

SAAWA

st. albans area watershed
ASSOCIATION

working to restore saint albans bay

Newsletter | May 2012

ST. ALBANS AREA WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

7th Annual Restore the Bay 5K is June 9th!

*a 5K Run or Walk from Kill Kare State Park
to St. Albans Bay Town Park*

Timed Event This Year!

Awards & Prizes

BBQ & Ice Cream

*Registration at the Bay Park
with transportation provided to the start*



**Registration form & details
on page 4 and 5**

Vermont's Most Valuable Crop

Farming in Vermont, by the newcomers, has been conducted for about 200 years. The principal crops have changed during that time: turkeys, sheep, grains, cheese, maple syrup and dairy. But the most valuable thing raised on farms have been children. So many things are learned on the farm: a work ethic, ingenuity, self reliance, a sense of community to name a few. Unfortunately, Vermont's children have been one of its' most valuable exports.

Two of Vermont's farm products have decided to carry on the family tradition. Jennifer and David Reynolds are operating an organic dairy farm on the Kellogg Road. They are milking about 90 cows. Jen and Dave purchased the farm from Jen's father, Mitch Montagne about four years ago. (Dave's farm roots also run deep as he's the grandson of Francis Howrigan and great grandson of Augustin Guay.) The process of changing from conventional farming to organic farming requires implementing pasture management infrastructure. Land which was formerly planted with corn is now permanent grass. Cattle lanes, constructed to reduce nutrient runoff lead to an extensive rotational grazing system which assures that the milking herd is on fresh lush grass

from May through October. No pesticides, chemical fertilizers or herbicides are now used on the farm.

Jen and Dave have accomplished a lot on this farm. If you are traveling on Kellogg Road, look west and you will see lots of green grass, cows grazing and some beautiful cattle lanes. The Reynolds are also very aware of nutrient runoff from their farm. Their land adjacent to Stevens Brook is undisturbed vegetation which stabilizes the stream bank and provides filtration for runoff resulting from heavy rain events. Jen and Dave's effort to change from conventional farming to organic farming has done more to improve the quality of St. Albans Bay than all the million spent on studies, manure pits and the rest. Some may disagree, but most do agree that the only way to improve water quality in Lake Champlain is to reduce the cultivation of corn in areas adjacent to streams and rivers.

If you happen to see Jen or Dave, say thanks. And, when you buy milk or other dairy products, look for the organic label. It may be more expensive but it's a healthier product and will help increase the demand for more organic dairy products. Organic dairies could save the farms in Vermont and save Lake Champlain.



St. Albans Area Watershed Association (SAAWA)
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www.saintalbanswatershed.org



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The manure has to flow somewhere

from the Burlington Free Press "My Turn" by Mike Rapacz

Remember the basic scientific premise we were all taught in grade school: "matter is neither created nor destroyed?"

Now apply that concept to Lake Champlain.

We have added hundreds of thousands of cows that add manure at an alarming rate to the watershed that feeds the lake. We encapsulate them into small areas where the manure generation becomes astronomical and the soils become unstable and are carried off during rains, carrying pollutants with them. Every year we bring in thousands upon thousands of tons of cow feed and nutrient fertilizer. And every year we grow thousands of acres of corn to feed the thousands upon thousands of cows, causing massive amounts nutrients and pesticide containing soils to runoff into streams and rivers.

"Matter is neither created nor destroyed."

Where do we think all of this pollution goes? It doesn't all go up in smoke and it doesn't mysteriously disappear when it infiltrates to groundwater. It is going into our lake. It has nowhere else to go.

For decades we have tried small scale experiments with bio-digesters, fancy manure spreading machines, composting practices, and we have implemented Nutrient Management Plans (NMPs) and Accepted Agricultural Practices (AAPs), and pollutant levels reaching the lake keep on increasing. Why?

Because matter cannot be created nor destroyed.

The agricultural industry, primarily industrial dairy, is considered responsible for between 50-60 percent of the nutrient pollution reaching our lake.

A well-run operation like Vermont's iconic Shelburne Farms despite instituting AAPs and NMPs pollutes the lake water around the farm with bacteria and nutrients so that they are frequently un-swimmable. Why? Because no matter how much technology you employ or how many NMPs you implement "matter cannot be created or destroyed."

There is only one answer to this dilemma, and it is becoming more and more obvious to those interested in balancing agriculture and water quality: less matter being dumped in Champlain's watershed.



