



**2009 ANNUAL REPORT  
THE LAST GREEN VALLEY, INC.**

**THE LAST GREEN VALLEY**



## *What Is It?*

The Last Green Valley is two things: it is the popular name given to the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor (designated by Congress in 1994) and it is the name of the non-profit organization that manages the National Heritage Corridor.

It is the mission of The Last Green Valley, Inc., (TLGV) to preserve the significant natural and cultural resources of the region while encouraging compatible economic development.

# Message from the Chairman of the Board of Directors



While The Last Green Valley, Inc. has been fortunate to count many successful years, 2009 stands as a watershed moment with several notable milestones.

After several years of work, we achieved the all-important reauthorization of the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor by Congress until 2015. Back in 2006, our consistent forward-looking Executive Director Charlene Cutler, in collaboration with our Finance & Planning Committee and Board, crafted *The Trail to 2015, A Sustainability Plan* outlining how our nonprofit would become self sufficient. It formed the basis for our request for reauthorization. We are very thankful for the inclusion of our bill in the Omnibus Public Lands Act that passed in March of 2009. We are very thankful for the support and hard work of our Congressional delegation from both Connecticut and Massachusetts. Now comes the daunting task of making TLGV self sufficient by 2015. We must succeed if our vital work is to continue.

The Connecticut General Assembly also passed a bill during this past year that will have a substantial impact on our region. The Connecticut Heritage Areas Program, PA 09-221, designated our region as a State Heritage Area. The substance of the legislation requires that every State of Connecticut agency, board, committee and commission take our significant resources into consideration in all planning and projects. It lays the path for TLGV's greater participation in future State of Connecticut endeavors.

The major event this year was Source to Sea. This great program was supervised by Deputy Executive Director Lois Bruinooge and paid for by two grants from the CDEP Long Island License Plate Program and Long Island Sound Futures Fund, as well as many other sponsors

listed in this report. Spring weekends were filled with educational programs and groups of paddlers making their way down the many tributaries feeding the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers. Trekking down those rivers, the paddlers included Director of External Affairs Bill Reid paddling the official TLGV canoe and becoming our newest and most enthusiastic expert on traveling the waterways. The flotilla reached the Thames and finally Long Island Sound, concluding at Avery Point on June 13th. Source to Sea made many new alliances and brought TLGV excellent press, radio and TV exposure. Source to Sea is one of many excellent programs completed in 2009 and enumerated elsewhere in this report.

I would like to thank the rest of our staff Mary Hubert, Valerie Imre, Michelle Bourgeois and Sharon Wakely for their great work and willingness to jump across their job descriptions to help out with whatever needs to be done. It is well recognized and truly appreciated.

The reins of TLGV passed from Paul Mills to me in June. We thank Paul for his leadership, guidance and vision during his two terms. We also welcomed several new Board of Director members: Roger Adams, Steve Broderick and Ken Parker. The Board, Staff, and I thank all our volunteers who help in so many ways. We hope we can continue to draw upon your generosity and community spirit in the future. Our grassroots are the strength of our nonprofit.

Finally, I thank *you* for supporting The Last Green Valley.

Kenneth Mahler  
Chairman, Board of Directors

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS, MAY 2008 TO JUNE 2009

**Paul A. Mills**  
*Chairman*

**Ken Mahler**  
*Vice Chairman and Finance & Planning Committee Chairman*

**Bill Jobbagy**  
*Secretary and Tourism & Community Resources Committee Chairman*

**Margaret Babbitt**  
*Treasurer*

**Jacquie Barbarossa**

**Heath Drury Boote**  
*Development Committee Chairman*

**Tom Dziki**

**Dick Erickson**

**Janet Garon**

**Laura Giannotti**  
*representing Governor M. Jodi Rell*

**Rick Hermonot**

**Kay Holt**

**Marge Hoskin**

**Elaine Knowlton**

**Rusty Lanzit**

**Norma O'Leary**  
*Natural Resources & Agriculture Committee Chairman*

**Melissa Phillips**

**Irving Pulsifer, Jr.**

**Janet Robertson**  
*Historical & Cultural Resources Committee Chairman*

**Wayde Schmidt**



# Message from the Executive Director & CEO

It seems only yesterday that we were planning The Last Green Valley's future to 2010, and yet, here we are at the beginning of that new decade already. Our collective endeavors are focused this year on drafting a new ten-year plan, aptly entitled *Vision 2020*. Through the active engagement of our subcommittees, committees, partners, and members, the Board of Directors will be developing both visions and strategies for the upcoming years that will take TLGV well beyond its present federal authorization.

Planning appears to be the theme for the year. In addition to an organizational plan for the decade, TLGV is focusing sharply on the preservation and enhancement of land and water resources. The Last Green Valley remains 78% forest and farm land. But concern over retaining our working lands and sustaining our vital agricultural economy has initiated the concept of the TLGV Foodshed Plan. The 2009 Farm Survey was the first step in this planning effort to comprehensively identify issues, propose real solutions and identify both partner and TLGV roles in achieving the objectives of the plan: to increase regional food production and the economic value of land.

Our watershed is the second focus of intense planning in 2010. In recent years, projects dealing with water quality, river access, water trail development, and the Source to Sea Expedition have verified

that water issues are of great concern to many who live in The Last Green Valley. Our water resources also have great appeal to those who visit our beautiful National Heritage Corridor. Therefore, we anticipate producing the TLGV Watershed Plan to specifically address our work in that area.

We continue to upgrade our website and this year will incorporate both an interactive map and an on-line shop in our very popular new internet presence. The Last Green Valley has received many compliments on both the design and function of the new website: [www.thelastgreenvalley.org](http://www.thelastgreenvalley.org).

One of the great aspects of working for this organization is the staff's daily enjoyment of the extensive resources of The Last Green Valley. We have paddled the rivers, surveyed bald eagles, toured nurseries, greenhouses and dairy farms, learned from local historians, viewed archaeological sites, hosted TV personalities, explored trails, climbed through historic structures, photographed gravestones, brain-stormed with Main Street groups, viewed microscopic critters in our waters, listened to the stories of our communities, and much more. We all look forward to the completion of *Vision 2020* and the journey the next decade brings.

Respectfully submitted,



Charlene Perkins Cutler

J. Gathreau



E. Langer

## THE LAST GREEN VALLEY STAFF, 2009

**Charlene Perkins Cutler**, Executive Director & CEO

**Lois J. Bruinooge**, Deputy Executive Director

**William B. Reid**, Director of External Affairs

**Sharon Wakely**, Finance Coordinator

**Michelle Bourgeois**, Tourism Coordinator

**Mary Hubert**, Office Coordinator

**Valerie Imre**, Administrative Assistant

# 2009 FINANCIALS

## Balance Sheet

The Last Green Valley, Inc. • As of September 30, 2009

### ASSETS

#### Current Assets:

Bank & Investment Accounts:	
The Savings Institute, checking	\$ 73,334.04
Jewett City Savings Bank	7,278.17
Southbridge Savings Bank	515.41
Southbridge Savings Bank, Sustainability	742.18
Southbridge Savings Bank, Encumbered	300,443.76
Weiss & Hale Sustainability Account	72,179.27
Petty Cash	101.00
<b>Total Bank Accounts</b>	<b>\$ 454,593.83</b>

