

ACA Club-Fostered Stewardship Program



2005—2008 Report

Sponsored by **L.L.Bean**

Since 2002, the ACA has partnered with L.L. Bean to sponsor the Club Fostered Stewardship (CFS) Program. The CFS Program provides funding and logistical assistance to local paddling clubs that undertake stewardship projects on local waterways. The purpose of the program is to support volunteer stewardship efforts, and encourage local clubs to take an active role in helping to protect and improve the nation's recreational waterways.

During the years 2005-2008, the ACA made 44 grants totaling \$35,860 to paddling clubs and stewardship organizations in support of volunteer-driven waterways stewardship projects. These grants were made possible by the generous support of L.L. Bean. Funded projects included several river cleanups and improvements to water access. Many grant recipients partnered with other groups and organizations to achieve their goals and increase the reach of their grant funds.

This extended look at 2005-08 ACA Club-Fostered Stewardship Grant projects offers a unique view of how these projects evolve each year, highlighting the drive and passion of the volunteers, as well as the remarkable impact of each dollar donated.



Cherry Capital Paddle America Club—Michigan

Working with divers from the sheriff's department, club members hauled out tires, bicycles, chairs, 50-gallon drums, a vintage 1960s refrigerator, the flatbed of a truck, a vacuum cleaner and a computer monitor.

Badger State Boating Society—Wisconsin

The Badger State Boating Society is a statewide paddling organization in Wisconsin. In 2005, the Society received a \$500 grant to assist in the development of the Milwaukee Urban Water Trail, a project jointly undertaken with Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers (now Milwaukee Riverkeeper). The Milwaukee Urban Water Trail helps the citizens of the Milwaukee area and beyond access Lake Michigan and the Milwaukee, Menomonee and Kinnickinnic rivers. During the development phase, the Society's grant leveraged the work of volunteers who inventoried and evaluated existing water access points, and incorporated them into a printed water trail map and website, at www.mkeriverkeeper.org/watertrail/watertrail.htm.

Bay Area Sea Kayakers—California

Bay Area Sea Kayakers (BASK) is a paddling club based in the San Francisco bay area that promotes safe paddling and provides education about bay and ocean ecology. In 2007, BASK received a \$660 grant to assist with two beach cleanups

at Horseshoe Cove, which sits near the north tower of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco Bay. Horseshoe Cove is a key launch and landing site for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail, and provides access to the ocean, to destinations in the Bay, and for the classic crossing of the Golden Gate. Unfortunately, the Cove also serves as a catching point for significant amounts of river debris heading out to sea.

BASK organized beach cleanups in August 2007 and April 2008. At each event, volunteers filled a 20 cubic foot Dumpster (rented with grant funds) and about three-dozen garbage bags. Volunteers collected hundreds of pounds of wood litter, some requiring eight people to carry it to the Dumpster. They also collected bottle caps, pacifiers, plastic tableware, syringes, shotgun shells, junk food wrappers and an armoire that had to be dug out of the sand.

In addition to improving the beach, the cleanups have helped them build partnerships with other organizations that have an interest in a clean bay. Their partners include the Tamalpais Outrigger Canoe Club, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail, and the Presidio Yacht Club, which has allowed paddlers to use its beach as a launch site and teaching venue.

Bend Paddle Trail Alliance—Oregon

In 2006, The Bend Paddle Trail Alliance (BPTA) received a \$1000 CFS grant to map the Deschutes Paddle Trail. During the summer, Alliance volunteers put in 256 hours surveying the Deschutes and Little Deschutes Rivers and the nine upper Cascade Lakes. Armed with GPS units and cameras, they collected data on the locations of put-ins, take-outs, hazards, parking, camping, picnic areas, and portage routes needed for the map. They completed their survey work in the Spring of 2007.

The task of formatting the amount of data they had collected for the map was challenging. To make it more manageable, BPTA decided to publish two Deschutes Paddle Trail Guides: (1) A 55+ page waterproof guide for the 110 miles of river, and (2) A waterproof foldout map for the nine lakes. BPTA raised additional funds for the survey, design and printing costs. The guide can be found online at <http://www.deschutespaddletrail.info/>.

