

2006 Year in Review



Salem Sound Coastwatch's 15th year has been a good one with many accomplishments, thanks to volunteer and member support. The top 5 priority environmental tasks for the Salem Sound Watershed continue to focus our efforts on restoration and preservation of our natural resources and the improvement of the region's quality of life.

- 1. Increase efforts to reduce contaminated discharge** - Stormwater runoff - nonpoint source pollution - is the number one threat to coastal water quality in our region. In an effort to identify sources of contamination, volunteers with our **Clean Beaches & Streams Program** take biweekly water samples from stormwater outfall pipes in each of the communities in the Salem Sound watershed. SSCW then works with municipal officials and other regional partners to develop solutions and notify the public of health risks. As a result of our monitoring, this past year the City of Salem took steps to clean up Juniper Beach.



Salem Public Works cleaned the pipe and added a duckbill tide-gate, which appears to have greatly reduced the bacterial level at Juniper Beach.

This year we also produced a brochure on the role played by trees in reducing stormwater runoff. Copies of this brochure are available.

- 2. Increase coastal habitat protection** - Salt marshes are one of the most productive habitats. In the Salem Sound watershed, we have lost 2/3 of our region's salt marshes since 1965. We are happy to report that for the first time in Salem Sound, SSCW obtained **MA Wetlands Restoration Program Priority Status** for a salt marsh in Beverly that has restricted tidal flow. SSCW is working with landowners, abutters, and governmental agencies to help design a restoration plan, while we continue to monitor existing conditions at the marsh. SSCW is also partnering with Salem State College on a Phragmites removal project at Salem's Pickman Park in Salem. We will be looking for volunteers next June to help cut Phragmites.

- 3. Detect and quantify marine bioinvaders** - SSCW is a leader in the monitoring of marine invasive species monitoring. We have developed packets of laminated cards to aid in identification of bioinvaders, and our Marine Introduced Species Resource Center (www.salemsound.org/miscenter.htm) has shared the SSCW monitoring program with countless educators and concerned citizens. Our volunteers, acting as "citizen scientists" continue to monitor docks, rocky shores and tidepools. This year we added a new component—reaching out to the diving community, we have established a MIS training program for SCUBA divers. Their response has been so enthusiastic that they created a DVD of their experiences in order to recruit more divers.

- 4. Promote environmental literacy and watershed awareness** - SSCW's success depends upon public understanding of the threats to Salem Sound and community participation in the solutions. This year we expanded the North River Awareness program to initiate a North River Stream Team. **Forty volunteers joined SSCW to survey the shoreline of the North River in Peabody and Salem and its tributaries, the Proctor, Goldthwaite, Tapley, and Strongwater Brooks.**



Surveying Proctor Brook, Peabody

- 5. Help empower the region's municipalities to implement effective solutions** - SSCW continues to bring **additional resources to the region to increase the environmental health and enhance the enjoyment of our watershed.** SSCW is working with the Open Space and Recreation committee in Salem, Town Pond Management committee in Marblehead, the Manchester Coastal Stream Team, and other citizens and concerned community leaders on other issues to protect our natural resources and to find proactive, environmentally sound solutions.

Salem Sound Coastwatch is grateful to the following grantors for supporting our programs: Cell Signaling Corporation, Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, Department of Conservation and Recreation - Urban Forestry Program, Environmental Protection Agency, Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment, Massachusetts Bays Program, Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, National Sea Grant, New England Biolabs, North Shore Garden Club (Mrs. Louisa Conrad Bequest), Salem Academy Student Council.