

Blackstone Watershed Event

Workgroup Meeting – Agenda

November 27, 2018

12:00 pm. to 2:00 p.m.

MassDEP Central Regional Office

8 New Bond St. Worcester, MA 01606

Background:

The Blackstone River Watershed, —the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution—is a celebrated waterway. The 2017 *State of Narragansett Bay and Its Watershed* report highlighted that population is increasing by 5% in this watershed. Five percent of forest is declining in the upper watershed, and urban areas are increasing by 8.8%. There are highly diverse ecological lands in this watershed, of which 19% remain unprotected. The river was once considered one of the most polluted rivers in America, yet is transformed into the John H. Chafee National Heritage Corridor. Pollution is declining thanks to the valuable efforts of local volunteers, governmental agencies, and dedicated non-profits and stakeholders. It is time to celebrate.

As an effort to highlight the various groups, state agencies, and stakeholders that work in this watershed, the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program will be hosting a workshop to talk about some topics and issues that the Blackstone faces as well as inspire partnerships and discussions to continue work in this watershed. A few topics we (NBEP) have discussed include: historical appreciation, volunteer monitoring, what it means to work in bi-state watershed basin, WWTF improvements, and impervious cover.

Goals of the workshop:

- Acknowledging the history
- Highlight efforts in the Blackstone
- Moving forward: networking opportunities – new partnerships
- More action focused – how people can make a difference and get involved

Goals of kick off meeting:

- Consensus on date and venue
- Form event committee
- Themes for workshop

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions (12:00pm)
2. Priority Items (12:15pm)
 - a. Summary of the State of the Taunton event
 - b. Discuss ideas/themes/topics
 - What are the desired outcomes of this event?
 - Catchy title of workshop: “Looking back, Moving forward”
 - Major topics – maybe ones that haven’t been talked about as much?
 - Linking to the 2017 *State of Narragansett Bay and Its Watershed* report
 - c. Potential speakers
 - Good representation of different stakeholders in the watershed
 - What types of projects/research is going on
 - List of who we can start to contact
 - d. Date/time of workshop
 - April 29th (tentative)
 - 9am-1pm
 - e. Venue
 - Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center at Worcester
 - Other?
 - f. Open forum
 - Any last minute thoughts or ideas
3. Next steps (1:45pm)
 - a. Event committee
 - After this meeting, we will form a smaller event committee made up of those of you who are interested in being directly involved in the logistics, planning, and coordination of this event.
 - Hold another meeting to delegate roles and discuss invitees, speakers, and draft agenda
4. Adjourn meeting (2:00pm)