This means far, far fewer cows. Which inherently means less manure generated to be spread on pasture and fields, less feed imported to feed the decreased number of cows, less fertilizer spread on fields and less corn grown to mobilize our soils.

This is the only way to reduce nutrient loading and clean up our lake, which by the way is the biggest financial interest in Vermont, way, way beyond the Vermont dollars derived from dairy.

So far down the road are we, talking about how to clean up Champlain, that it is truly criminal that people will not engage at this very basic scientific level. Over \$100 million spent to date, and we are still shamefully engaged in discussions about technological answers and new programs and new grants and new committees. None of them will work, because matter is neither created nor destroyed.

If you consider Champlain from a purely financial perspective (which is a sad way to view her) our actions are misguided. It is our most valuable resource from a dollars and cents perspective and we already know that the cost of cleanup is enormous.

Have we given up? Are we letting a dairy tradition overwhelm our common sense? Are we ignoring the future which promises to seriously exacerbate our nutrient problems? Are we OK with leaving our children a ruined primary resource? Are we incapable of modifying our land use to make it less destructive?

Unfortunately, our reluctance to grasp the very simple concept of simply reducing matter (cows, fertilizer, manure, corn) in our watershed suggests we answer "yes" to questions above. Because at this point, we have to understand the risks of pollutant overloading and the principal that matter is neither created nor destroyed.

working to restore Saint Albans Bay



How to deal with the lake, from the *Burlington Free Press* Chuck Ross, Secretary of Agriculture and Deb Markowitz, Secretary of Natural Resources

Where does all the phosphorus pollution come from that fertilizes algae blooms in Missisquoi Bay and St. Albans Bay every summer? There is no simple answer to this question. There are many different sources of runoff including parking lots, rooftops, driveways, paved and gravel roads, construction areas, and agricultural lands. Even stream banks and stream beds are sources of phosphorus when rivers become unstable enough to result in excessive erosion. Progress in controlling phosphorus laden runoff has been slower than any of us would like, which is confounded by the decades of legacy sediments already in the bays.

If we can identify where on the landscape the majority of the phosphorus pollution is coming from, then we can target our efforts to control sources of phosphorus more effectively. That is the premise behind the recently released “critical source area” study of the Missisquoi Bay watershed. The Lake Champlain Basin Program and its contractor, Stone Environmental, prepared the study thanks to funding from the International Joint Commission and the efforts of Senator Leahy.

The study found that nearly three quarters of the phosphorus runoff comes from only 20 percent of the land area within the Missisquoi Bay watershed. These sites are the “critical source areas,” the sites with a high risk of generating and delivering phosphorus to the nearest stream.

The study reported that targeting land use management practices at critical source areas, instead of implementing practices randomly, can be two or three times more effective at reducing phosphorus pollution. This finding applies to management practices including better fertilizer and manure management, cover-cropping of bare fields during the winter months, and avoiding the planting of corn in environmentally sensitive areas.

What are the characteristics of these critical source areas in the Missisquoi watershed? To answer this question, the researchers conducted a modeling analysis that considered the physical characteristics of each site, not including any best management practices, in order to assess the risk of phosphorus runoff. On average, cropland without buffers or erosion reduction practices in various rotations of corn, hay and soybeans had the highest predicted rates of phosphorus generation per acre. Barnyards and other farmstead areas were also shown to be high potential phosphorus-producers. Pastures, roads, and residential areas were in the middle of the range, while forest land generated the lowest predicted amounts of phosphorus per acre. The study also found that stream bank erosion along unstable river channels contributes 40 percent of the phosphorus delivered to the Missisquoi River.

Not all cropland is equal, however. Factors like soil type, slope and proximity to streams play a significant role in determining whether a particular corn field has the potential to be a critical source area. This is where the study showed that placing

the right erosion controls or changing land management on key critical source area fields may be more beneficial to the overall water quality goals than blanket requirements for all fields. In this way, we can use the critical source approach to target our efforts in a manner that protects our farm economy while maximizing environmental returns.

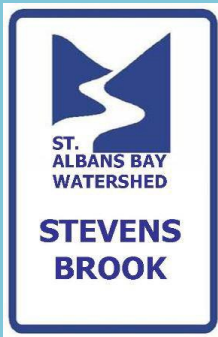
The study produced detailed, computerized maps of potential high-risk areas throughout the Missisquoi watershed. These map tools will help resource managers locate and prioritize sensitive areas as they work with farmers, foresters, and developers to design management practices. These maps are no substitute for a site visit, however, since the model was not able to distinguish where good water quality management practices are already in place.