#### Accounts Receivable

Contributions pledged	2,000.00
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**Total Accounts Receivable \$ 2,000.00**

#### Other Current Assets

Undeposited Funds	-1,700.00
Inventory, reusable shopping bags	1,845.61
Prepaid Expenses	-8,775.00
Prepaid Insurance	3,664.77
P & L Sale/Distribution	9,964.49

**Total Other Current Assets \$ 4,999.67**

#### Total Current Assets

**\$461,593.50**

#### Fixed Assets:

Property, Plant & Equipment	34,339.75
Accum. Amortization, leasehold improvements	-5,130.28
Accum. Depreciation, furniture & equipment	-25,013.17
Accum. Amortization	5,130.28

**Total Fixed Assets \$ 9,326.58**

#### Other Assets:

Security Deposits	845.00
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**Total Other Assets \$ 845.00**

#### TOTAL ASSETS

**\$471,765.08**

### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

#### Current Liabilities:

##### Accounts Payable:

Accounts Payable	\$ 27,457.96
Grants Payable	51,056.81

**Total Accounts Payable 78,514.77**

##### Other Current Liabilities:

Payroll Liabilities	5,481.14
Direct Deposit Liabilities	3,723.29
Life Insurance	- 139.49
Medical Insurance	- 986.07
AFLAC-cancer	13.21
AFLAC-dental	7.28
Accrued Expenses	30,256.04
Accrued Payroll	4,326.15
Accrued Vacation	10,109.67
Accrued Payroll Taxes	595.08

**Total Other Liabilities \$ 131,910.07**

#### Equity:

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 70,948.99
Fixed Operating Net Assets	97,117.76
Temporarily Restricted Net Asset	12,050.40
Net Income	159,737.86

**Total Equity \$ 339,885.01**

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY \$471,765.08**

Audited financial statements are available upon request.

## FY2009 Outlays and Impacts

### OUTLAYS

NPS Cooperative Agreement	\$ 712,000
Non-Federal Matching Contributions	\$ 23,568,705
<b>Total Outlays</b>	<b>\$ 24,280,705</b>

### IMPACTS

Community Development and Outreach <i>e.g. Walktober, community revitalization projects</i>	\$ 5,315,153
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Economic Development and Tourism <i>e.g. Tourism projects, Visitors Guide</i>	\$ 8,305,209
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Historical and Cultural Resources <i>e.g. National Historic Register Properties assessments, nominations, and preservation, interpretive projects</i>	\$ 6,849,627
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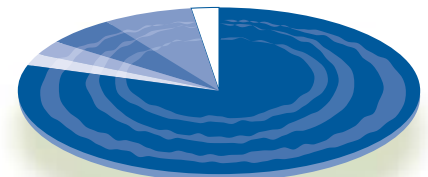
Natural Resources, Agriculture and Land Use <i>e.g. Green Valley Institute, Water Quality Monitoring Partnership, Source to Sea Expedition, Farm Survey</i>	\$ 2,420,546
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Recreation <i>e.g. Water trail development and linkages, nature-based tourism products and promotion</i>	\$ 1,390,170
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**Total Impacts \$ 24,280,705**

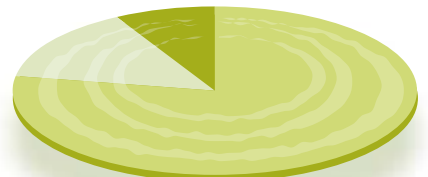
### FY2009 Income Sources

NPS	\$ 712,000
Other Federal	22,152
State	23,493
Corporate	50,846
Private	62,677
Other	19,189
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 890,357</b>



### FY2009 Expense Allocations

Programming & Outreach	\$ 694,478
Administration & Overhead	124,650
Membership & Development	71,229
<b>Total Expense Allocation</b>	<b>\$ 890,357</b>



### Matching contributions provided by the following organizations as well as the partners listed under Source to Sea Expedition, Tastes of the Valley and Walktober:

Avalonia Land Trust	Joshua's Tract & Historical Trust	Town of Brimfield
Brooklyn Historical Society	Lebanon Historical Society	Town of Charlton
City of Norwich	Lisbon Historical Society	Town of Coventry
Clara Barton Birthplace Museum	MA-DCR	Town of Franklin
Coventry Historical Society	MA-MTC/RTC	Town of Killingly
CT DECD	NE Alliance	Town of Oxford
CT DEP	Old Sturbridge Village	Town of Pomfret
CT-DOT	Opacum Land Trust	Town of Southbridge
CT-HPTAG	Scotland Historical Society	Town of Sprague
Dudley Conservation Land Trust	Slater Memorial Museum	Town of Sturbridge
Franklin Historical Society	Sterling Recreation Authority	Town of Voluntown
French River Connection	Sturbridge Recreation	Town of Woodstock
Historical Commission of Dudley		Unitarian Universalist Society
Huguenot Memorial Society of Oxford		WINCOG



## Federal Reauthorization

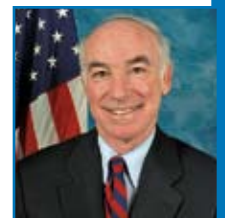
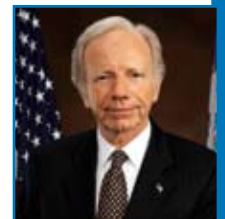
During 2005 and early 2006, The Last Green Valley, Inc., developed *The Trail to 2015, A Sustainability Plan* for The Last Green Valley. The process analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and its work, and included input from a plethora of partners. The plan capitalizes on the strengths and addresses the challenges with a goal to be self-sufficient by the year 2015. The Last Green Valley was the first National Heritage Area to develop a future operating scenario that did not include federal funding. However, in order to maintain credible programming that would

attract significant resources, it was critical to retain the federal investment until 2015. Reauthorization would also leverage significant multiyear commitments essential to self-sustainability.

TLGV, formerly known as QSHC, has received federal appropriations since 1996. For each of the first four years that appropriation was \$200,000, in the fifth year it was \$248,000. With the expansion of the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley Heritage Corridor in 2000, the authorization rose to \$1 million per year, with actual annual funding ranging from \$515,000 to \$840,000

since 2001. The federal funding has been used to initiate programming. The smaller federal investment in the early years did not allow significant programming to be in place until after 2001.

With authorization expiring on September 30, 2009, it was essential to have the reauthorization passed during the 110th Congress. TLGV's bill was included in the Omnibus Public Lands Act and passed in March, 2009. We are grateful to Congressmen Courtney and Neal and Senators Dodd, Kennedy, Kerry and Lieberman for their hard work and support.



## Connecticut Heritage Areas Program Legislation

Together with the Upper Housatonic National Heritage Area, TLGV initiated state legislation in Connecticut to recognize the significant resources of the National Heritage Areas in the State's planning and programs. The bill was passed by an overwhelming majority and in July, 2009, Governor M. Jodi Rell

signed into law Public Act 09-221, An Act Establishing Connecticut Heritage Areas, which identified the nationally significant resources of a Connecticut Heritage Area and specifically recognized the two National Heritage Areas. Additionally, the legislation states, "each state agency, department, board, and commission (1) shall

consider Connecticut Heritage Areas when developing planning documents and processes, and (2) may partner with the managing entities of such areas on projects concerning, but not limited to, environmental protection, heritage resource preservation, recreation, tourism and trail development."





