



# Spring & Summer Newsletter

Save the River-Save the Hills, Inc., is dedicated to preserving the health of the Niantic River Estuary, its watershed and the natural beauty of the Oswegatchie Hills.

[www.SavetheRiver-SavetheHills.org](http://www.SavetheRiver-SavetheHills.org)

## It's Kayak Regatta Time!!!

Please join us for the 10th Annual Niantic River Appreciation Day Kayak Regatta on **Saturday, August 24th, 10:00am—2:00pm** on the headwaters of the Niantic River (towards Rt 1). This year:

- ☺ 9:30am or earlier—launch at Three Belles Marina or call Deb 444-9247 for a closer to event launch site. (Rent kayaks from Three Belles or EMS)
- ☺ 10:00am meet **The Goshen Fire Boat** just past Sandy Point to start our north bound **Kayak Parade of Solidarity!!!** Decorate your **Kayak for prizes!! All participants of the day will receive free gift...**
- ☺ 10:30—**Denise and Tony Band are back!!** They will kick-off our 10th year party for us from a balcony on Point Comfort, as you buy T-shirts and STR-STH beach bags, STR-STH hats, kayak trail maps, etc. Pack some cash!! Pick up you **FREE DRAWING TICKET FOR THE KAYAK** from our membership table.
- ☺ 11:00 - **Our local politicians speak in favor of Saving the Hills!** Hear the latest on our efforts to keep the Oswegatchie Hills wild.
- ☺ Noon -1:30pm **FREE CLAM CHOWDER** donated by Flanders Fish and **FREE HOT DOGS** donated by **The Dock Restaurant!!**
- ☺ 1:00pm—**Short, fun kayak races** for different classes of kayaks and kayakers for t-shirts and braggin' rights. Who will beat Jay Sullivan?!?
- ☺ 1:45pm—**FREE DRAWING** for donated items (kayak and paddle—for members & volunteers only, other items for all participants). Go on land by the food & Porta-Pottie to find the membership table for tickets.
- ☺ Ongoing safety checks from the **Coast Guard Auxiliary, kayak demos by Three Belles and EMS** and a **STR-STH information booth** at 47 Oswegatchie Road.

**COME ENJOY A DAY ON THE RIVER WITH US!!**

**“In the end our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy”**

**- John C. Sawhill**

**“Let's Save the Last Mile”**

**We believe that the Oswegatchie Hills frontage on the Niantic River is the last continuous mile of salt water frontage in the whole State of Connecticut that has not been either already developed or protected.**

### Upcoming Events!

“LIKE” our Facebook page to stay “between Newsletters” up-to-date on our events...

- ☺ Wine, Cheese and Song this coming Fall—Date TBD (Nov or early Dec)



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Enjoying the Niantic River in front of the Oswegatchie Hills!



Fred on our Water Quality skiff—testing the waters for your safety!

## A Note from the President and Founder of STR-STH:

The Connecticut Audubon Society sponsors a program called Important Bird Areas. In order for a specific location like the Oswegatchie Hills to be designated as an Important Bird Area certain protocols have to be done involving work by experienced birders. I have been able to interest at least two excellent people to help with this, but we need several more to make this happen.

If we can get The Hills designated as an IBA by The Audubon Society our attorneys believe it will be very helpful in future legal battles. If you or any relatives or friends believe they can help in these efforts please contact me, Fred Grimsey, at 860-442-8349 or email me at [cfgrimsey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cfgrimsey@sbcglobal.net).

Yours in Saving the River and the Hills, Fred Grimsey

### New Phosphorus Law — by Suzanne Thompson

Take that Test!

There's an even more compelling reason to get your soil tested and apply only the Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium (N-P-K) that it needs. A new state law requires testing for Phosphorus before applying it. While too much Nitrogen can pollute groundwater and the Sound with excess nitrate, UConn's Soil Nutrient Analysis Lab (SNAL) says that Phosphorus, the P in the N-P-K listing for fertilizers, is the number one cause of declining water quality in fresh water lakes and ponds in the state.

Although new plants need P to stimulate good root growth, just a bit too much of it can turn clear fresh water ponds into slimy green scum. Established lawns don't need much added P, SNAL staff says, and that can probably be met by just leaving grass clippings on the lawn.

This law applies to synthetic, organic and compost fertilizers on established lawns; get the test so you know what you need to have applied. If you use a professional lawn care service, ask if they are doing the test. If not, get your soil tested and share the results with them; commercial mixes of fertilizers with Zero P are readily available.

The law exempts newly seeded or sodded lawns and existing lawns being overseeded. But it still makes sense to get a soil test and apply only what is really need. Maybe your lawn doesn't need more than a lime application to increase its soil pH. Save your money and help save the quality of our water resources!