So what are the lessons from this study for resource managers? First, financial assistance programs should be restructured to better assist farmers, forest landowners, and others in implementing the most effective phosphorus-reducing management practices. Technical assistance and funding should be targeted at the practices that will result in the greatest phosphorus reductions.

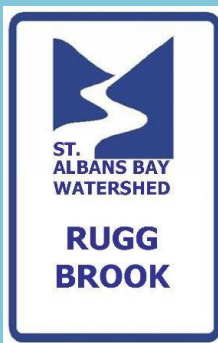
The 40 percent phosphorus contribution from stream bank erosion must be reduced. This means finding better ways to achieve long-term natural stability of our river channels. Allowing rivers to restore and maintain their natural shapes and floodplain functions is the most cost-effective solution to achieve stability. Armoring stream-banks with rock rip-rap, berming the banks, and draining wetlands only transfers the erosive power of the water elsewhere in the river system, prevents the storage of sediment, phosphorus, floodwaters in floodplains and wetlands, and does little to help Lake Champlain recover.

Finally, we should extend the critical source area approach to other watersheds in the Lake Champlain Basin. This will present technical challenges. The Missisquoi watershed is mostly forested and agricultural land uses, whereas other watersheds are more influenced by urban and suburban runoff. Transferring the approach to other watersheds may require different analytical methods and an evaluation of additional types of critical source areas.

Our two agencies are committed to working with all of our partners to put this good scientific work to use. In doing so, we will deploy the full mix of funding, technical assistance, and regulatory tools at our disposal. By being smarter and more strategic in the way we target our resources, we can make faster progress toward a clean Lake Champlain while minimizing the economic impact to the regulated community and the State of Vermont.



Look for these signs....they signify where these brooks run through our city and town.....



Seeking donations for 5K

We would love to promote your business!

We are looking for donations to use as awards and prizes for our Restore the Bay 5K!

If your business would like to donate items or gift certificates please contact Lori at 802-343-0546

A Failure to Regulate

Our elected officials and policy makers continue to avoid imposing regulations which would limit the economic activities taking place in areas adjacent to our streams and rivers which are killing the ecology of Lake Champlain. The science confirms that unless the current activities are curtailed the Lake will become more polluted and more areas of Lake Champlain will become unusable as are parts of Missisquoi Bay and St. Albans Bay in the summer. Instead our elected officials continue to kick the can down the road, fearful of offending economic interest and not truly aware that an ecological disaster can happen to Lake Champlain. Here's a little story of how ecological disasters occur.

In 1497 John Cabot, exploring the "New World" for England, happened upon the Grand Banks fishing grounds located southeasterly of New Foundland. He reported there were so many cod that they could be scooped up with a basket. Men rowing smaller boats found it hard to row because there were so many cod you couldn't get the oars in the water. The Basque fisherman and others soon came to these fishing grounds and began taking cod and shipping them back to Europe. Many others also came to fish: New Englanders, Norwegian, Russians, French and many others. For 450 years it seemed that there was an unlimited supply of cod in the Grand Banks.

In the 1950's a new technology in fish processing arrived on the Grand Banks. Floating fish factories which could process unheard of numbers of fish into convenience food.

Shortly after that came newly designed trawlers which had trawling nets with mouths hundreds of feet around taking cod of all sizes, sexes, ages and health. But it was not only cod these great nets scooped up. They also dredged the bottom taking all forms of living things to be discarded later. These fish factories came from all over the world to fish the Grand Banks.

By 1968 810,000 tons of cod alone were being taken from the Grand Banks. The scientists began to calculate the tonnage of cod coming from the Grand Banks and determined it was unsustainable. To address the problem the Canadian Government mathematicians also calculated that 400,000 tons of cod could be taken each year. While many protested that this number was way too high, few listened and the fishing industry flourished through the late 1970's and most of the 1980's.

Then the numbers started to decline. The mathematicians for the government who had gotten the number wrong in the 1970's began to suggest that the annual catch should be no more than 125,000 tons. The politicians ignored these figures and imposed a limit of 235,000 tons. While the politicians were justifying their decision, something unimaginable was happening out at sea. Newfoundland fishermen couldn't catch anywhere close to the tonnage now allowed. The cod had run out. The government's only option was to close down the fishery and hope that it would recover. It never did.

Thank you to our 2012 Restore the Bay 5K Sponsors!



Hannaford employees manning the grill!
They are gearing up to do it again this year!