In 2008, the Alliance received a second CFS grant of \$1,000 to install signage for safety hazards and access points along the trail. Although people of any skill level can paddle most of the trail, there are sections of more difficult whitewater, and also some structural hazards. The signs help people avoid these hazards, and choose areas of the trail most suited to their skill levels.

Jo Ann Weber-Koenig, Chair of BPTA's Fundraising Committee, said the Alliance's 2006 CFS grant "was greatly instrumental in moving the project forward. Thanks again for showing your support and making the Deschutes Paddle Trail Guide a reality for all outdoor enthusiasts who come to Central Oregon to enjoy our natural waterways. Your grant gave us national support and exposure that meant so much to our local community in the establishment of the Deschutes Paddle Trail."

Cherry Capital Paddle America Club—Michigan

The Cherry Capital Paddle America Club (CCPAC) is a paddling club based in Traverse City, Michigan. Each year for the last four years, the club has helped organize cleanups of the Boardman River and several lakes in the Traverse City area. CCPAC received grants in 2005, 2007 and 2008 to assist.

In 2005, the club focused its efforts on Boardman Lake. Working with divers from the Sheriff's Department, club members hauled out tires (car, tractor, truck and airplane), bicycles, chairs, 50-gallon drums, a vintage 1960s refrigerator, the flatbed of a truck, a vacuum cleaner and a computer monitor. CCPAC's \$700 grant leveraged significant volunteer labor by providing a portable restroom and a large tent for lunch preparation and shelter.

By 2007, the cleanup had grown into a larger event called the Boardman River Clean Sweep. CCPAC received a \$400 grant to purchase supplies for the cleanup. More than 60 volunteers from all over the city turned out to collect trash on six different sections of the river. The club also tried the innovative approach of collecting trash from the streets of downtown Traverse City, to keep it from being washed into the river. The Outdoor Adventure Club of Kingsley High School, a local government office, and the Youth Conservation Corps participated. One group braved deep mud to remove trash from Keystone Pond, which was being drawn down in preparation for removal of a 90-year-old dam. One volunteer



—Cherry Capital Paddle America Club—Michigan

used snowshoes to cross the muddy lake bottom. The art class at Traverse City Central High School designed t-shirts for the event, and several local businesses, churches and offices donated Dumpsters for disposal of the collected trash. Through their efforts, volunteers removed several hundred pounds of trash from the river and surrounding area.

CCPAC received a \$650 grant to support the 2008 Clean Sweep. The event continues to grow, with a total of 95 volunteers participating in the 2008 program, including anglers from the local Trout Unlimited chapter and members of an outdoor adventure club from a local high school. Each year, they have seen declining amounts of trash in the river, and for the first time in many years, loons have returned to Boardman Pond.

Coulee Canoe and Kayak Club—Wisconsin

The Coulee Canoe and Kayak Club is working with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the La Crosse Parks and Recreation Department to establish a water trail on a segment of the La Crosse River in La Crosse, WI. In 2007, the Club received a \$950 grant to help launch this project. Club members worked with DNR to make modifications to the put-in and take-out sites so they are easier for boaters to use and also meet the standards for fish and wildlife habitat. The club removed a large amount of instream debris from the launch sites to make them more usable. The club also produced a promotional brochure about the water trail and distributed it throughout the area.

Dan River Basin Association—North Carolina

In 2007, the Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) received \$700 grant to educate the public about the importance of streamside buffers. The grant funds were used to purchase educational signage that Association volunteers installed at a high-usage river access point in 2008. Greater public awareness of the need to protect trees along rivers and streams will result in improved water quality and enhanced recreational values. News releases highlighted the role of the CFS grant in the project. The Association also produced a brochure and festival posters acknowledged the grant funding.

Delaware River Greenway Partnership— New Jersey/Pennsylvania

The Delaware River Greenway Partnership (DRGP) is a non-profit membership organization that works with local communities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania to protect and improve the quality of the Delaware River and its outstanding natural and cultural resources. DRGP received a \$1000 CFS grant to support Project River Bright, which conducted two river cleanups in September 2006.