Make sure you and your lawn service are following this requirement: *"No fertilizers containing phosphorus can be used on lawn areas that are less than 20 feet away from any body of water unless applied with a drop spreader, rotary spreader with a deflector or targeted liquid spray in which case the application may be within 15 feet of a water body. Phosphorus containing fertilizers are also not to be applied to any impermeable surface."*

See this new P Law factsheet:

[www.soiltest.uconn.edu/documents/Phosphoruslawlawnstmclean.pdf](http://www.soiltest.uconn.edu/documents/Phosphoruslawlawnstmclean.pdf)

The CT Ag Experiment Station doesn't charge residents for its soil tests. See online brochure at

[www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/publications/brochures/soil\\_testing\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/publications/brochures/soil_testing_brochure.pdf)

UConn's SNAL charges \$8 per test. Forms, instructions and mailing address are online:

[www.cag.uconn.edu/plsc/soiltest/sampling.php](http://www.cag.uconn.edu/plsc/soiltest/sampling.php)

There's also good information on Conn Home and Garden Center website: [www.ladybug.uconn.edu](http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu)

Read more about the new law in STR-STH Board Member Suzanne Shaw's recent Local Dirt column in The Day: Mind Your P, [www.theday.com/article/20130320/ENT07/303209994/1070/NWS04](http://www.theday.com/article/20130320/ENT07/303209994/1070/NWS04)

# STR-STH Program Updates...

## Legal Defense Fund – Help Us Save Oswegatchie Hills!

Landmark is back in court appealing the Town of EL's Water-Sewer Commission's decision to not give 118,000 gallons/day of sewer capacity to their development plans for the Oswegatchie Hills. STR-STH and The Friends of the Oswegatchie Nature Preserve are both acting as legal Interveners in support of the town's decision for environmental reasons. Our stand is that areas on the Niantic River that are already developed, like Saunders Point, should be first in line for any excess capacity for sewer that the town has. If the 118,000 gallons a day were promised to a new development, these areas might remain un-sewered. Our getting involved gives the Town more support in their legal fight to Save the Hills. **Also, Landmark's attorney has stated that there is ANOTHER APPLICATION for development of the Hills coming soon!!** Please give generously to our Legal Defense Fund as our bills keep coming in as we continue our fight!

## Water Quality Testing Program

Thanks to Fred who works tirelessly on the boats to get them ready, and our new summer Interns Todd and Noah this year (Thank you!), we have the Water Quality Testing boat out on the water. As in previous years, **we have found very high bacterial counts in the water after a substantial (1-2 inch) rainfall. We do not recommend water contact sports (swimming, tubing, skiing) on the Niantic River for a few days after a 1-2 inch rainfall** to allow the tidal flows to clear the River out. We are working with the Towns of Waterford and EL on coming up with a notification system for when the bacterial counts are high enough that they would shut a public lake or beach down.

## Watershed Education Program

The Enviroscape was borrowed by the Children's Museum for the Spring months. They thought it is a wonderful tool for teaching children (and their parents) about what a Watershed actually is and how what we do everyday affects the quality of the water in our Coastal Watershed. If you would like to be involved in an education project or have an idea of a school **or summer camp** that might want to use it, please call Deb at 860-444-9247.



## Pumpout Boat Program

We started our 11th season of the Pumpout Program Memorial Day Weekend! Remember—the Niantic River and the entire Long Island Sound is a No-Discharge Zone by order of the Federal EPA. Tell your friends! The Boat can be contacted by calling the numbers for the pumpout boat: **287-2774 (phone) and VHF Channel 68.**

## Three Belles Marina Note:

*If you would like try out a stand-up paddle board or kayak, go out to [Groupon.com](https://www.groupon.com) and look for their 50% rental coupons! It's a great deal... and you can buy one for yourself and for a gift!*

*If you would like to rent a Kayak for the Kayak Regatta—call Three Belles Marina (860-739-6264) as soon as you can! They have a number of different kayaks to rent, but they “rent out” very quickly.*

# www.SavetheRiver-SavetheHills.org

Save the River – Save the Hills, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) grassroots environmental organization based on the Niantic River Estuary in Waterford & East Lyme. We are dedicated to abating and preventing pollution of the river, its Watershed and advocating the preservation of Oswegatchie Hills.

To donate or become a member, clip and mail the form below, or call Eileen O’Pasek @ 860-439-1687

## Volunteer Opportunities:

- ☺ **Join Our Board**—we are looking for new ideas... come bring yours to STR-STH!
- ☺ Help with our 10th Kayak Regatta!
- ☺ Help with the Education Program — call Deb 444-9247 to borrow the Enviroscape
- ☺ Administration - helping with mailings, etc.

Join us in anyway you feel comfortable and take action to Save the River and the Hills!

## Membership News

Thank you to all our members who have sent in their 2013 membership dues! If you are not current, please renew today. We appreciate your generosity and support of our programs. Always remember, **Membership is the Voice and Backbone of our Organization!**

This Fall we are awaiting another application from Landmark. Their attorney has mentioned that it is imminent. We will keep you up-to-date on Facebook about Public Hearings, etc. as we find out from the Town when they are scheduled. Stay connected and support us in Saving the River and Hills!

Sincerely, *Eileen O’Pasek*, Membership and Fundraising Chair

### Membership & Other Contributions:

New  Renewal

Basic Family \$20

River Keeper \$50

River Saver \$100

River Neptune \$250

River Neptune \$500

River Champion \$1000

All members receive our quarterly newsletters and one STR-STH membership sticker

Note: first \$20.00 of any membership category goes to the general fund and is used as required for all programs.

Additional amounts may be directed as below:

Water Quality (testing, education, pumpout programs)

Water Safety  Legal Defense Fund  General Fund

Please make checks payable to:

**STR-STH, Inc.**

and mail to

**Save the River-Save the Hills**

**P.O. Box 505**

**Waterford, CT 06385**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Phone:**

**Email:**

(email will be used for Action Alerts for STR-STH issues only)

**Referred by:**