



Spring Newsletter

In this issue:

- Water Quality Monitoring
- Equipment Rental
- Planting opportunities
- Summer lake programs
- Plant Sale 2019
- Stormwater work

Contact us about our 2019 plant sale! We sell a variety of fruit trees/shrubs as well native plants grown right in Poultny VT at the Champlain Valley Native Plant Restoration Nursery. Some of the plants include Blueberries, Raspberries, Asparagus, apples, Pears, Dogwood, Balsam Fir, Winterberry, and Virginia Rose. Email sadie@pmnrcd.org for more information or to place an order.

Stay tuned for volunteer opportunities and workshops as the weather begins to warm up! PMNRCD has a variety of hands-on workshops planned for the upcoming growing season. The workshops include topics specifically for those in agriculture as well as for gardeners and homeowners. Find us at www.pmnrcd.org or on Facebook @PMNRCD

“The one thing I’d like to see come out of these plantings is increased awareness and respect for our shared Earth.”

-Savannah Watson,
Nursery intern & spring tree planting crew-member 2018

Over the last few years PMNRCD has annually planted roughly 5,000 trees and shrubs along streams in the Poultny Mettowee Watershed. This past summer was no exception, our planting crew kept busy! The trees planted aid in the protection of water quality by reducing the amount of runoff containing excess nutrients from entering our waterbodies. Planted riparian buffers also increase available wildlife cover and food supply, improve many aspects of aquatic habitat, promote the connectivity of wild lands, reduce erosion and flooding damage, and reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere.

A primary funder of our plantings is Pur Projet, which focuses on agricultural lands. Our planting success was aided by both Pur Projet and through **Trees for Streams**, a state-wide program funded by an Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) grant through the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts.

Each year we look for sites and residents to partner with. If you are interested in learning more, please contact hilary@pmnrcd.org. We can schedule a time to visit you and your property to discuss your participation in one of these programs and give you an idea of what your planting could look like. If you are interested, please contact us to begin the planning process.



PMNRCD WATER QUALITY MONITORING

PMNRCD has collected water samples in local streams and rivers since 2003. Samples are collected bi-weekly from May through September, with efforts to conduct two sample events during periods of high rainfall and runoff. The resulting data is used in conjunction with our agricultural, stormwater, and outreach programs to focus efforts in areas with poor water quality, and monitor the results of past projects. With data compiled from multiple years, we are able to capture any trends occurring within the watershed and use that information to prepare for the future. Lake Champlain has an established TMDL for phosphorus. The southern portion, South Lake B drainage of the Poultny and Mettowee watersheds, is required to reduce the amount of contributing phosphorus by a total of 41.6% in order to meet these guidelines. These graphs depict the levels of Total Phosphorus (TP) at a portion of sites sampled in 2017. For the data year shown there were six collection dates. While there are exceptions, as a whole the sites showed levels not far from those allowed for TP, the standard set by the DEC is 27ug/L for warm water streams

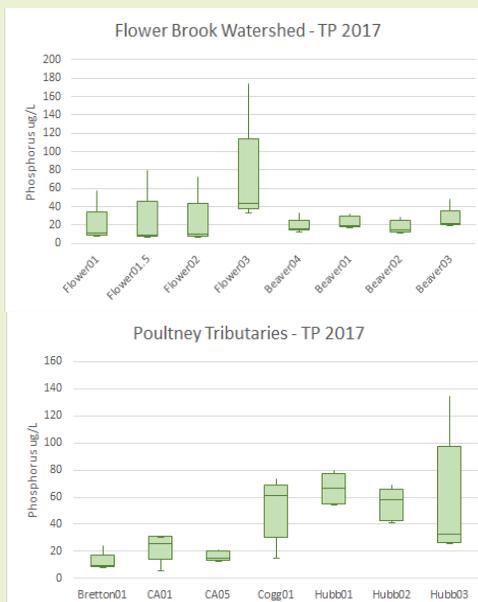


Figure 1. Graphs depicting TP measured in 2017 samples. Boxes show quartile grouping at each site.

during low flow.