The Abbey Group
Bruley & Bruley
Corporate Outfitters
Cross Consulting Engineers
Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation
Franklin County Regional Chamber of Commerce
Green Mountain Electric Supply
Hannaford
Mimmo's
Mylan Technologies
Northwestern Medical Center
Paul Poquette Realty Group
People's Trust Company
S.B. Collins
St. Albans Society for Performing Arts
WoodChuck Yacht Club

Volunteers needed!

If you are not participating and can volunteer, please call Lori at 802-343-0546

Thanks to our supporters!

L.G. Printing
Sportshoe Center

working to restore Saint Albans Bay



St. Albans Area Watershed Associations' 7th Annual RESTORE THE BAY 5K! – Registration Form

A 5K Walk/Run beginning at Kill Kare State Park

Please park at St. Albans Bay Town Park to be transported by bus to the start

Saturday June 9, 2012

Registration 9:00-10:00 a.m. at St. Albans Bay Town Park

bus leaves for Kill Kare to transport participants at 10:15

5K begins at 10:30 at Kill Kare

5K ends at St. Albans Bay Town Park with BBQ/Refreshments, Awards & Prizes

Can Pre-register by mailing by June 5th to SAAWA § P.O. Box 1567 § St. Albans VT 05478

Mail completed form with payment of \$20 payable to SAAWA – 1st 100 received are guaranteed a T-Shirt

Collect pledges to be eligible for a prize! See below Forms online at www.saintalbanwatershed.org

Participant Name				
Address				
Phone			E-mail Address	
Participant Age		Check One	Male _____	Female _____
Shirt size (not guaranteed)	Adult S _____ Adult M _____ Adult L _____ Adult XL _____	Check One	Running _____	Walking _____

I hereby release the St. Albans Area Watershed Association and all volunteers and sponsors of the "Restore the Bay 5K" from any liability for injuries or damages sustained by me or my property in connection with this event as a participant or observer. I further attest that I am physically conditioned to safely participate in this event and do so at my own risk. I realize that I will be running or walking on public thoroughfares that are not closed to traffic and I am fully responsible for my own health, safety and wellbeing.

Signature: _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____

(Guardian signature required if under 18)

**HELP RESTORE THE BAY BY ASKING YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY & NEIGHBORS
TO SUPPORT YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE 5K WITH THEIR TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION**

The St. Albans Area Watershed Association is a non-profit corporation with tax exempt status under IRS section 501(c)(3) TIN 41-2196343

	Donor Name	Address	Phone Number	Pledge Amount
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

**ALL PLEDGE PAYMENTS ARE DUE THE DAY OF THE EVENT
PLEASE BRING COMPLETED FORM AND CASH OR CHECKS PAYABLE TO S.A.A.W.A.**

2012 Weed Harvesting Project

St. Albans Area Watershed Association 2012 WEED HARVESTING PROJECT

The St. Albans Area Watershed Association will hold its' annual weed harvesting program in St. Albans Bay in July and August 2012. This will be the 4th year of operating the weed harvester purchased in November of 2008. To fund this project, SAAWA receives contributions from the Town of St. Albans and Georgia, the City of St. Albans and shoreline property owners.

To cover operating costs which includes tractor rental, fuel and maintenance, we are again seeking contributions to fund the weed harvesting from property owners. Due to the weather conditions this year, we expect 2012 to be a big year for weed harvesting. Shoreline property owners are encouraged to contribute \$100.00 per household. All others receiving this request are asked to contribute \$25.00. All contributions will be considered a membership payment in the St. Albans Area Watershed Association. Please fill out the form below and return it to:

**St. Albans Area Watershed Association
P.O. Box 1567
St. Albans VT 05478**

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ E-MAIL: _____

LOCATION ON LAKE: _____ ZONE: _____

- Zone 1. Bingham Shore
- Zone 2. Ferrand Road
- Zone 3. Pines
- Zone 4. Hathaway Point Road (Black Bridge to Fishing Access)
- Zone 5. Hathaway Point (Fishing Access to Point)

AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION: _____

COMMENTS: _____



working to restore Saint Albans Bay

Membership in SAAWA

We rely on annual Membership dues to help keep our organization running. It helps pay for administrative costs that are not covered by grants, paper, supplies, postage, printing of Newsletters and so on. Up until now, we have not 'billed' our membership annually.

