festival in 2021. Stay up to date by joining our mailing list.

Visit [UMATRwildandscenic.org](http://UMATRwildandscenic.org) to learn more about these events, and to register

## Contact us!

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Check us out online:



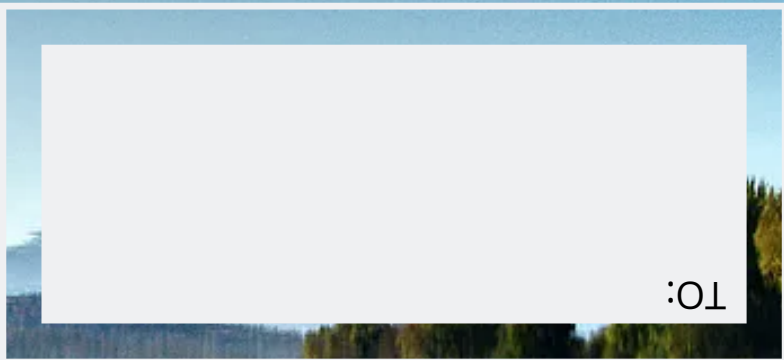
[UMATRwildandscenic.org](http://UMATRwildandscenic.org)  
Facebook & Instagram  
vtwildandscenic

## 2019 Accomplishments

**8** events provided fun & learning for **240** residents and visitors!

**18** bags of trash and **1 hot water tank** removed from our rivers this year!

**\$87k** federal dollars spent in our region, thanks to Wild and Scenic designation.



**You Matter** to your local rivers!

Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR) Wild & Scenic Committee  
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