

MEDUXNEKEAG
RIVER ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 5806
612 MAIN STREET
WOODSTOCK, NB
E7M 2C4

DID YOU KNOW

- 2/3rds of the Meduxnekeag Watershed is in the state of Maine
- The Meduxnekeag River Association has an office at 612 Main Street, Woodstock. Do drop in and visit us and see our projects

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 2005
Meduxnekeag
Environmental
Awareness
Showcase at local
elementary
schools

**MRA Annual
Dinner &
Auction—April
15, 2005 @
Knights of
Columbus Hall**

Call the office
anytime to
arrange tours of
the Meduxnekeag
Valley Nature
Preserve

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UP THE “CREEK”

NEWS FROM AROUND THE MEDUXNEKEAG WATERSHED

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MEDUXNEKEAG WATERSHED CLASSIFICATION PROJECT

The Meduxnekeag River Association is coordinating a **water classification project** within the Meduxnekeag River watershed.

Over the next year, we will be gathering, and sharing, as much information about the Meduxnekeag as we can. Its history: what it was like and how it has been used in the past; its present condition, based on the results of water quality and other tests we've been carrying out; what's special about it; and, what vision people who live here have for its future.

The classification process involves five steps:

- Identify and involve residents and stakeholders;
- Evaluate the river system - gather and analyze water quality information, land and water use information;
- Reach, through consensus among stakeholders, a vision and a plan for classification of surface water in the Meduxnekeag watershed;
- Develop an action plan that addresses issues and promotes the vision;
- Recommend to the Province the provisional water classification which has been agreed, and begin to implement the action plan.

This process is expected to take about 18 months to complete.

Involving residents and stakeholders

All residents and stakeholders have a stake - an interest - in the Meduxnekeag River and how part or all of its watershed is managed. The water classification project relies on resident and stakeholder involvement to lay the ground work. We will be using a number of ways - mailings, newsletters, one-on-one meetings, public meetings, our website - to solicit input and feedback.

What is important to you about the Meduxnekeag River, its tributaries and its watershed? How has it changed from the way it used to be? What do you know about it that should be included in the classification process? How do you use it? How do you think it should be used in the future? What concerns do you have about the Meduxnekeag or about the classification process?

Evaluating the river system

Over the past three summers, we have collected water samples from more than a dozen sites; water temperatures and *pH* readings have been recorded; we've

done fish surveys and collected *benthic* samples to find out what lives on the river bottom.

By examining the existing water quality and understanding how land use contributes to water quality, any watercourse within the Meduxnekeag watershed can be placed into one of the six possible “classes” used in New Brunswick.

The ecological, social and economic consequences of classifying a watercourse in a given class will be considered by residents and stakeholders during the process. The aim is to ensure that long-term impacts of the classification do not negatively affect the Meduxnekeag watershed and those that live and work here.

The river will be categorized into various classes, based on the current biological health and the objectives as determined by stakeholders.

Recommending Classification

The aim of the project is to produce **recommendations** for classification of the different watercourses within the Meduxnekeag watershed according to the consensus reached by stakeholders. Residents and stakeholders will have a further opportunity to comment on the provisional classification recommendations, with resulting revisions being made prior to the classification being recommended to the provincial Department of Environment and Local Government.

The Minister considers the recommendations of the classification process, and where necessary may undertake additional consultation with residents and stakeholders. The Minister then makes a final decision and informs the public of the result of the classification process. Once accepted by the Minister, the Meduxnekeag watershed classification becomes a regulation of the Clean Water Act.

After a watercourse is classified, the water quality standards associated with the class will apply, and it will be an infraction to use the water, or the land within the watershed associated with the watercourse, in a way that will, directly or indirectly:

- cause the quality of the water to cease to meet

the class standards;

- cause the quality of the water to degrade in relation to the class standards;
- impede or stop any progress that the quality of the water may have been making toward meeting the class standards

In most cases, the existing water quality will meet the standards, and most activities in the watershed will already be in compliance.

Future changes to the classification only occur after careful consideration by government and those involved in the region. Changes may occur as a result of shifting environmental, social or economic priorities, improvements in water quality, and ongoing input from residents and stakeholders.

Action planning

Through the participation of residents and stakeholders a plan will be developed to identify and carry out actions that are needed to maintain the classification standards and make the vision we’ve developed into a real future. Actions can be carried out over a number of years, and may include such things as encouraging voluntary use of best management practices by residents and stakeholders; developing community-based initiatives aimed at improving or maintaining water quality; providing assistance to landowners, and other projects intended to maintain or improve water quality.

