

# Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee

Washington Lempster Marlow Gilsum Sullivan Surry  
Keene Swanzey Winchester Hinsdale

## 2022 Annual Report

ARLAC members met monthly to discuss permits, projects and concerns along the River corridor. ARLAC involved the community with our water quality monitoring program and river cleanup. The group continues to work with Southwest Regional Planning Commission to formulate an updated Corridor Management Plan.

**PERMITS:** ARLAC members carefully reviewed plans for Shoreland, Wetland and Alteration of Terrain (AOT) applications. We made comments to the appropriate state agencies.

- Culvert replacements in Gilsum (3 sites) and Winchester (1 site). Recommend shading outflow areas with native plants.
- Eversource pole replacements on the A152 line and N186 line. No comment.
- Washington: Ashuelot Pond, 2 Shoreland permits, 1 Wetland permit. Recommend more stormwater infiltration; no pressure treated lumber.
- Winchester: Mitchell Sand & Gravel. Recommend containment surrounding asphalt tank.
- Swanzey: River Access Park. Both Shoreland and Wetland permits. Recommend bank stabilization with native plants; control sheet flow off impermeable surfaces; no use of pressure treated lumber.
- Swanzey: Frogg Brewery Shoreland permit. Recommend maintain forested banks and swales to catch runoff and prevent erosion.
- Keene: AOT permit for Keene State College, Bushnell Apartment demolition. No comments.
- Swanzey: AOT permit for NH Solar Gardens LLC to install solar array. Recommend work on steep slopes in small areas at a time; reseed disturbed areas with native plants.

## PROJECTS OR ISSUES:

- Surry: Asphalt recycling plant: letter of concern to Planning Board regarding nesting Bank Swallows.
- Winchester: Wastewater Treatment Plant production of Class A Biosolids for agricultural use. Recommend no increase in impermeable surface at plant; concern for strong odors.
- Winchester: Forest Lake Association, advocated for installation of fish passage for eel and herring. Funding not available at this time.
- Winchester: Lost Road off Route 119, former Ashuelot Paper lagoons. Complaints of leachate from lagoons, contact with DES.
- Hinsdale: Fiske Mill Dam removal. Letter of support to DES for Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund application by The Nature Conservancy.
- Winchester: Brownfield cleanup. Letter of support to the EPA for funding.
- Marlow: Marlow Hydro license expired Nov. 30, 2022; annual license issued effective Dec. 1, 2022. No comments.
- Small wastewater treatment plants (Swanzey, Winchester, Hinsdale) to be covered under a General Permit in 2023.
- Instream Flow Program: Members attend demonstration of data instruments installation May 17, 18.
- Corridor Management Plan: Members have identified areas of concern including increased stream flow leading to bank erosion, non-point source pollution affecting water quality, fish passage and dam removal, the increased presence of invasive plant species in the corridor. Creation of the document and funding for specific action plans is ongoing.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Front Porch Project, Hinsdale: Barbara Skuly gave a presentation about ARLAC to the Hinsdale Historical

- society, August 5th.
- Source to the Sea River Cleanup, September 23 & 24: 121 volunteers collected 1,285 pounds of refuse from Beaver Brook and the Ashuelot River in Keene, Swanzey and Winchester.
  - River Monitoring: Monthly river water quality monitoring was conducted by 18 volunteers May through September, finding once again that large storm events result in elevated E.coli levels found even 48 hours after the rainfall. The characterization of the River differs overall with the upper reaches above Surry Dam having lower, more acidic pH but lower E.coli and Specific Conductance (measures ions in the water). Keene and downstream exhibit slightly better pH levels, but more frequent elevations of E.coli and Specific Conductance. Non-point source pollution along with low pH remain the areas of concern for our river. Total Phosphorus levels remained mostly at acceptable levels with the exception of a slight elevation in Marlow in August, perhaps related to beaver activity, and in Washington in July. Readings of Dissolved Oxygen and Chloride remain better than Class B standards. Complete data can be viewed under annual reports at <https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/river-and-lake-monitoring>.

Submitted by  
Eloise Clark, Clerk

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