As one can imagine, large storms and flow patterns affect the amount of TP found in our samples. The district takes into account the precipitation and flow category measured. During storm events we often see an increase of TP and E. coli sampled due to the high amount of runoff produced. Land use as well as physical characteristics of the stream sampled play into the results, an example is depicted in the second graph of Figure 1. with higher levels found in the clayplain streams, Coggman and Hubbardton.

Both graphs show focus areas of the District with additional monitoring and various projects being implemented.

PMNRCD is analyzing the 2018 data which we will integrate into our work this coming season. Let us know if you would like to learn more or have questions about what you can do to protect our waters!



Look for these events:

- District Volunteer Days
- Pollinator Garden Workshop
- Poultney Earthfair
- Poultney Town-wide Yard Sale
- East Poultney Day
- Tinmouth Plant Sale

PMNRCD is moving to a new office space in April

More information to follow!

Required Agricultural Practices: Any Questions?

If you would like a confidential and non-regulatory mock inspection of your farm or a one-on-one discussion about any aspect of the RAPs, please contact Jennifer Alexander at 802-558-6470 or Jennifer@pmnrcd.org. She has worked for the District for 14 years and has provided practice inspections since the Accepted Agricultural Practices revisions were adopted in 2006.

PORTABLE AGRICULTURAL SCALES

New in 2018, the District has 6 GEC portable truck scales available to weigh your manure spreader or harvest wagons. This allows calibration for more accurate Nutrient Management Planning. Staff brings the scales to your farm and assists with the weighing process while taking forage samples for drying to determine dry matter content. We also assist with NMP updates and soil samples.

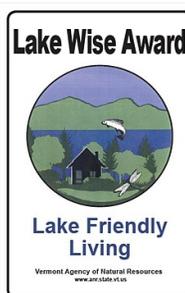
What's the big deal about storm water?

Stormwater runoff contains pollutants, including fertilizers, pesticides, salts, and sediment, that have washed off of impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, and houses as well as areas of bare soil and sloped lawns. This excess water can also increase flood damage during storm events due to the influx of water to the river systems that otherwise would be infiltrating elsewhere.

PMNRCD is continuing our work in stormwater management. Currently, we are doing work on the Lake St. Catherine Stormwater Master Plan. Plans like this help to identify locations where projects could be implemented. We are also working with towns, road crews, organizations and individuals in the assistance of grant applications and the design process of projects. Many of the projects aim to control runoff through the implementation of onsite infiltration practices. Funding for these projects is made available through stormwater block grants from VT ANR

Lake Programs

Interested in protecting the health of our lakes? Contact us for an assessment of your shoreland property! The assessment will give you an idea of the best management practices that fit your land. Lake wise is a state DEC funded program which awards exemplary properties that are maintained with the care of the lake in mind. The assessment goes over lake friendly living in four categories; shoreland, recreation, buildings, and septic system.



Lake Education Action Program

LEAP will be back this summer! LEAP is sponsored by the Lake Champlain Sea Grant and provides the opportunity for high school student interns to be involved in conservation work. LEAP is a mutual learning experience based in action! Students implement shoreline buffers and raingardens for lake residents. Along with the implementation of these best management practices, students increase local awareness of lake water quality issues by providing door-to-door outreach.

Contact Hilary Solomon if you are interested in participating in LEAP as a student intern or shoreland homeowner: hilary@pmnrcd.org

Rent our farming equipment!

Haybuster 107C No-Till Drill

With funding from the Lookout Foundation, the District offers a Haybuster 107C no-till drill to farmers. It is in high demand during the spring and fall, so call us to be added to the waiting list.

8ft GenTill II Aerator

With funding from the Vermont Legislature, the District offers an 8-foot GenTill II Aerator for rent. Aerators can be used to reduce surface compaction, aerate the soil, incorporate manure, or as primary tillage.

Q: How much does it cost to rent the equipment?

A: There is currently no acreage fee to use our No-Till drill.

A. The acreage fee for the aerator is \$6 per acre. This fee is used for purchasing new tines and bearings as they wear out.

Contact Jennifer for equipment rentals: (802) 558-6470 or Jennifer@pmnrcd.org.

**Featured Native Plant
Buttonbush
*Cephalanthus occidentalis***

A flowering deciduous shrub found in wetlands or areas with moist soils. The unique blooms attract a variety of butterflies and birds while other wildlife species utilize its branches for covering/habitat.

