



www.SavetheRiverSavetheHills.org

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.

It's Kayak Regatta Time!!!

Please join us for the 13th Annual Niantic River Appreciation Day Kayak Regatta on **Saturday, August 20th, 10:00am—2:00pm** on the headwaters of the Niantic River (towards Rt 1). This year:


- ☺ 9:00 or earlier—launch at Three Belles Marina (or call Deb 444-9247 for a close to event launch site) and meet us on your paddle up the River
- ☺ 10:00am—**Follow the Goshen Fire Boat from Sandy Point in our Kayak Parade** in front of the Oswegatchie Hills!
- ☺ 10:30—**Denise and Tony Band are back!!!** They will serenade us from a balcony on Point Comfort, as you buy T-shirts and STR-STH beach bags, kayak trail maps, etc. from membership table. Pack some cash!!
- ☺ 11:00-1:30pm **Free Clam Chowder** (donated by **Flanders Fish**) and **Free Hot Dogs** (donated by **The Dock**) served at **47 Oswegatchie Rd, Waterford.**
- ☺ 11:30ish—Our Elected Officials will say Hello and a **short ceremony honoring retiring (January 2017) State Representative Ed Jutila!**
- ☺ 12:15ish—**Geoff Kaufman sings folk music for us!!**
- ☺ 1:00pm—**Short, fun kayak races** for different classes of kayaks for t-shirts and braggin' rights.
- ☺ 1:45pm—**Free Drawing** for donated items (SUP and paddle—for members & volunteers only, other items for all participants). Go to the membership table for tickets (by Porta-Pottie!)
- ☺ Ongoing **Demonstrations and free try-outs of SUPs, peddle kayaks by 3 Belles Marina** in front of 47 Oswegatchie Road.

(All times are estimates... as we go with the flow of the day!)

COME ENJOY A DAY ON THE RIVER WITH US!!

Save the Dates!!

- ☺ **New event at Artisan Framing & Gallery in Niantic! Oct 21st & 22nd**
- ☺ **Annual Fundraiser at Flanders Fish—Friday, December 9th!**

“LIKE” our Facebook page or go out to our website at SavetheRiverSavetheHills.org and click the  to stay “between Newsletters” up-to-date on what’s going on...



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2015 Kayak Regatta participant trying out a SUP with fellow kayakers in front of the Oswegatchie Hills!



Happy kayakers full of Clam Chowder and Hot Dogs listening to Denise and Tony Band in 2015

President's Message:

We have started organizational meetings on our Water Safety Study! We have an advisory committee headed by Russell Melmed, Epidemiologist and Community Outreach Supervisor for Ledge Light Health District, who has graciously offered to develop a survey that will give us important information about the health and safety of the people who use the Niantic River. To-date we have 10 people on the committee, including two doctors, two nurses, and a handful of dedicated community members.

Data-gathering will be coordinated by "Block Captains", each of which will contact, by email, participants who use the river for water sports, swimming, water skiing, etc., and control subjects who don't use the river for water contact activities. 200 participants will produce a statistically valid study. Total participants and controls can be as low as 60, but study validity will be decreased at that level. We are therefore aiming for 200. This is a tall order, so we hope our membership will respond by **volunteering to be Block Captains and/or to fill out our survey**.

There is a "Catch 22" in all of this because we are in a three year drought and rainfall amounts have been reduced from 30 to 40%. Since the study is dependent on significant rainfall, we cannot begin the study until the drought breaks. This delay will give us plenty of time to collect and organize volunteers.

Please contact to me volunteer for this important survey! Call me at 860-442-8349 or email me at cfgrimsey@sbcglobal.net.

Yours in Saving the River and the Hills, *Fred Grimsey*

STR-STH Program Updates...

Legal Defense Fund — Help Us Save Oswegatchie Hills!

Water-Sewer Focus:

Landmark's Appeal of the Town of EL's Water-Sewer Commission's decision to deny 118,000 gallons/day of sewer capacity has been remanded by Judge Cohn back to the Commission for a new—read that as higher—allotment of sewer capacity. This is not the best result that could have come out of this! Our attorney, Jason Wescott has been working on briefs and attending hearings as he represents STR-STH and the Friends of the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve in our intervention in the Appeal on behalf of the Town. STR-STH is now waiting to see if the Town will appeal the Judge's decision. We hope that ultimately any Commission decision will be deemed by the Judge to be within the Water and Sewer Commission's discretion as they decide where the limited sewer capacity needs to go in East Lyme. We know the law has protected the "wide discretion" allowed for town W/S Commissions to allot their sewer resources. As such, we also expect the new allotment will be consistent with EL's long term planning and reflect the inherent characteristics of the property - unique, fragile and adjoining the waterfront on the Niantic River. We know the Town understands the limited ability of this site to sustain development, much less the intense development proposed by Landmark.