The project targeted several islands in the Delaware River where a large



amount of trash had been deposited by recent flooding. Volunteers removed litter using canoes, kayaks and a limited number of powerboats. Another group of volunteers removed trash along the stream banks. Project River Bright activities included a pre-event safety and education program and a post clean-up celebration.

Friends of Stafford Creeks—Virginia

Friends of Stafford Creeks is a volunteer nonprofit organization dedicated to

the preservation of clean water in Stafford County, Virginia. Members of the organization monitor water quality in the county, which is in the Potomac River watershed. Their monitoring activities include measuring submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in the waterways via canoe and kayak. The Friends received an \$820 grant to purchase a 14-foot canoe, four PDFs and four paddles to facilitate this monitoring activity.

The Friends launched its canoe for the first time in September 2007 and completed a survey in Accokeek Creek. Later in the month, Friends volunteers surveyed about three miles of Potomac Creek that previously had been unreachable because of the paddling distance from their home base. Their new canoe can be easily transported in the back of a truck, and this portability allowed them to complete their survey. Having the canoe is also allowing more members to participate in SAV surveys, and will enable the Friends to cover more of the tidal waters with SAV searches.

Friends of the Locust Fork River—Alabama

The Friends of the Locust Fork River (FLFR) is a local group of citizens working to protect the Locust Fork River in Alabama. FLFR received a \$500 grant to assist with a major river cleanup held on the weekend of May 13-14, 2005 in conjunction with National River Cleanup Week. This cleanup was the largest in the organization's 15-year history, and helped keep the river a safe and quality place for paddlers and other recreational users.

Forty volunteers helped remove thousands of pounds of trash and 13 tires from four river crossings, some of which were being used as garbage dumps. On May 14, FLFR members spent the day in canoes gathering trash along a ten-mile stretch of the river. The results of the cleanup were impressive. Volunteers removed a total of 6000 pounds of debris, including 27 tires. Overall, this was a rewarding and productive team building and community service project.

FLFR also received a \$1000 grant to assist with another cleanup in 2006. Unfortunately, the planned cleanup was postponed a week due to high water levels. As a result, participation was less than anticipated. Even so, ten dedicated volunteers showed up to clean five miles of the Locust Fork River in canoes. They pulled out ten tires, a baby's playpen, and a metal folding chair along with the normal bottles, cans and trash.



Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club—New York

Because FLFR's expenses for the 2006 cleanup were lower than anticipated, the club sought permission to use the remaining balance (\$700) on another project. FLFR plans to use the funds to improve public access areas along the river, install much needed watershed signage, and investigate the possibility of developing a canoe trail.

Friends of the St. Croix Headwaters—Wisconsin

The Friends of the St. Croix Headwaters (FOTSCH) is an energetic, citizen-based organization that focuses volunteer activities on water quality monitoring, invasive species control, environmental education, and advocacy for the upper St. Croix River in northwestern Wisconsin. In 2007, FOTSCH received an \$830 grant to celebrate the historic Brule-St. Croix Waterway and Portage Trail through interpretive signage, brochures, a water trail map, website and special events.

The Brule-St. Croix Trail is the historic portage route used by Native Americans and explorers to bridge the north-south continental divide. The Brule River flows north to Lake Superior, and the St. Croix River flows south to the Mississippi. A well-worn path connects the navigable portions of the two rivers. FOTSCH partners on the project include the Brule River State Forest (Dept of Natural Resources), the National Park Service, the Brule-St. Croix Chapter of the North Country Trail Association, the River Alliance of Wisconsin, the Superior-Douglas County Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the West Wisconsin Land Trust.

As part of the celebration of the St. Croix River headwaters area, Friends held the first St. Croix Riverfest on June 13-14, 2008. The Riverfest included a watershed conference, a sustainable tourism workshop, and a series of watershed-wide events. ACA and L. L. Bean were listed as Riverfest Sponsors in promotional materials.

