

THE BLACKSTONE RIVER – PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center at Worcester
3 Paul Clancy Way, Worcester, MA
Monday, April 29, 2018
8:30am – 1:00pm

PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP: Provide an open platform to share information on the history of the Blackstone River, learn about the status of environmental indicators in the watershed and the groups working to improve its health, and discuss current challenges, successes, and how we can best use science and partnerships to improve the resilience of the watershed moving forward.

OUTCOMES:

1. Greater understanding among participants about the current condition and future of the watershed
2. New relationships formed and potential new partnerships explored.
3. Specific next steps defined for advancing water quality, habitat, and appreciation of the Blackstone watershed.

AGENDA

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| Registration and Networking
<i>Coffee, tea, and light snacks to start the day. Don't forget your reusable mug!</i> | 8:00-8:30am |
| Welcoming Remarks
Mike Gerel, Program Director, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
<i>Mike introduces the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program, the status and trends report, the purpose of the workshop, and desired outcomes for the day.</i> | 8:30-8:45am |
| Perspective on the Blackstone
Joseph Petty, Mayor, City of Worcester
Martin Suuberg, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Janet Coit, Director, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
Ken Moraff, Director, Office of Ecosystem Protection, U.S. EPA Region 1
<i>Speakers provide an overview of their work and perspective on the Blackstone and its watershed.</i> | 8:45-9:15am |
| Looking back – the historical importance of the Blackstone
Kevin Klyberg, Park Ranger, Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park
<i>Kevin grounds us in the local area by offering a brief history of the region and takes questions</i> | 9:30-10:00am |
| Panel 1 – Present: Successes, challenges, and opportunities in the Blackstone watershed
Moderator: Nick Wildman, Ecological Restoration Specialist, MA Department of Ecological Restoration
Panelists:
Susan Mara, Director of Planning, City of Pawtucket
Karla Sangrey, Director, Upper Blackstone Clean Water
Stefanie Covino, Conservation Planner, City of Worcester
Peter Coffin, Blackstone River Water Coalition
<i>Panelists offer their views on recent successes, ongoing challenges, and current opportunities by answering questions from the moderator and audience.</i> | 10:00-11:15am |

Break

11:15-11:30am

*Exhibitor tables and invited student work from WPI Students***Panel 2 - Future: Setting goals and making a difference moving forward**

11:30-12:45pm

Moderator: Pieter de Jong, Blackstone River Coalition**Panelists:**

Heidi Ricci, Senior Policy Analyst, MassAudubon

Keith Hainley, River Restoration Coordinator, Blackstone River Watershed Council/
Friends of the Blackstone;

Rob Johnston, Professor of Economics, Clark University;

Joanne Holahan, Vice President/Education Team Leader, Blackstone River Watershed Association

*Beginning with our panelists and then including workshop attendees, reflect on the success, challenges, and opportunities shared by the last panel and then identify some priority actions necessary to improve water quality, habitat, and community engagement for a healthy watershed.***Next Steps and Closing Remarks**

12:45-1:00pm

Donna Williams, Watershed Advocate, Blackstone River Coalition

*What's next? Opportunities, next steps, and looking forward***GUIDED WALKING TOURS (OPTIONAL)***Please join Marina Flannery (Blackstone Valley Tourism Council) and Kate McPherson (Save The Bay) on a guided walking nature tour of the Blackstone River.*

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