

From: [Fort River Watershed Association](#)
To: [Sarah Ripper](#)
Subject: 2020 - A Year in Review
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News and Updates on the Fort River

DECEMBER
2020

A brief year in review - 2020 work on the Fort River

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Volunteer and FoRWA Board Member Christine Hatch cleanup up the Fort River!

This was a challenging, surprising and innovative year - we could not be more proud of all that was accomplished to protect, preserve and prioritize work in the Fort River watershed. We thank you for your partnership and support!

Here are just a few of the highlights from this year's work on the Fort:

- First-of-its-kind water quality testing (through the help of FoRWA volunteers!) revealed concrete evidence of bacteria pollution in popular local river access points, posing a health risk to our watershed community. We are committed to using this data to develop an action plan to clean up these access points so that both human and non-human watershed neighbors can stay safely connected to the Fort River.

- In addition to bacteria monitoring this summer, volunteers also collected data on nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus, specifically), macroinvertebrates (water bugs!), river discharge and a host of water quality measurements from water flowing directly in to the river from stormwater drains. We look forward to sharing what else we can learn from this data about the state of the Fort River watershed. A special thank you goes out to all of our volunteer monitors!
- Despite a drastically different format, the 2nd Annual Fort River Cleanup, part of CRC's 24th Annual Source to Sea Cleanup, united volunteers throughout the entire month of September to remove trash from our local waterways and neighborhoods. Collectively, we estimate that over 1300 volunteers ventured out on their own or in household groups and removed over 34 tons of trash and debris from the Connecticut River watershed (which includes the Fort!) over the course of this year's cleanup. THANK YOU to all of the helping hands that lent their time and abilities to clean up in the Fort River watershed, and to the Town of Amherst for all of their help in disposing of the trash collected!
- In partnership with local researcher and Fort River watershed resident, Dr. Boyd Kynard, FoRWA volunteers contributed to a river-long survey of anadromous sea lamprey nests in the Fort River and helped to rescue over 1500 juvenile lamprey from a maintenance drawdown at the Turner's Falls dam. This incredible migratory fish returns to the un-dammed Fort River each year, as it has for thousands of years, and is a vital part of the Fort River ecosystem.
- Thanks to generous supporters like you, FoRWA continues to raise funds to begin preparing for next year's work - monitoring the quality of the Fort River waters, taking strategic action to ensure a safe and thriving watershed ecosystem, and continuing to partner with our community to safely and enjoyably connect everyone to this natural treasure. Interested in supporting more of this work in 2021? [You can make a donation here.](#)

However you are observing the end of this year, please know that we are grateful to be working alongside you and sending you best wishes for safety, serenity and health.

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Fuerte the Fish collecting trash at Groff Park last September.

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*Cleanup crew from Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge
Photo credit: Jen Lapis, USFWS*

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*Volunteers Albert Yue and Nick Bowers sample stormwater outfalls.
Photo credit: Brian Yellen*

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*Volunteer Alex Baker samples macroinvertebrates on the Fort.
Photo credit: Brian Yellen*

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*Budding river scientists Nell and Daisy measure river discharge on the Fort.
Photo credit: Brian Yellen*

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*Volunteer Hailey Fleury collects water samples for bacteria monitoring.
Photo credit: Brian Yellen*

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Jimmy and Daniel Byun spot a lamprey nest!
Photo credit: Will Daniels

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*Snow tucking the Fort in for a restful winter.
Photo credit: Brian Yellen*

Image



Stay safe,
your neighbors at the
Fort River Watershed
Association

**Have updates on what's happening
in the watershed?**

Please send us your local Fort River
news at
fortriverwatershed@gmail.com



Donate to FoRWA

Image



The Fort River Watershed Association has partnered with the Connecticut River Conservancy, a local non-profit organization advocating for the Connecticut River watershed since 1952. This working partnership makes us both more effective advocates for our rivers.

For more information on the Connecticut River Conservancy, please visit their website:
www.ctriver.org

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