# Growing Capacity

Thank you to the hundreds of dedicated supporters who contributed to The Last Green Valley in 2009. It was the most successful year to date in funds raised from private sources in support of the organization. Our membership, annual appeal donations, corporate sponsorship and program grants grew by more than 36% from the previous year. This remarkable increase would not have been possible without the many individuals, businesses and partners listed in this report. Their continued involvement and dedication to the mission of The Last Green Valley is greatly appreciated.

## WALKTOBER

The 19th Walktober was a wonderful success, despite rainy weekends! A full report on Walktober is detailed in subsequent pages but the program would not be possible without the generous support of the sponsors and donors listed below. A special thank you to our premier sponsor Northeast Utilities Transmission and our lead sponsor Savings Institute Bank and Trust.

### Providing sponsorships of \$1000 or more were:

- Northeast Utilities Transmission 
- Savings Institute Bank and Trust 
- Charter Oak Credit Union 
- The Citizens National Bank 
- Millennium Power 
- Putnam Bank 
- Wheelabrator Putnam, Inc. 

### Additional support was provided by:

- PAP Auto and Hardware
- Town of Ashford
- Town of Eastford
- Town of Hampton
- Town of Lisbon
- Town of Plainfield
- Town of Sprague

## MEMBER PROGRAMS

Membership is the best way to become involved in The Last Green Valley, Inc. Members enjoy a wide array of member-only programs, volunteer on one of our committees or for special projects, and find new ways to help TLGV realize its mission of preserving the natural and cultural resources of the National Heritage Corridor. Our thanks to the many locations that provided tours for our members in 2009 including Killingly Historical Society, Slater Memorial Museum, Town Line Farm and Sugar House, Old Sturbridge Village, and the Coventry Regional Farmers Market at The Nathan Hale Homestead. Our members also enjoyed several of the paddle trips and related programs held during the Source to Sea Expedition. All

in all, 2009 was a great year to be a member of TLGV and we look forward to providing a wide array of interesting programs, opportunities and experiences in 2010.

## ANNUAL MEETING

The 15th Annual Meeting and Anniversary Party was held on June 13th, at Slater Memorial Museum in Norwich, CT, with more than 100 people attending. Following the museum tours, attendees enjoyed a coffee and dessert reception, and slide show of the Source to Sea Expedition.

The Annual Meeting opened with the year in review provided by Chairman Paul Mills. The organization's many volunteers and donors were thanked and awards were presented. Deputy Executive Director Lois Bruinooge provided a recap of the Source to Sea Expedition, completed earlier in the day, which was followed by a rendition of the Source to Sea song by folksinger Tom Callinan. New Board members were elected and Executive Director Charlene Perkins Cutler previewed TLGV plans for the establishment of a rural sustainability region and development of foodshed and watershed plans.

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Coventry Regional Farmers' Market



J. Gothreau

Awards were presented to partners and volunteers: the Boland-Hoskin Volunteer Award was presented to both Betty Robinson and Alan Dabrowski; the Voice of the Valley Award was presented to Judy Benson of *The Day*; the Walktober Award was presented to Roseland Cottage, Joan Fox, and Alan Dabrowski; the Greener Valley Award was presented to Putnam Bank; the Gold Star Award was presented to Heath Boote; the GVI Green Neighbor Award was presented to Holly Drinkuth, the Town of Brooklyn Conservation Commission, and Ken Parker; special recognition awards were presented to Ruth Cutler on the occasion of her retirement from GVI, and Paul Mills for his work as Chairman of the Board.

## SOURCE TO SEA EXPEDITION

The Source to Sea Expedition provided an exceptional opportunity to educate the public about our extensive water resources and their interconnectivity to the 35 towns of The Last Green Valley. The program was supported by many partner organizations and businesses.

### The educational component of the program was funded by:

Long Island Sound Futures Fund



CT Department of Environmental Protection

Long Island Sound License Plate Program (logo)



### Many organizations provided assistance and developed public programs for the Expedition. Special thanks to:

National Park Service, Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



### Several area businesses also provided important sponsorship support of \$1,000 or more including:

Southbridge Savings Bank



Norwich Public Utilities



Wal-Mart, Norwich Store



L.L. Bean



New Alliance Foundation



Wheelabrator Putnam, Inc.



Additional support was provided by Arland Tool & Manufacturing, Danielson Surplus, Dexter Russell, and Lake Road Generating.

## TASTES OF THE VALLEY

On September 25th, nearly 200 people filled The Inn at Woodstock Hill for a truly magnificent evening. We enjoyed walking tours of Woodstock Hill, amazing food provided by the area's finest chefs and restaurants, the harvest bounty of many area farms and vineyards, and exceptional auction and raffle items donated by area residents and businesses. The evening netted more than \$14,000 for The Last Green Valley. Our heartfelt thanks to all who helped make the evening a wonderful success and an annual tradition for The Last Green Valley.

Restaurants that donated their talents and services in preparing an exceptional meal were: 85 Main, The Inn at Woodstock Hill, Publick House Historic Inn, The Vanilla Bean Café, Vienna Restaurant and Historic Inn, Hop Vine Café @ 12 Crane Street, Heritage Trail Vineyard & Restaurant, and The Golden Lamb Buttery. Farms from the region that donated product were: Ekonk Hill Turkey Farm, Morse Farm Stand, Maple Lane Farms, Beltane Farm, Lapsley Orchard, The Inn at Woodstock Hill Gardens, Blackmer Farm, 18th-Century Purity Farm, New Boston Beef, Fabyan Sugar Shack, We-Li-Kit Farm, East Acres Farm, Woodstock Orchards, Signal Rock Farm, Meadowstone Farm, The Farmers Cow, and Westford Hill Distillers. Beverages were donated by

## Source to Sea

By Tom Callinan - © 2008 - Cannu Yusic, Ltd.

*Paddling down "The Last Green Valley,"  
From north to south - from source to mouth,  
As we dip and swing our trusty paddles;  
We feel the force that sends us forth.  
Refrain: The Fivemile, French,  
the Moosup, and the Thames, The  
Quinebaug, Shtucket, Natchaug,  
Pauchaug - what great names!  
The Willimantic, and the Yantic all end  
up in the Atlantic - From their source down  
to Long Island Sound.*

*Pulling through the liquid ribbon -  
Heading ever toward the sea.  
Our path is fed from streams that  
come together;  
The watershed has arteries.  
Refrain*

*With ribs and planking, thwarts,  
and gunwales,  
And our paddles to pull us through,  
In fragile shells, we're one with the river;  
Just me and you, in our canoes.  
Refrain*

*How fast we go is set by the river,  
And our partner - hand in hand.  
As people have throughout  
the centuries;  
We kneel and think,  
and understand.  
Refrain*



The Farmers Cow, Heritage Trail Vineyard, Hosmer Mountain Soda, Maple Lane Farms, Sturbridge Coffee Roasters, Taylor Brooke Winery, Westford Hill Distillers, and Willimantic Brewing Company.

For the third year, Johnson and Wales University provided several culinary arts students to assist the chefs. Tastes of the Valley also included a silent auction and raffle baskets. Gary Osbrey of WINY Radio served as our emcee for the evening and we are especially grateful for his continued support. The event could not have happened without the generous support and wonderful assistance of Richard Naumann and his staff at The Inn at Woodstock Hill.

The event committee worked throughout the year to organize the evening's festivities: Linda Auger, Dave and Peg Babbitt, Heath Drury Boote (Chairman), Stephanie Gosselin, Joan Gray, Paul Mills, Carolyn Mills-Meyer, Irving Pulsifer, and Bill Reid. Special thanks to Peg Babbitt for arranging the raffle baskets.

**TLGV is most grateful to the following individuals and businesses that supported Tastes of the Valley with donations of a raffle basket or silent auction items:**

- Allen Hill Tree Farm
- Aoife's Ices
- Beth Greene
- Bicycle Concepts/Southbridge Bicycles
- Bird Store & More
- Canterbury Cones
- Canterbury Horticulture
- Carolyn Mills-Meyer & John Meyer

- Cornerstone Creations
- Country Bank
- CT Forest & Parks Association
- Danielson Adventure Sports
- Elias Child House B & B
- G. Leslie Sweetnam
- The Handmaiden
- Hazelwood
- Hidden Fields Farm
- Hog Heaven Hobbies
- Hull Forest Products
- John & Joan Gray
- Logee's Greenhouses, Ltd.
- Margaret & David Babbitt
- Mittcom
- Old Sturbridge Village
- Onomea
- Raceway Golf Course
- Rene & Lynne Morin
- Robert Svenning
- Sadie Greens
- Southbridge Feed Store
- Southbridge Savings Bank
- Stephanie Gosselin
- We-Li-Kit Ice Cream Stand
- WSRS Radio
- WXLO Radio

**We are also grateful to our event sponsors:**

- Putnam Bank, Savings Institute Bank & Trust, Southbridge Savings Bank, and The Inn at Woodstock Hill.



T. Felice



M. Melford



A. Dobrowski





# *FOCUS PROJECT*

## *Source to Sea Expedition: Connecting the Drops Through The Last Green Valley*

Paddlers from the nine-week Source to Sea Expedition successfully reached Long Island Sound on June 13, 2009. Along the way, more than 95 partners and sponsors hosted 90 events designed to showcase the natural, scenic, and cultural treasures in the Thames River Watershed. Between 15,000 - 20,000 people attended the events, including the Southbridge, Willimantic, Sprague, and Norwich River Festivals, plus family fun day events in Putnam, Thompson, Killingly, Canterbury, and Woodstock.

There were three primary goals for the Source to Sea Expedition when we launched our canoes and kayaks in Mashapaug Pond, Union, CT, in April: 1) to connect people to their place in the watershed; 2) to connect individual behavior and water quality; and 3) to highlight recreational opportunities and attract new river stewards.

In order to accomplish these goals, we used paddling as the “hook” to draw people to the water’s edge and to engage the public. More than 500 people paddled the major tributary and mainstem segments of our rivers, logging more than 160 miles on the Fivemile, French, Moosup, Natchaug, Quinebaug, Shetucket, Thames, Willimantic, and Yantic Rivers. Flatwater, quickwater, and rapids, we have it all!

Along the way, three new Quinebaug River Water Trail segments were dedicated and one segment of National Canoe Trail

was re-dedicated. The Quinebaug River Water Trail system now includes 30 miles of paddling:

- Lake Siog in Holland to E. Brimfield Reservoir – 5 miles;
- Fabyan to West Thompson Dam – 5 miles;
- Simonzi Park in Putnam to Route 101 Pomfret – 5 miles; and
- Danielson Little League Ball Fields to Butts Bridge Road in Canterbury – 15 miles.

Landside access points were also improved. A new car-top boat launch was dedicated in Oxford, MA; a new car-top boat launch was completed in Brooklyn, CT; an existing car-top boat launch was improved in Canterbury, CT; and a new segment of riverfront trail was dedicated in Killingly, CT.

Draft Paddler’s Guides for the Quinebaug River Water Trail segments, plus paddling safety resources, are available at [www.thelastgreenvalley.org](http://www.thelastgreenvalley.org) (click on “Explore” and “Where to Paddle”). The web site also contains extensive photo-documentation of river conditions, portages, access points, and wildlife sightings. A new Water Trails Steering Committee has been formed to further develop river and pond access points and water trails in The Last Green Valley.



The Expedition was much more than paddling – it was about “Making a Sound Choice.” Thanks to our primary education sponsors, the CT DEP Long Island Sound License Plate Program and the Long Island Sound Futures Fund, we were able to produce informative exhibits and materials about water quality that traveled throughout the watershed with the Expedition.

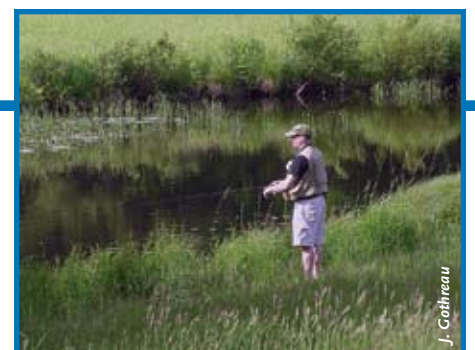
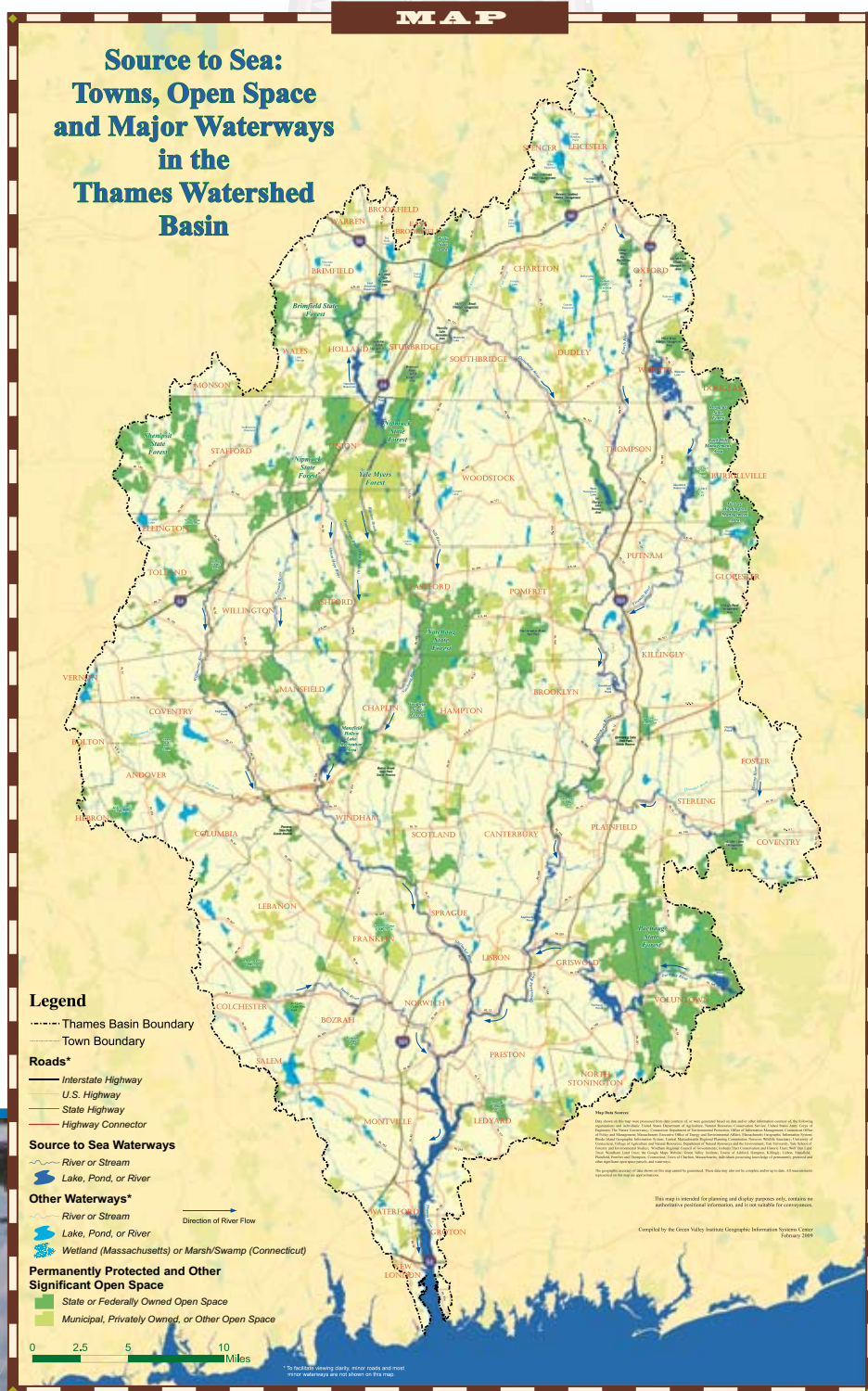
The Thames River Watershed contains 1,478 square miles, and is the third largest land area draining into Long Island Sound. All 35 towns in the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor are located within the watershed. The Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers converge in Norwich to become the Thames River, which then flows out to Long Island Sound. As part of the

exhibit, we developed the first-ever watershed map that includes town boundaries, major roads, and water features from all three states in the Thames River Watershed – Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Materials were also developed to explain the relationship between our day-to-day activities and water quality as far away as Long Island Sound. All of the education and outreach materials are available on [www.thelastgreenvalley.org](http://www.thelastgreenvalley.org) (click on “Preserve,” “Watershed Projects, and “Source to Sea”).

Participants were also asked to fill out pledge cards that identified simple changes in everyday behavior that can lead to improved water quality. About 700 people chose to “Make a Sound Choice” for a healthy Thames River watershed:

- 565** will use fertilizers sparingly;
- 490** will vegetate lawn bare spots;
- 545** will avoid pesticides;
- 470** won't wash their car in the driveway;
- 520** will pick up pet waste and won't feed waterfowl;
- 570** will never dump in storm drains;
- 415** will compost yard waste;
- 320** will plant a rain garden;
- 590** will check their car for leaks and recycle oil;
- 470** will maintain their septic tanks; and
- 70** people expressed an interest in becoming water quality monitoring volunteers.

*continued page 10*



J. Colbreau

The TLGV website received 558,009 hits between January 1, 2009 - June 30, 2009, and the Expedition received outstanding press coverage and public participation over the nine-week period. TLGV staff made multiple radio and cable TV appearances.

**We are grateful for the support of our sponsors and partners, without whom the Expedition would not have been possible.**

**Sponsors:**

- Arland Tool & Manufacturing, Inc.
- CDEP Long Island Sound License Plate Program
- Danielson Surplus
- Dexter-Russell
- L. L. Bean
- Lake Road Generating
- Long Island Sound Futures Fund
- National Park Service – RTCA Program
- New Alliance Foundation
- Norwich Public Utilities
- Southbridge Savings Bank
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Wal-Mart, Norwich
- Wheelabrator Putnam Inc.

**Partners:**

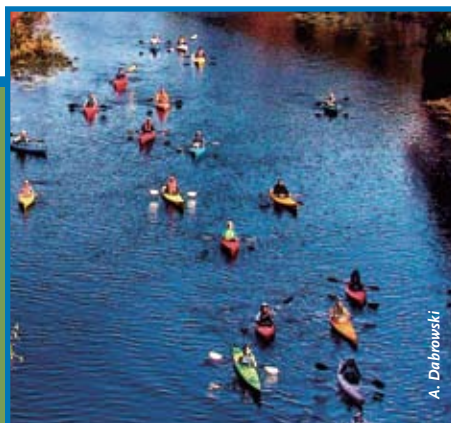
- Appalachian Mountain Club, CT Chapter,
- Appalachian Mountain Club, Worcester Chapter,
- Avery Point Lighthouse Society,
- Ashford Conservation Commission, Avalonia Land Conservancy,
- Bakerwoods, Blue Slope Country Museum,
- Brimfield Trail Committee, Brooklyn Conservation Commission,
- Bungay Fire Brigade, Camp Nahaco Commission,
- Canterbury Public Library, Citizens National Bank,
- Columbia Canoe Club, CT Audubon Society Center at Pomfret,
- CT Department of Environmental Protection, Connecticut Landmarks,
- Denison Pequotsepos Nature



- Center, Dudley Quinebaug Rail Trail Committee,
- Eastford Conservation & Historic Preservation Commission,
- Eastern CT Conservation District,
- French River Connection, Friends of Roseland,
- Grand Trunk Trail Blazers, Greater Norwich Area Chamber of Commerce,
- Groton Parks and Recreation Department,
- Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust,
- Killingly Conservation Commission,
- Killingly Parks & Recreation Department,
- Killingly Economic Development Department,
- Ledyard Garden Club,
- Mansfield Parks Advisory Committee,
- Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration,
- Northern Lights Drummers,
- Plainfield and Sterling Recreation Department,
- Pomfret Historical Society,
- Pomfret Conservation Commission,
- Preston Historical Society,
- Preston Parks & Recreation, Project Oceanology,
- Public House Historic Inn,
- Putnam, Putnam Parks and Recreation Department,
- Putnam Business Association,
- Quaddick Lake Association,
- Southeastern CT

- Water Authority, Sprague Park & Recreation,
- Sprague Conservation Commission,
- Sturbridge Lions Club,
- Swift Waters Artisans' Cooperative,
- Thames River Basin Partnership,
- The Chamber of Commerce,
- Windham Region, The Nature Conservancy,
- Thompson, Thompson Historical Society,
- Thompson Recreation, Conservation, and Inland Wetlands Commissions,
- Thompson Recreation Department,
- Thompson Together Environment Committee,
- Thompson Trails Committee,
- Trout Unlimited,
- Thames Valley Chapter,
- Willimantic River Alliance, Willimantic Whitewater Partnership,
- Willington Conservation Commission,
- Windham Textile & History Museum,
- Woodstock Conservation Commission,
- Woodstock Garden Club,
- Woodstock Historical Society,
- Woodstock Recreation Committee

We are also grateful for the expertise, energy, and commitment of our super volunteers, particularly the paddle and event leaders, who went above and beyond to ensure a safe and informative Expedition.





# Messages from the Bottle

During the nine-week trek down the watershed for the Source to Sea Expedition, a large bottle collected messages from supporters and well-wishers.