The action plan is the basis for the implementation of activities at the watershed level to achieve the vision and goals identified during the water classification process. Ensuring clean water flows in the Meduxnekeag watershed that support a variety of uses and meet the needs of residents and stakeholders now and in the future will be the direct responsibility of the residents and stakeholders.



Your Environmental Trust Fund at Work!
Votre Fonds en fiducie pour l’Environnement au travail!

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES?

Like all non-profit community organizations, the Meduxnekeag River Association thrives on the work and time of its volunteers. If you'd like to help, here are some of the opportunities for volunteer involvement:

- Be a judge in our annual competition. The week before Earth Day each year, we look for community volunteers to spend a couple of hours at one of the local elementary schools looking at projects and talking and listening to the students who created them
- Help us organize our annual dinner and auction. Held about April 15th, this is the Meduxnekeag River Association's major source of funding, as well as a popular social occasion.
- Become a water quality monitor. In 2005, as part of our Meduxnekeag Water Classification Project, we'll be training volunteers to help carry out some of the testing that shows aspects of the health of the river
- Help with the trails clean-up. After the snow goes in the Spring, we go around the 10km of trails on the Meduxnekeag Valley Nature Preserve, remove any fallen trees and branches which have come down and get the trails ready for use.

Please contact us if you are interested in volunteering. Thank you.

Meduxnekeag River Association, 612 Main Street, Woodstock, Phone: 506-328-8227



Our watershed address?

In the same way that you are a community member in the town where you live, you are a community member in the watershed where you live. You likely live near water, with a stream on your property, a river flowing through your community, or a nearby lake where you can swim. All of the tributaries or small streams that flow into a river, as well as the connected lakes and ponds, belong to the same water system. This is called your watershed, and like your postal code is a unique "address" for you and the surrounding community.

Since rivers drain the land within a watershed, their water quality is influenced by land use activities within the watershed. Together with the other residents of your watershed, you can carry out your daily activities in such a way that they will not harm the water quality of the river, streams, wetland and lakes in your watershed.

3rd Annual Meduxnekeag Environmental Awareness Showcase coming April 2005

For the past two years the Meduxnekeag River Association has partnered with local elementary schools to create awareness and educate students, parents and the local community of the uniqueness and importance of our natural environment.

Each year we set a theme, and challenge students from Kindergarten to Grade 5 to participate by producing a project or artwork, and a written essay on the theme. In 2005, our challenge is: "Lose a tonne!" - how can you, your family, your school, your community reduce CO₂.

This project relies on the enthusiasm of the students and community members, who are recruited to judge the students' creations. Winners are announced for each Grade level with a Grande Finale scheduled for right after Earth Day (April 22).

For more information, or to become involved in this initiative please contact the Meduxnekeag office at 328-8227.

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The Meduxnekeag River Association was formed in Woodstock, New Brunswick in 1995 as a community-based non-profit environmental organization, incorporated in 1998, and received official charitable tax status in 2002. Our purpose:

- to promote, encourage and assist in the protection, restoration and responsible use of the Meduxnekeag River Watershed;
- to promote and encourage the protection, conservation and enhancement of wild Brook trout, Brown trout and Atlantic salmon;
- to co-operate with landowners to conserve the natural riparian zone along the Meduxnekeag and its wildlife and plant species;
- to preserve remnant *Appalachian Hardwood forests* and their inherent biodiversity and natural beauty;
- to promote public education and awareness of the value of preserving the natural qualities and biodiversity of the unique Meduxnekeag River watershed; and,
- to co-operate with and support any agency that shares a common purpose with the Association.

The Association has purchased and protected as the Meduxnekeag Valley Nature Preserve three ecologically significant properties on the Meduxnekeag. The Association hosts an annual fundraising Dinner and Auction in Woodstock every Spring; organizes an annual student Environmental Showcase competition at local elementary schools; and guides walks by student groups on the Nature Preserve trails (a well-marked 10 km network open to the public). In 2004, we began an 18-month project to develop recommendations for water classification in the Meduxnekeag watershed.

Meduxnekeag River Association awarded 2004 New Brunswick Environmental Leadership Award

In 2004, the Meduxnekeag River Association won an Environmental Leadership Award from the province of New Brunswick. Nominated in the category, we were up against other finalists including the City of Edmundston and Fredericton’s Science East.

The Award is a recognition of our work in preserving environmentally significant forest and protecting it forever through our Meduxnekeag Valley Nature Preserve, as well as an acknowledgment of the value of our education program, both the guided class visits to the Preserve and our annual Meduxnekeag Environmental Showcase competition.



Carl Faulkner (left), Meduxnekeag River Association Board member and George Peabody (right), Program Coordinator receive the 2004 New Brunswick Environmental Leadership Award from Brenda Fowlie, Minister of Environment and Local Government