In 2008, FOTSCH received a second grant of \$1000 to help establish a volunteer-run environmental education program for high school students in northwest Wisconsin. In its interactions with members of its local community, FOTSCH learned that most high school students graduate without ever having an on-water canoe or kayak experience. In an effort to change this, FOTSCH is creating the Canoes-On-Wheels Program. Through this program, FOTSCH volunteers will schedule paddling trips

In its interactions with members of its local community, FOTSCH learned that most high school students graduate without ever having an on-water canoe or kayak experience.

with local high schools, and deliver boats and related equipment to the schools for their use. By making this equipment available, FOTSCH is introducing students to paddlesports, and also educating them on ecological resources and issues.

Friends of the Riverfront—Pennsylvania

In 2006, Friends of the Riverfront received a \$600 grant to develop, print and distribute a free guide to the Three Rivers Heritage Trail in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. The guide provides users with information about river access points, nearby amenities, and boating safety. Volunteers and several private funders assisted in the development of the guide and provided in-kind donations of paper. Grant funds were used to print the brochure, of which 12,000 copies were distributed.

Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club—New York

The Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club is a volunteer organization located in Brooklyn, New York dedicated to providing waterfront access and education to the public in the Gowanus, Red Hook, and Dumbo neighborhood sections of the city. For several years, they have been running cleanup and public education programs on the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn.

In 2005, the Club received a \$700 grant to expand what had been a twice-a-year shoreline cleanup schedule to ten cleaning days throughout the summer. One day was scheduled each month from May through October to clean the shoreline of Valentino Pier and remove trash from the water that would eventually wash ashore. Through their efforts, the Dredgers collected approximately 200 bags of trash, up from 40 bags the previous year. The club used its funds for trash bags, gloves, safety equipment, refreshments for volunteers and outreach materials.

The Dredgers received a second grant of \$1000 to expand their activities in 2006, and a third grant of \$250 in 2007. The expanded program includes a New York City Parks launch site in the neighborhood of Red Hook that is adjacent to the Gowanus Canal. This area is similar to the Gowanus industrial area, but is also home to a large low-income population.

The Club complemented its cleanup activities with an Introduction to the Estuary Program that educated volunteers and the public about the health of the harbor. Many of the low-income residents returned week after week to help clean the shoreline and participate in other volunteer efforts. As part of their programs, the Club introduced local residents to paddling, and encouraged them to become more involved in determining the future of their environment.

Hiawatha Water Trail Association—Michigan

The Hiawatha Water Trail stretches for 120 miles along Lake Superior's southern shoreline between Big Bay and Grand Marais, Michigan, encompassing the cities of Marquette and Munising as well as the Grand Island National Recreation Area and Pictures Rocks National Lakeshore. The Trail is a project of the Hiawatha Water Trail Association (HWTA).

In 2005, HWTA volunteers received \$990 in CFS funds to purchase and install trail signs to mark access points for both land and water users. HWTA also developed a portable display to share information about the Hiawatha Water Trail at symposia, trade shows and other silent sport activities. The booth, manned by HWTA volunteers, will be an important part of their ongoing trail promotion efforts. HWTA also used a portion of the funds as a cash match for a Michigan



Department of Environmental Quality Coastal Management Grant. With these combined funds, HWTA volunteers designed, printed and distributed a waterproof trail map and an Access Points Brochure. Users of the trail will benefit from this grant for many years to come.

Illinois Paddling Council—Illinois

Over the last decade, the Illinois Paddling Council (IPC) has partnered with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Northeastern Illinois Regional Planning Commission and a regional non-profit planning organization

called Openlands to plan and establish a regional system of water trails in Northeastern Illinois. The Northeastern Illinois Regional Water Trail Plan includes ten waterways in the seven-county region, totaling more than five hundred miles of designated water trails.

In order to manage the resulting increased use of these water trails, IPC created a program called “Illinois Water TrailKeepers” in the spring of 2007. The TrailKeepers work to maintain clear passage on the trails by training

volunteers to remove large woody debris and other safety hazards in a safe and environmentally sensitive way.

