

UPPER MERRIMACK RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Annual Report • 2019

The Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee, (known locally and affectionately as UMLAC; pronounced Uhm'-re-lack) closed out 2019 with well-attended monthly meetings, informative presentations, updated bylaws, and other activities for the upper Merrimack communities.

Established in 1990, the UMLAC represents its six communities of Boscawen, Bow, Canterbury, Concord, Franklin, and Northfield through its statutory duties including permit review and management plan coordination. The UMLAC provides a voice for the upper Merrimack River towns and cities through the river's designation in the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program. The UMLAC updates the *Merrimack River Management and Implementation Plan* (<http://www.merrimackriver.org/managementplan>) and coordinates the activities in it.

Gary Lemay acted as lead in monitoring and commenting on Federal Energy Regulatory Commission applications for Eastman Falls, Kelley's Falls, Mad River, Lakeport, Contoocook, and Lowell projects.

The UMLAC reviewed and provided local comment on several project plans and proposals in the upper Merrimack including underground storage tanks in Concord, culvert replacements in Bow, and Concord, and wetlands, shoreland, and alteration of terrain permit applications in Bow, Concord, and Franklin. Gary Lemay led a process to provide comment letter formats based on the UMLAC's permit review guidelines.

The UMLAC is represented by Mike Hansen on the Brownfields Advisory Committee administered by the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission. The UMLAC wrote a letter of support for the grant to continue the project.

The state's local river advisory committees have been represented by Senator Ruth Ward on the state Rivers Management Advisory Committee. The UMLAC recommended that Senator Ward be re-nominated and re-appointed to this state-level post.

John Magee, NH Fish and Game Department, presented a case study of habitat restoration in the Nash Stream area. Sharon McMillan, Franklin Waste Water Treatment Plant, presented on micro plastics in water and, more generally, the treatment of wastewater in the Winnepesaukee basin.

Non-statutory or discretionary programs include a variety of studies, planning activities, and programs related to the upper Merrimack River and its watershed. The UMLAC is working with the Upper Merrimack Watershed Association (UMWA) to assume and manage its non-statutory activities including community outreach, informative and data-rich website, St. Paul's School of the Upper Merrimack Monitoring Program Winter Series and Birkhead Science Lectures partnership, and the Upper Merrimack Monitoring Program (UMMP).

The Upper Merrimack Monitoring Program, which has been working for its communities' rivers since 1994, depends on the high quality work of over a hundred volunteers each year who monitor river and stream health on the upper Merrimack River and its tributaries at a total of seventeen sites from Franklin to Bow. During the summer, volunteers collect river water samples and the Franklin Waste Water Treatment Plant analyzes them at no charge to detect the presence or absence of *E. coli* bacteria. The resulting data are used to determine if the upper Merrimack River is safe for swimming, fishing, boating, and other recreational activities. The information is shared with municipalities and other local officials for their health officers' and other local officials' use, as well as to the State of New Hampshire and the US Congress.

St. Paul's School continues to be the gracious host for "Bug Nights," the UMMP's educational and research program, which continues its popularity in the region with dozens of individuals volunteering their sample sorting and identification services each Wednesday evening. The commitment and quality of volunteers that participate in the UMMP cannot be overstated and is the primary reason this program has been recognized nationally for generating superior citizen science results. Over 80 volunteer citizen scientists contributed their time to the Upper Merrimack Monitoring Program. Rhithron, Inc. completed a

quality control analysis of volunteer identifications of benthic macroinvertebrates, and produced a digital library of specimen images.

At its annual meeting in November, the UMLAC elected officers Michele Tremblay, Chair; Steve Landry, Vice-Chair, Krista Crowell, Treasurer; and Gary Lynn, Secretary. The committee welcomed back Mary Lee, a past “UMLACer” representing Northfield.

The UMMP work would not be possible without the generosity of all six of its municipal supporters and eleven Adopt-a-River Site Sponsors. Their support assures that the program has the resources that it needs to continue its programs. Adopt-a-River Site Sponsors include Aries Engineering, Inc., Elektrisola, Essex/Briar Hydro, Franklin Savings Bank, Franklin Wastewater Treatment Facility, Granite Shore Power, GZA Environmental, Inc., Nelson Analytical Lab, and Watts Regulator/Webster Valve.

Please visit the UMLAC’s blog at www.MerrimackRiver.org/forum as well as its website, www.MerrimackRiver.org for further information on the river, committee membership, activities, summaries from prior meetings, upcoming meeting agendas, maps, water quality data, and photographs of brave and selfless volunteers demonstrating their passion for water quality monitoring in the upper Merrimack watershed. Information is also available on Facebook and Twitter.

The UMLAC meets on a rotating basis in its six represented communities on the second Monday of each month (except for holidays and unforeseen conflicts) at 7:00 PM. Thank you to the Towns, Cities, and other organizations in Boscawen, Bow, Canterbury, Concord, Franklin, and Northfield for graciously hosting Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee meetings and for their financial support during the past year. All are welcome to attend the meetings. For further information, please contact Michele Tremblay, Chair via telephone at 603.796.2615, email at UMLAC@MerrimackRiver.org or through your representatives listed below.

Boscawen

Thomas Gilmore

Canterbury

Anne Dowling
Adrienne Hutchinson

Franklin

Wayne Ives
Donna Liolis
Jeffrey Perkins

Bow

Krista Crowell
Michael Hansen
Gary Lynn

Concord

Rick Chormann
Gary Lemay

Northfield

Mary Lee
Ashley Warner

At-large

Stephen C. Landry
Nita Tomaszewski
Michele L. Tremblay