

SeVWA's 2016 *E. coli* Monitoring of Local River Sites Began June 21st

The Southeastern Vermont Watershed Alliance (SeVWA) began its monitoring program for the summer of 2017 on Wednesday, June 21st. Volunteers will be collecting samples from 34 sites on nine rivers and streams every other week through the end of August. This year, we have sites on the West River, Flood Brook, North Branch Ball Mountain Brook, Rock River, Williams River (including the Middle Branch), Saxtons River, East Putney Brook, Sacketts Brook, and Whetstone Brook.

One of the parameters we test the water we collect for is *Escherichia coli*, more commonly known as *E. coli*. It is a bacterium that is found in the guts of all warm blooded animals, including humans. Most *E. coli* will not make a person sick, but sometimes they can become pathogenic which means they can cause illness. Additionally, the presence of *E. coli* in waters acts as an indicator for the presence of other, more difficult to test for pathogens that may cause waterborne illnesses to those swimming, wading, or boating. We publish our results to the public in order to help everyone make informed decisions about recreating in Vermont's waters.

The days leading up to June 21st were very wet with some sites receiving upwards of four inches of rain 48 hours before samples were collected. About half of our sites tested above the "suitability for swimming" standard set by the State of Vermont and the US Environmental Protection Agency. Because heavy rains can cause spikes in bacteria, it is generally recommended to wait 24-48 hours after a significant rainfall to resume swimming in lakes and streams.

SeVWA's water quality monitoring program is supported by SeVWA volunteers, members and donors, including the Londonderry Conservation Commission, Robert Fritz, Inc, Rock River Preservation, Elaine Lambert Living Trust, Grafton Village Cheese Company, State of VT Department of Environmental Conservation's LaRosa Environmental Testing Laboratory, & Connecticut River Watershed Council (CRWC).

For more information about SeVWA's monitoring program sites and results and other Connecticut River watershed water quality and recreational information, please visit www.ctriver.us.

Thanks again for all you do to support SeVWA's monitoring program and for your interest.

This information is provided by Ryan O'Donnell, SeVWA WQMP Coordinator, and Gabriel Chevalier, 2017 VT ANR intern (sevwa.volunteer@gmail.com).

SeVWA website – <http://www.sevwa.org>

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SeVWA's 2017 *E. coli* Monitoring of Local Rivers Continued July 5th

The Southeastern Vermont Watershed Alliance (SeVWA) continued its monitoring program for the summer of 2017 on Wednesday, July 5th. Volunteers will be collecting samples from 34 sites on nine rivers and streams every other week through the end of August. This year, we have sites on the West River, Flood Brook, North Branch Ball Mountain Brook, Rock River, Williams River (including the Middle Branch), Saxtons River, East Putney Brook, Sacketts Brook, and Whetstone Brook.

While we had great weather this week to celebrate the 4th of July, last weekend much of Vermont received heavy rains that were catastrophic in some areas. Some of our watersheds saw some street flooding and erosion while some watersheds further to our north experienced more severe flooding that damaged roads and crops. Even though the rain had ceased well before our usual 24-48 hour window of concern for elevated bacteria levels, many rivers were still experiencing high water at the time of sampling and that is reflected in the results.

Most of our sites tested above the "suitability for swimming" standard set by the State of Vermont and the US Environmental Protection Agency this week. Because heavy rains can cause spikes in bacteria, it is generally recommended to wait 24-48 hours after a significant rainfall to resume swimming in lakes and streams.

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