In 2007, IPC received a \$930 grant to purchase tools and equipment for its TrailKeeper crews, and to provide training in chain saw safety, rigging, stream ecology, woody debris removal, and mapping. In its first year, the program trained more than a dozen volunteers who then contributed 89 hours of their time to clear rivers. Since then, the Council has partnered with county governments and northern Illinois forest preserves to expand the program's reach. Their efforts improve access and safety conditions on rivers throughout northern Illinois.

James River Canoe & Kayak Club—Virginia

The James River Canoe and Kayak Club received a \$1000 CFS grant in 2007 to plan and execute a 400-mile canoe and kayak trip from the headwaters of the James River to the First Landing State Park in

Many of the most heavily used access points along the James River are not authorized, not maintained, or not accessible for persons with disabilities. In March 2008, club members began recruiting volunteers to adopt these access points and take on maintenance responsibilities.

Virginia Beach, VA. The purpose of the trip was to gather information to help develop the new James River Heritage Water Trail Map. Grant funds enabled the club to purchase supplies and equipment for the trip.

While paddling the river, volunteers gathered GPS data on access points, landmarks and historical sites. The data gathered by the club will be valuable to the James River Association, which is working to extend the James River Water Trail, currently extending from Hampton Roads to Lynchburg. The extended trail will encompass the entirety of the river from the mouth to the confluence of the Jackson and Cowpasture rivers at Irongate, Virginia, about 122 miles upriver from Lynchburg. Overall, the James River Water Trail will be 340 miles long.

During the trip, the club made a very useful discovery. Many of the most heavily used access points along the James River are not authorized, not maintained, or not accessible for persons with disabilities. Beginning in March 2008, club members began recruiting volunteers to adopt these access points and take on maintenance responsibilities. The club is also working to increase accessibility for mobility-impaired paddlers.

Kayaks Unlimited—California

Kayaks Unlimited (KU) is a sea-kayaking club in the San Francisco area. Its members cooperatively own their boats and paddling equipment and allow others to use them. In 2005, KU received a \$1000 CFS grant to purchase and install a boat storage container in a small neighborhood park on the shore of the San Francisco Bay.

In cooperation with the Port of San Francisco and the Friends of Islais Creek, Kayaks Unlimited is restoring and rejuvenating the park and creating a site that is safe for use by the human-powered boating public. The site is the only launching point for paddlers along that section of the San Francisco shoreline, and is on a protected waterway where the club will be able to safely teach paddling skills.

Northern Virginia Conservation Trust—Virginia

On December 1, 2007, 16 volunteers from the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT), including 10 students from George Marchall High School, undertook a riparian area restoration project on Pimmit Run, a tributary of the Potomac River in northern Virginia. The volunteers removed several invasive species from the Run's riparian zone, including Multiflora Rose, English Ivy, Japanese Honeysuckle, and Climbing Eponymous. They also planted 11 nursery-grown native trees and shrubs suited to riparian conditions and beneficial to wildlife.

NVCT received a \$930 CFS grant to purchase native plants, chicken wire to shelter the new plants, and tools such as shovels and Pulaskis. The tools will help NVCT volunteers remove invasive species around these and other plants in the future, thus continuing to improve native habitat and water quality of this and other Potomac tributaries.

North West Rafters Association—Oregon

The North West Rafters Association (NWRA) is a multistate organization for whitewater paddlers in the Pacific Northwest. In 2008, NWRA received a \$1000 grant to help with the 6th Annual Down the River Cleanup on the Clackamas River. The Clackamas provides valuable outdoor recreation opportunities in the Portland, Oregon area, and also provides valuable habitat to two species of salmon.

On September 7, a total of 319 volunteers turned out to remove trash from a 14-mile section of the river. A flotilla of kayaks (plastic and inflatable), rafts, canoes and drift boats hauled out more than three tons of trash. Since 2003, the event has collected more than 31,000 pounds of refuse, though event organizers were happy to report that the amounts removed have declined each year, a hopeful sign that their efforts are making a difference.