Please give generously to the Legal Defense fund to help us continue this part of the legal battle!

Pumpout Boat Program

We started our 14th season of the Pumpout Program Memorial Day Weekend. Spread the word—the Niantic River and the entire Long Island Sound is a No-Discharge Zone by order of the U.S. EPA. Our Pumpout Boat can be contacted by calling the cell number for the boat: **287-2774 (phone)**. Tips for our workers are appreciated!!



Save Oswegatchie Hills Coalition—Update

Our message to preserve the remaining undeveloped Oswegatchie Hills and to protect Niantic River from pollution runoff is getting more visibility and gaining supporters. On June 9, we unveiled the Save Oswegatchie Hills traveling display at East Lyme Community Center to show why protection of these resources is crucial to the local communities on both sides of the river, the region and the state.

“This is a special place,” Connecticut Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection Rob Klee told leaders of civic, conservation and preservation organizations at the unveiling reception. “You have laudable goals to protect these rich natural resources.”

The purpose of the coalition, founded by Connecticut Fund for the Environment and its bi-state program Save the Sound, Friends of Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve and STR-STH earlier this year, is to show the broad public support for protecting the remaining 236 acres of the Hills from ill-conceived development. Our goal is to preserve this land and to avoid further degradation of the Niantic River, which flows directly into Long Island Sound.

Connecticut Sierra Club, Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed and Old Lyme Land Trust have signed on to our Coalition, and we continue to seek more organizations, individuals and businesses to join our cause. See updates at www.ctenvironment.org/oswegatchie.

The display is made up of indoor/outdoor banners and maps, including the large aerial map of the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve, the adjoining land we seek to protect, and the Niantic River, plus photographs of birds and wildlife found in the existing preserve and on the river. We’re at Celebrate East Lyme Day this summer and will have the large maps and banners at the Kayak Regatta, too. The full display, including photographs of the Hills and River, including STR-STH’s pump-out boat, will be in Waterford Community Center and Public Library throughout September.

Please contact Suzanne Thompson, Save Oswegatchie Hills Outreach Coordinator, for more information, including displays and fact sheets. Contact her at sthompson@ctenvironment.org, or at 860-434-5754.



Eileen O'Pasek, Suzanne Thompson, Ron Luich, Kris Lambert, Mike Dunn, DEEP Comm Rob Klee, Marvin Schutt, Fred Grimsey, Deb Moshier-Dunn, David Hughes, Roger Reynolds



CFE Legal Director Roger Reynolds, STR-STH founder & President Fred Grimsey, and DEEP Commissioner Klee discuss the need for better water quality monitoring and the unsafe bacterial levels found in Niantic River after heavy rains.



Guests studied three maps of the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve, the adjoining 236 acres we seek to protect, and how they drain into Niantic River Estuary.

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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:

- ☺ Help with our 13th Annual Kayak Regatta!
- ☺ **Volunteer for our Water Safety Study!**
- ☺ 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

The Kayak Regatta is a special Save the River-Save the Hills tradition. The Kayak Parade is a wonderful opportunity to experience the Oswegatchie Hills and Niantic River in all their beauty. It's a day to **renew membership and bring new members** into our dedicated grassroots organization. The day is filled with fun, games and camaraderie on the Niantic River and at the beach at 47 Oswegatchie Road where we have our free clam chowder, hot dogs, membership and merchandise table and we can't forget this year's drawing for a SUP Board!! Please invite a friend to kayak, enjoy the music, food, prizes and to learn about the Save the River-Save the Hills mission. Let's make this our **best year** for new members and renewals!

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

Membership & Other Contributions:

___ New ___ Renewal

___ Basic Family \$20

___ River Keeper \$50

___ River Saver \$100

___ River Protector \$250

___ River Neptune \$500

___ River Champion \$1000+

All members receive our quarterly newsletters.

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)

___ Legal Defense Fund

Please make checks payable to:

Save the River-Save the Hills, Inc.

P.O. Box 505

Waterford, CT 06385

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

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

Referred by: