

Thames River Basin Partnership (TRBP) Plan of Work July 2018 - 2021



What Is The Partnership?

The Partnership is a voluntary, cooperative effort to share resources and to develop a regional approach to resource protection.

Priority areas of concern for the basin are:

- Protect the region's agricultural and natural areas being threatened by land-use changes;
- Protect ground and surface water quantity and quality being threatened and degraded by contamination;
- Protect the region's biodiversity; and
- Improve the coastal zone resource conditions.

The Partnership is a fluid organization. Any government agency, non-profit conservation organization, educational institution, faith-based organization, industry, municipality or individual with a focus on our key areas of concern in the greater Thames River watershed and surrounding areas is welcome to participate in the quarterly meetings and other events.

Goal 1: Accelerate the pace of conservation by participating in the development of a regional conservation planning strategy.

- A. Promote the use of and updates to online natural resource mapping programs to help develop priorities for open space planning.
- B. Promote farmland preservation through agricultural conservation easement programs.
- C. Promote forest land preservation through the purchase of conservation easements and other open space land acquisition programs.
- D. Promote the planning for and development of connected corridors of open space utilizing greenways and/or blueways.

Goal 2: Participate in watershed-based planning/implementation work for protecting healthy watersheds from degradation and restoration of watersheds that fail to meet one or more water quality standards as defined by the US EPA Clean Water Act, and that will lead to meeting the Clean Waters and Healthy Watershed Ecosystem Targets of the Long Island Sound Study.

- A. Support plan development that focuses on non-point source (NPS) pollution reduction, or healthy watershed preservation or other water quality conservation plans.
- B. Support the implementation of existing NPS reduction, healthy watershed or other conservation plans.
- C. Provide assistance to farms that develop and implement Best Management Practices to reduce NPS contaminated runoff.
- D. Support projects that reduce will nutrient imports to existing nutrient rich watersheds.
- E. Promote stormwater best management practices and ongoing stormwater retrofit efforts.

- F. Support studies of streamflow and retention of long-term stream gaging stations.
- G. Facilitate the development of regional stormwater coalitions.
- H. Facilitate planning for, and protection of sustainable drinking water supplies and development of healthy watershed collaboratives.

Goal 3: Participate in educational outreach on the subject of biodiversity considerations in regional planning.

- A. Support citizen science monitoring programs including but not limited to the Connecticut Breeding Bird Atlas project and the mid-winter eagle survey.
- B. Participate in educational outreach on the subject of biodiversity considerations in regional planning.
- C. Promote the use of native plant landscaping and invasive species management.
- D. Promote the valuable ecosystem services of natural areas, including tidal marshes, inland wetlands, large forest blocks and stream continuity.
- E. Promote and encourage fish passage initiatives, fish habitat restoration and compatible culvert replacement.
- F. Promote *The Plan to Restore Diadromous Fishes to the Shetucket River Watershed*.
- G. Support small coastal stream habitat management efforts for naturalized and wild sea-run brown trout.

Goal 4: Participate in projects that improve coastal zone water and habitat quality in municipalities that border the Thames River estuary.

- A. Promote opportunities to reduce nitrogen and indicator bacteria/pathogen input into the watershed for improved water quality conditions in the Thames River and Long Island Sound estuaries.
- B. Support water quality and habitat monitoring efforts in the coastal region.
- C. Support the Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, the Long Island Sound Study and similar plans.
- D. Promote community resilience and risk reduction through planning and the use of Climate Change and Coastal Resilience Tools.
- E. Promote the use of living shoreline habitat techniques and monitoring protocols (dunes, coastal marshes, vegetation, etc.).
- F. Facilitate planning and local land-use response to sea level rise.

Goal 5: Develop and/or promote education and outreach programs for municipal leaders and citizens that promote TRBP Plan of Work objectives.

- A. Develop and conduct a Thames River “Floating Workshop” to address current resource issues related to the greater Thames River watershed. This annual event provides educational opportunities for municipal officials, local businesses, and concerned citizens.
- B. Participate in public education and outreach regarding farm conservation programs, including support for the annual regional event, Celebrating Agriculture Day.
- C. Promote forested land preservation through education and outreach to forest landowners.
- D. Provide education and outreach support for the ongoing Regional Conservation Partnership Programs.
- E. Promote and/or participate in volunteer water quality monitoring to help expand knowledge of current water quality conditions and long-term trends of the region’s

water quality.

- F. Facilitate sharing of water quality data.
- G. Promote the use of Low Impact Development, green infrastructure and riparian buffer plantings to reduce water quality impacts of land development.
- H. Assist with education and outreach related to the Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) general permit and minimum control measures (MCMs) for DOT and other institutional MS4s.
- I. Promote land-use and natural resource training and advanced training for municipal officials
- J. Promote statewide natural resource protection plans and other available data through presentations at TRBP meetings and links on the TRBP website

Goal 6: Partner with Individuals and Groups to Address Regional Environmental Issues, Strengthen the Partnership's Organizational Structure and Increase the Diversity of Stakeholders

- A. Continue to enhance the Partnership's organizational structure in order to develop a sustainable and balanced workload, while achieving desired outcomes.
- B. Promote TRBP activities to the region, which shall include distribution of the TRBP Plan of Work, annual reports, fact sheets, workshop information, Partners in Action Report etc.
- C. Maintain the www.trbp.org website for the promotion of the organization and its goals, and to disseminate information to the membership.
- D. Continue and expand the TRBP social media outreach program to provide access to information on Partner activities between quarterly newsletter publications.
- E. Promote greater participation in TRBP quarterly meetings through engaging presentations.
- F. Continue to establish workgroups to focus on specific issues, such as a website development/upkeep committee, outreach/social media committee, floating workshop planning committee, fundraising committee and/or others, to increase participation in Partnership management.
- G. Encourage Partnership representatives to participate in one or more work group/sub-committees, and to provide updates regularly on relevant Plan of Work objectives of their organization at quarterly meetings.
- H. Conduct long-range strategic planning to ensure sustainability of the partnership.