Ohio River Way—Ohio

Ohio River Way is a nonprofit organization working to establish a 150-mile land and water trail along the Ohio River. The trail is to be multi-dimensional, bringing together artistic, commercial, ecological, heritage and recreational assets.

In 2006, ACA awarded a \$1000 CFS grant to Ohio River Way to assist with the development and printing of an Ohio River Water Trail Guide. Volunteers for Ohio River Way and its partner organizations provided the research and graphic design services for the map, which plots boat ramps, marinas, fuel docks, floating restaurants, campgrounds, and points of interest along the Ohio River between the Meidahl Dam and the Markland Dam. Information about paddling, general boating safety and Leave No Trace is also included.

The initial printing of 10,000 brochures, distributed at the Ohio River Way Paddlefest and through retailers, marinas, riverfront restaurants, and other groups, was nearly exhausted in less than two months, so the club ordered a second printing. In addition, all the information and graphics were posted on the Ohio River Way website (www.ohioriverway.org/trailguide/).



Ozark Greenways—Missouri

In 2005, the Ozark Greenways, a trail and greenway group, and the Ozark Mountain Paddlers (OMP) teamed up to develop the James River Water Trail. ACA awarded the organizations a \$1000 to assist with their efforts. This 3-mile long trail utilizes two existing Missouri Department of Conservation access points, and ties into the local nature center and lands under the management of the Springfield Park Board. The trail is within 15 minutes of 150,000 residents, and because it connects with the Galloway Creek Greenway/Trail, it offers the opportunity for combining biking and canoeing.

Paradise Coast Paddlers Club—Florida

In 2007, the Paradise Coast Paddlers Club joined forces with the Collier

County Health, Tourism, and Parks & Recreation Departments to create a segment of the Paradise Coast Blueway, on Florida's Gulf Coast. The segment created by the club and its partners is known as the Collier County Paddling Trail. Paradise Coast Paddlers received a \$1,000 grant to determine GPS waypoints and develop brochures and signage for access points. Club members worked to complete the first phase of the trail covering the area from Everglades National Park's Wilderness Waterway to Coon Key Pass.

Prescott Paddle Club—Arizona

The Prescott Paddle Club has "adopted" the five lakes in the Prescott, AZ area in the same manner that "Litter Lifters" adopt American roads and



highways. The club cleans the lakes each month, pulling out aluminum cans, glass bottles, plastic containers, fishing lines and lures while also "lassoing" automobile tires and towing them back to shore for proper disposal. Members and volunteers in boats and on shore work together to make the lakes more accessible to everyone.

In 2005, ACA awarded the club a \$1,000 grant to purchase mechanical

grabbers, spike poles and rope to collect debris floating in the lakes and lying onshore. They also purchased plastic bags for trash collection and gloves to protect volunteers' hands. The grant money also enabled the club to prepare and distribute promotional and informative literature to increase public awareness of everyone's responsibility for keeping our waterways clean and healthy.

Sebago Canoe Club—New York

The Sebago Canoe Club is located in Brooklyn, New York. Unlike most ACA member clubs, Sebago has its own clubhouse, with access to Jamaica Bay. Because the clubhouse is located in a densely populated urban area, the club is able to provide valuable on-water recreation and environmental education opportunities to a community with limited access to these experiences. The ACA has supported the club's programs with four CFS grants since 2005.

In 2005, the club received a \$600 grant to complete renovations to its dock, which had been made larger (and heavier) the previous year and therefore needed more flotation. The improved ramp allowed the club to expand its Open Paddle Program, a series of weekly volunteer-led paddling trips that introduces city residents, free of charge, to kayaking on Jamaica Bay.

In 2006, the club sought to further expand the Open Paddle program, increasing their schedule to two trips a week. The club received a \$1,000 CFS grant to assist with this expansion. The enhanced program featured guest lecturers from different environmental and social organizations, who accompanied the groups on their paddles to speak about issues in the Bay and surrounding areas. Guest speakers included representatives from the Gateway National Recreation Area, the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, the Jamaica Bay Keepers, and New Yorkers

for Parks. The program fosters a relationship with the Bay's delicate but thriving tidal wetlands, and gives participants a chance to begin a relationship with natural areas right in their neighborhood.