*“Thanks for the hard work that you have done to educate our communities about the importance of protecting our waterways and Long Island Sound! You have made a difference for the future of Connecticut’s environment.”*

Gratefully,  
Kate Brown, CDEP Long Island Sound Fund Coordinator

*“Remember... We all live downstream.”*

Eric Thomas

*“To all who paddled in this incredible adventure – Thank you for your determination and dedication to help educate us all in preserving our wonderful watershed in the magnificent Last Green Valley.”*

Joan and John Gray

*“Rivers are the blood vessels of nature.”*

David Ostrowski

*“May the winds aid our progress. May the water cleanse us from fear. May we arrive safely from the Source to the Sea.”*

Lynne Sarty

## Inspiring Volunteers

### WATER QUALITY MONITORING

The fourth year of The Last Green Valley Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program has wrapped up and, thanks to Source to Sea, Connecting the Drops in The Last Green Valley, scores of new people expressed an interest in becoming involved.

Our volunteers completed a visual assessment (also known as a Stream Walk) of the Mount Hope River in Ashford and Mansfield this summer and the fall Rapid Bioassessment Program is on target to exceed the number of samples collected last year. Our Troll user groups in Massachusetts and Thompson, CT, monitored the water quality in 71 different locations in the upper parts of The Last Green Valley this season.

TLGV was also able to acquire additional equipment to expand the program next year. Our organization now has an additional In-situ Troll 9500, capable of monitoring dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, depth, turbidity and conductivity - all with a single multi-parameter sonde. Also, four new sets of Rapid Bioassessment equipment were purchased with funding provided by the CDEP License Plate Program and the Long Island Sound Futures Fund.

The MassDEP cited the French River Connection water quality monitoring results in the 2004-2008 Water Quality Assessment Report of the French & Quinebaug Watersheds published in November 2009. Also, a request was made by the US EPA Region 1 office for water quality data from our upper Quinebaug River Monitoring Team for consideration on a permit application.

G. Leslie Siveetham



## *Invigorating The Economy*

### 2009 FARM SURVEY AND THE FOODSHED PLAN

TLGV's success in preserving the region hinges on our two most significant assets: the valley remains 78% forest and farmland and there are very abundant water resources both above and below ground. In order to preserve the region, the economic importance of the land and water needs to be increased – not just for residents but for a constituency surrounding The Last Green Valley. It makes sense to focus on those elements by proposing that TLGV not only sustain but expand its agriculture and become an important food producer for southern New England.

TLGV has spent the past year developing a research paper on the state of the present food system for southern New England and why the expansion of food production in the region may be successful:

- TLGV is the only remaining undeveloped region in the coastal sprawl between Boston and Washington, and it has significant land and water resources needed for food production.
- TLGV is centrally located within southern New England where 11 million people live. Within the urban areas a significant population lives below the poverty level and has health risks related to insufficient, low-quality food.

- The distant origins of our food pose risks to consumers. Imported foods account for 65% of vegetables and fruit consumed, 75% of seafood. A very small percentage of imports are inspected (per FDA).
- Contamination and lack of traceability have increased. Over the past several decades, 14 new pathogens associated with food borne illnesses have been identified.
- Food travels on average 1,500 miles to consumers; 85% of all food consumed in New England is trucked in through the greater NY and NJ region. At any one time there is 3-7 days supply of food on the shelves in our stores. Any major disruptions in the transportation system put a large population to great disadvantage.
- Consumers want a safe, nutritious, affordable source of food produced close to home.

It is important to consider that in addition to raising crops there are many other economic development activities associated with food production: support services of equipment, supplies, marketing, distribution and technology are necessities; processing plants (canning, freezing) and value added productions (jams, jellies, salsa, pasta sauces, etc.) are a logical outgrowth.

Presently, TLGV staff, GVI and the Agriculture Subcommittee are developing

a TLGV Foodshed Plan that will identify partners and existing programs, point out additional needs and identify resources that will encourage the expansion of food production in our region.

An important foundation for the TLGV Foodshed Plan has been a complete survey of the agricultural businesses in the region. The 2009 Farm Survey contacted 556 businesses and garnered a 60% response rate with 331 replies. Of those 331, 228 were food producers. One-third expressed an interest in expanding their existing business; more than one-third were also interested in diversifying their products.

By an overwhelming majority, the issue of public education is the most important to the businesses surveyed – why farming is important. Farmers are interested in learning more about green technology and energy efficiency. They are also concerned about stewardship and preservation of the working land.

Among the challenges identified are infrastructure, reliable workforce, public education, and the ageing population of farmers. Nearly everyone who responded to the survey knew The Last Green Valley and its work.

The Foodshed Plan is expected to be completed in 2010 and will provide a comprehensive direction for the expansion of agriculture in the region.



# Tourism Outreach

## 19TH ANNUAL WALKTOBER

Walktober has been 19 years in the making. When the grassroots organization coalesced and began working for designation of the region as the fourth National Heritage Corridor, an idea was born that residents needed to get out there and discover what was in their backyard and learn about all the wonderful resources in the watershed. Guides with special expertise in local history, archaeology, natural resources, etc., were enlisted to provide special experiences to walkers that were normally not available to the public. There were 25 walks on the schedule for Columbus Day weekend in 1990. Some felt that diffusing the audience over 25 walks would result in a dismal attendance. However, there were over 100 people on many of those first walks.

More walks were added each year with no sign of losing favor with participants. After a particularly windy and rainy Columbus Day weekend in 2003, The Last Green Valley launched the 14th Annual Walking Weekends in 2004. The thought was that if one weekend was clobbered with bad weather, the other weekend would still offer a chance to continue the celebration. The reasoning proved accurate until 2006 when two extremes were encountered. It was the first year walk and paddle experiences were offered. The first weekend the rivers were so dry the canoes could not put in. The following weekend

all the streams and rivers were over their banks with flooding. The only recourse was to expand the program again to the entire month of October. The audience has grown constantly over the past 19 years.

Walktober 2009 offered a month-long program of guided walks, paddles, bike rides and special events. There were more than 160 opportunities for people to enjoy the beautiful Last Green Valley in the intoxicating splendor of autumn and thousands attended, despite four weekends of abysmal weather!

## SEASONAL PROMOTIONAL EVENTS

Summer Sensations, May through September, highlighted summer fun in The Last Green Valley. Museums and historic houses opened for the season. Pick-your-own farms offered hands-on experiences. Residents and visitors alike enjoyed fishing, boating, hiking, antiquing, fireworks, river fires, festivals and fairs, hayrides, picnics and much more! A constantly updated schedule appeared on the website: [www.thelastgreenvalley.org](http://www.thelastgreenvalley.org) and audiences were driven there by a colorful rack card distributed through the more than 65 information racks and centers in the region.

Winter Wanderings, December through March, focused on four months full of outdoor and indoor, quiet and exciting, musical and athletic, historic and

contemporary, romantic and adventurous, fireside and snowside, sweet and savory, winter activities in the region. From hiking, cross-country skiing, sleigh rides, sledding, ice skating, nature walks and talks, theater performance packages to fireside feasts, unique shopping and art galleries, holiday specials and maple sugar days in March, there was an abundance of activities in The Last Green Valley. A rack card was distributed and a frequently updated schedule of events appeared on the website [www.thelastgreenvalley.org](http://www.thelastgreenvalley.org).