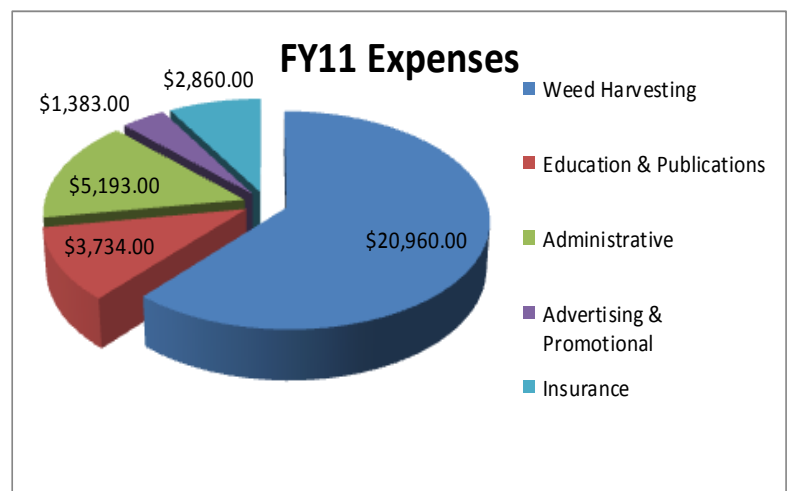
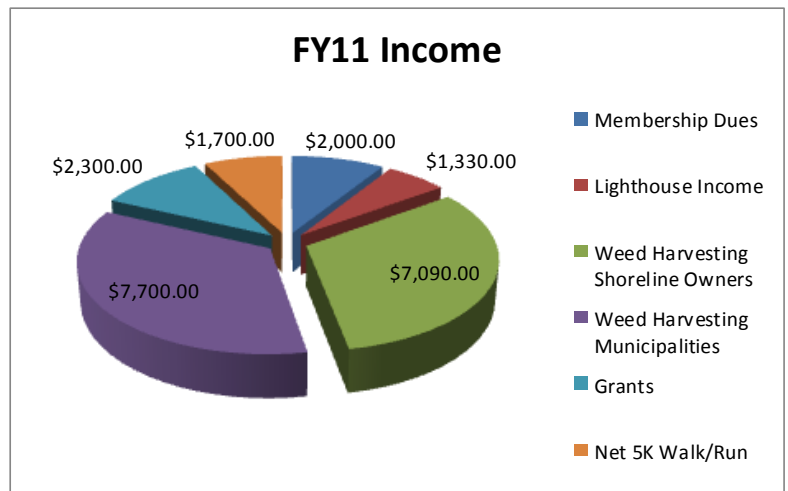
We appreciate everyone who has consistently sent in an annual donation. If you have not recently sent in any dues, and would like to put something toward the 2011-2012 fiscal year please send your payment along with the 2012-2013 membership to our post office box.

If you would like more information or want to know when you last paid, please contact Lori at sawatershed@myfairpoint.net or call her at 524-0184.

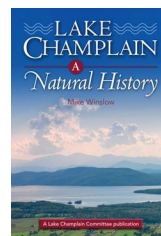
You can see to the right a sample year of Income and Expenses for the organization for the last fiscal year ending June 30, 2011.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR MEMBERS FOR THEIR ONGOING SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION FOR A CLEANER LAKE

We welcome membership involvement! Please attend a meeting, give us feedback, volunteer at an event.....help in anyway you can with whatever expertise you have.



BECOME A MEMBER TODAY or RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!



Autographed copy is yours at the \$100 membership level



I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN/RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP
St. Albans Area Watershed Association

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

SEASONAL ADDRESS: _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Mail to: St. Albans Area Watershed Association
P.O. Box 1567
St. Albans VT 05478

CHOOSE MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

_____ Student	\$ 5
Receive a hat	
_____ Individual	\$ 10
_____ Family	\$ 20
_____ Lake Advocate	\$ 50
Receive a hat	
_____ Lake Steward	\$ 100
Receive Mike Winslow's book	
_____ Business	\$ 250

working to restore Saint Albans Bay



PO Box 1567
St. Albans VT 05478

Upcoming Events

- June 9th** Restore the Bay 5K!
- June 16th** Friends of Northern Lake 2nd Annual Bike for the Lake
- June 20th** SAAWA Monthly Meeting at St. Albans Free Library 5:30
- July 1st** Bay Day! Visit www.stalbanstown.com for details
- August** SAAWA Annual Meeting
at the St. Albans Bay Town Park (stay tuned for date & details)

**Remember to bring your redeemable bottles & cans
to our Lighthouse!**