## TLGV VISITORS GUIDE

The second edition of *The Last Green Valley Visitors Guide* was published to facilitate tourist access to the region. It is the only complete resource guide for the 35 towns and offers information to customize a unique vacation experience. For the smaller museums and nonprofits in the region, the Visitors Guide is the only promotional publication that directs visitors to their sites and helps to keep their doors open with a revenue stream. The State of Connecticut and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts no longer publish their tourist guides. The Last Green Valley has become, by default, the only engaged tourism promoter.


The full-color, digest-sized guide was unveiled in March and features a cover photo from Walktober showing a segment

*continued page 14*



J. Cottrill



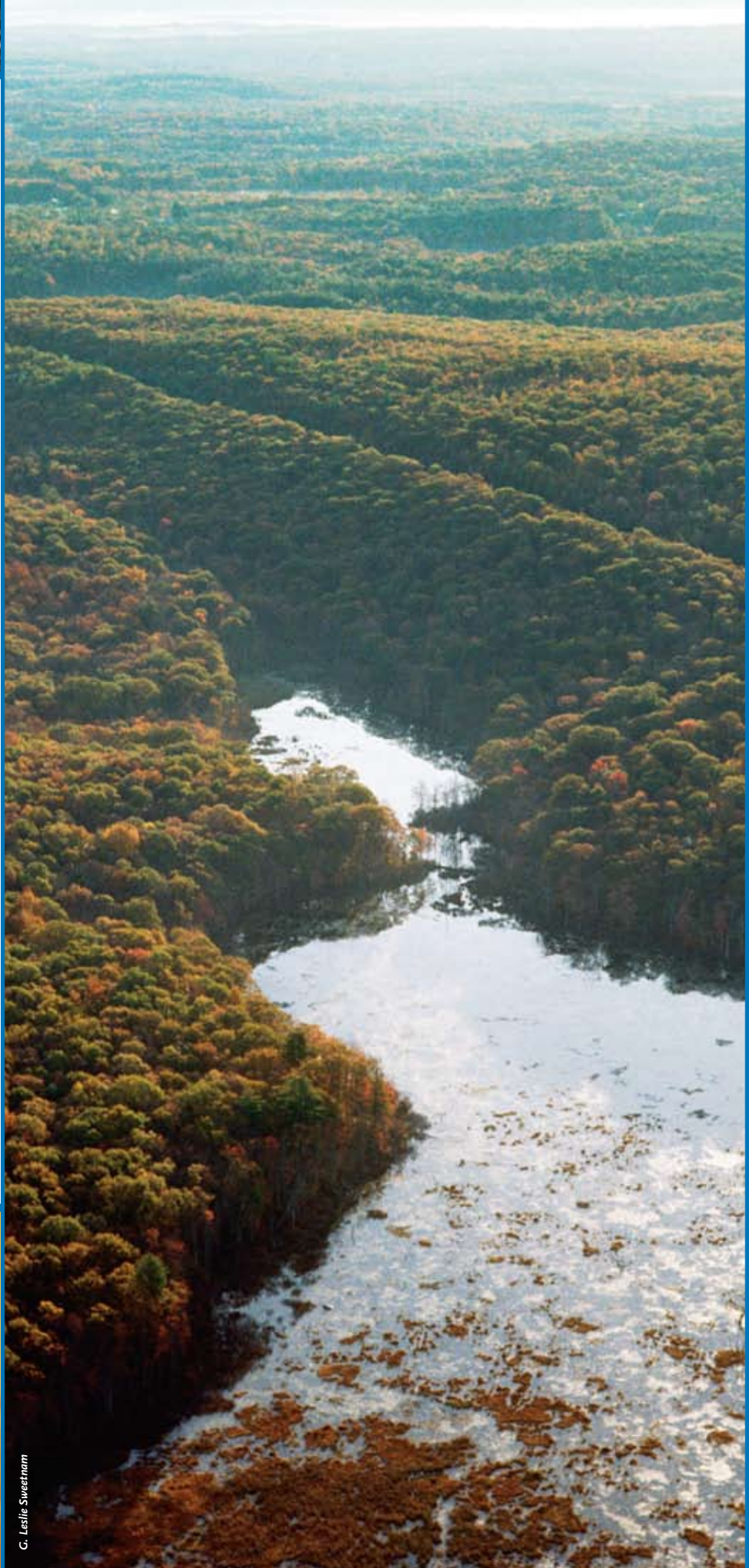


of the French river in autumn splendor being enjoyed by a flotilla of colorful canoes and kayaks. The 112-pages include editorial features about the region, information on natural, agricultural, historical and cultural resources, a seasonal calendar of fairs, festivals and other major events, as well as reference material on accommodations, attractions, campgrounds, shops and restaurants. It was distributed throughout the region, by mail to fulfill requests, and there is also a version on the website.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Last Green Valley enjoyed extensive editorial coverage of all its programs during the year. There is one of particular note. *Yankee Magazine* featured The Last Green Valley in a special eight-page article in the March/April 2009 issue. The writers focused on a tour of the region using National Scenic Byway Route 169. A photo essay accompanied the article which led with:

*"The skies don't lie. From on high, looking down along the East Coast at night, we're blazing away like Times Square squared, a crazy quilt of sparks illuminating the darkness...Except...over there. A distinct patch of northeastern Connecticut and a bit of Massachusetts that's noticeably still, remarkably dark. A break in the unrelenting mass of artificial brilliance that lights the night. So much so that airline pilots use this patch of darkness as a point of reference. And by day, it's green. Deeply, profoundly green. The Last Green Valley, so they say."*





# Educating Stewards

## GREEN VALLEY INSTITUTE

The Last Green Valley is blessed with many things: a long, rich history still written in our towns and on the landscape; working farms and clean, beautiful rivers; and large tracts of unbroken forests that remain full of wildlife. The Green Valley Institute (GVI) was created to help document, plan for and protect these priceless resources as our region grows by:

- Improving the knowledge base from which land use and natural resource decisions are made, and
- Building local capacity to protect and manage natural resources as our region grows.

GVI is a formal outreach partnership among The Last Green Valley (TLGV), the University of Connecticut's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension, and The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter (TNC). Its programs are made possible through active partnerships with many other organizations, and the active involvement of TLGV's Natural Resources and Agriculture Committee.

Land use and natural resource planning and management are primarily local activities. As a result, GVI programs specifically target three local audiences: private landowners, municipal leaders and land use commissioners, and contractors, realtors and others who convert open space to other uses. GVI works to ensure that these groups have the knowledge and resources they need to make good decisions as they plan for the future.

## 2009 PROGRAM IMPACTS:

- Forty-eight GVI short courses, workshops and training sessions were taught to 1,073 TLGV community leaders, landowners and others. The great majority of these were held in TLGV town halls and other community buildings, bringing the information directly to our target audience in their own communities.

- GVI staff held numerous individual meetings with private landowners and interested citizens in 2009 as well as two Family Land Protection workshops with over 120 participants in attendance; these efforts contributed to at least 343 acres of additional land that is now in the process of, or has been permanently protected. These additional acres bring the total since 2001 to at least 8,685 acres of undeveloped land permanently protected from development, as a direct result of landowners attending programs and workshops or working directly with GVI staff to identify protection options.
- GVI continued its partnership with the Blackstone Heritage Corridor in a Heritage Landscape Survey with a total of 13 towns in the two corridors. In 2009, the three stage process was completed; each town received a final report detailing the process, descriptions of the most important heritage/historical landscapes identified in the town, and suggestions and proposals for next steps to be taken by each town to preserve and protect its most valuable historical and heritage landscapes.
- GVI, along with TNC and local stakeholders, led the Natchaug Basin Conservation Action Plan (CAP) Project conducting a series of four meetings to identify critical aquatic and terrestrial resources shared by the eight participating municipalities. Over 100 participants, including elected officials, conservation organizations, state and local agencies, the University of Connecticut, scientists and other stakeholders collaborated to develop regional strategies and measurable actions for the protection of high water quality for the plants, animals and people of the Natchaug Basin, the largest water supply watershed in Connecticut.
- To help the towns of Chaplin and Coventry prepare for updating their Plan of Conservation and Development, GVI conducted a series of visioning workshops for

each town. GVI is also assisting Chaplin by coordinating the preparation of the Plan.

- As a result of the Coventry visioning sessions, the town is working with GVI staff in developing detailed design guidelines for commercial development along its major roadways. Once complete, the guidelines will be shared with other TLGV communities.
- GVI has been working with the Town of Ashford in implementing the goals for the villages of Warrenville and West Ashford as outlined in Ashford's Plan of Conservation and Development.
- In 2005, GVI helped the French River Connection and the towns of Webster and Dudley envision a riverfront recapture of the French River that each town shares. In 2009 another piece has fallen into place with the leasing of a 2 acre parcel along the river in downtown Webster. GVI has developed a concept for a park that has enabled the French River Connection to receive \$30,000 from the Webster Redevelopment Authority for Phase I of the French River Park development.
- GVI has worked with TLGV to begin developing an agricultural sustainability plan for the region.
- With funding from the Borderlands Project, GVI continues to work with the two project towns, Killingly CT and Exeter RI, to identify innovative approaches and regulations that will encourage new community growth and development in village centers and protect valuable farms and forestland. Phase I, Heart and Soul Visioning, included University of Connecticut Landscape Architect students and innovative public engagement techniques. Phase II will focus on researching innovative regulatory tools to implement the vision developed in Phase I and further refining this vision. Lessons learned from this project will benefit other TLGV communities.

*continued page 16*

- GVI has assisted Eastford, one of only two towns in Connecticut without zoning regulations, with a workshop to help them understand the issue.
- TLGV towns are continuing to respond to GVI workshops on conservation subdivisions and alternative development techniques. Twelve TLGV towns now include Conservation or Open Space Subdivisions in their regulations, and two more are in the process.
- With funding from the US Forest Service, GVI has created a geographic information system (GIS) model which can be used to identify waterbodies suitable for the installation of dry hydrants for fire protection. This data will assist local fire companies and CT DEP fire control personnel with identification and certification of potential fire pond waterbodies in the Natchaug River Basin. The model can be used to generate data throughout The Last Green Valley and southern New England.
- GVI's GIS Center has worked with local land trusts including Joshua's Tract and Wolf Den Land Trust to map existing protected open space and identify potential land protection projects. Updated data and maps allow land trust volunteers to coordinate resource protection with municipalities and other organizations as well as provide valuable assistance for conservation monitoring.
- GVI continues to work with TLGV towns in developing or updating their Natural and Cultural Resource Inventories. During 2009, two more towns received their first map set bringing the total TLGV towns with a GVI map set to 21. GVI also has developed a methodology to map co-occurring resources, another tool to help towns prioritize their resources and incorporate those goals into their Plans of Conservation and Development or Open Space Plans. GVI worked with two additional towns to develop their own co-occurring maps in 2009; to date 12 towns have this important tool.
- GVI continued its successful seminar series in 2009 in partnership with Eastern Connecticut RC&D Council on tools and techniques to protect what we value as TLGV continues to develop. Topics included Transfer of Development Rights: Making it Happen and Brownfield Redevelopment.
- GVI staff prepared a Farm Building Tax Exemption Study for the Town of Lebanon that provides the town with information to help it in determining the fiscal effect of supporting working farms by exempting certain farm buildings from local property taxes.
- To help the Town of Brooklyn prepare an update to their Plan of Conservation and Development, GVI staff conducted a second build-out analysis. A build-out analysis projects the maximum development possible based on current zoning regulations. The first analysis, in 2002, showed that significant population growth was possible in Brooklyn; subsequently the town revised the zoning regulations. This 2009 study clearly shows that the zoning revisions decreased the potential build-out.
- GVI was invited to present Lessons Learned: GVI & Borderlands Projects at the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals Conference in San Diego.
- With funding from the Land Use Academy, GVI staff developed Map Reading: A Manual for Commission Members. Filled with a wealth of information and tips on site plan reading, this manual will be provided to Land Use Academy attendees. In addition, GVI staff taught Map Reading 101 to an additional 170 folks, many from TLGV, at Academy workshops across Connecticut
- GVI staff are finishing a comprehensive workbook designed to assist municipalities, land trusts and recreational organizations in planning for greenways and green infrastructure across town and state boundaries. It will be developed, printed and distributed throughout TLGV. The "how-to" workbook will include information on greenways, green infrastructure, important natural and cultural resources and protected lands maps, as well as visioning tools for planning.
- GVI Presented three 2009 Green Neighbor Awards to TLGV communities and organizations who have worked to keep The Last Green Valley green:
  - To the Town of Brooklyn Conservation Commission for the valuable steps they have taken to protect Brooklyn's rural character and natural resources in many ways: establishing an Open Space Land Acquisition Fund, developing a Greenway Plan for protection of natural resources and recreational opportunities, and advising regulatory land use commissions to achieve a sustainable balance of growth and conservation in the Town of Brooklyn.
  - To Ken Parker for creating an army of French River stewards where none existed before; for co-founding an organization that has successfully improved water quality and river access; and for completely changing the public perception of the French River from a polluted backwater to a treasured resource in only four short years.
  - Jointly with TLGV, to Holly Drinkuth for her efforts above and beyond the call of duty to protect the water quality of the Natchaug River Watershed by obtaining a Connecticut State Greenways designation for the Natchaug River and its key tributaries, and for convening an in-depth conservation action planning process, bringing together diverse stakeholders from throughout the region to ensure continued protection of this precious resource.



**Partner organizations that made the Institute's 2009 programs possible include:**

Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission  
Charlton Heritage Preservation Trust  
Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions  
Connecticut Audubon Society  
Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection  
Connecticut Forest & Parks Association  
Dudley Conservation Land Trust  
Eastern Connecticut Forest Landowners Association/  
Wolf Den Land Trust  
Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area  
Eastern Connecticut Soil & Water Conservation District  
Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historical Trust  
Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions  
Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Mid-State (MA) Trail Association  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments  
Rhode Island Chapter of The Nature Conservancy  
Opacum Land Trust  
Southeast Connecticut Council of Governments  
University of Connecticut Center of Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) and Extension Geospatial Technologies Program  
University of Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources Conservation  
Washington County Regional Planning Council  
Windham Region Council of Governments  
Wyndham Land Trust

And in particular, the numerous municipal boards, commissions and staff from across TLGV, and the dedicated members of the TLGV Board of Directors and Natural Resources & Agriculture Committee.

J. Cothreau





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