The program continued to expand in 2007, so much so that the club had to turn people away almost every Saturday and at many of the Wednesday evening paddles. The club added new speakers to the program schedule,



including the Jamaica Bay Historian, a representative of New Yorkers for Parks, and two different Gateway National Recreational Area Rangers. ACA provided a \$250 CFS grant in 2007 to assist with program expenses. More than 300 New York City residents (non-club members) participated in the program and got out on the water during the year.

In 2008, the club decided it was time to expand the Open Paddle program to younger residents (it had been limited to persons 16 and older). To do so, it created the Young People's Open Paddle program, with the goal of taking kids from the area of Brooklyn near the group's clubhouse out onto Jamaica Bay. The response to the club's initial invitation was overwhelming. More than 200 students asked to participate. ACA provided a \$350 CFS grant for the program, which will continue in 2009. The program also formed a partnership between the club and the Academy for Science and Environment, a newly created NYC public high school within walking distance of the clubhouse. The club plans to work year-round on environmental education programs with the school to develop future environmental leaders.

Space Coast Paddlers—Florida

In 2005, the ACA learned that the canoe/kayak landing dock on the north branch of the St. Sebastian River near Melbourne, FL was damaged during the hurricanes of 2004. Local park officials asked the Space Coast Paddlers, an ACA-affiliated club, to take on the project of building a new dock and launch site. The club agreed, and ACA provided a \$594 CFS grant for the project.

After several delays due to weather and high water, seven club members rebuilt the dock on December 14, 2005 with supplies purchased with the grant. Park officials expressed their appreciation: "The Space Coast Paddlers and their volunteers did an outstanding job repairing the damaged canoe landing on the St. Sebastian River. Because of their hard work and commitment, visitors can once again enjoy a leisurely paddle on the river and land at the park for a scenic picnic or hike."

Stewards of the White Oak River Basin—North Carolina

The Stewards of the White Oak River Basin are a group of paddlers in the

coastal region of North Carolina. Led by the stout octogenarian Elmer Eddy, the Stewards have a simple philosophy. They always try to leave the rivers and



bays that they paddle cleaner than they were when they arrived. The Stewards pick up trash and remove invasive plants whenever and wherever they paddle.

In 2008, the Stewards decided they needed to do some public education to complement their trash removal efforts. They applied for, and received, an \$860 CFS grant to purchase anti-littering signs for their volunteers to post throughout the watershed.

The signs tell the public that people are taking care of the waterways, and discourage them from littering. They also acknowledge LL Bean's generous contribution to the Stewards' work.

Three Rivers Paddling Club—Pennsylvania

In 2007, the Three Rivers Paddling Club, based in western Pennsylvania, applied for a grant to assist with the construction of a much-needed access point on the Big Sandy River in Rockville, WV. The club partnered with Friends of the Cheat on the project, a non-profit watershed group that received a donation of four acres of riverside land that will serve as a great access site. ACA awarded the club a \$1000 grant.

Originally, the project was to be completed in 2007, but was delayed when Friends of the Cheat was given an opportunity to obtain two additional acres of land at the access site. Since this additional land would significantly enhance the site, the Friends delayed the project to pursue this opportunity. Their negotiations were successful, but lasted until late fall. As a result, the project was completed in the summer of 2008.

University of Montana Outdoor Program—Montana

In 2007, the University of Montana Outdoor Program received \$1000 to fund a cleanup on the Blackfoot River. The program used its grant to promote participation, to rent vehicles and rafts to haul trash, and to provide water and ice to volunteers. The cleanup was a big success, with nearly three times as many volunteers than the previous year. The group even recruited some tubers who weren't initially part of the cleanup but decided to help when they saw the volunteers working. In addition, University Outdoor Program

employees gave 64 in-kind hours for preparation and cleanup.

Webster County Watershed Association—West Virginia

The ACA awarded a \$1,000 CFS grant to the Webster County Watershed Association in 2007. The Association used the grant to improve river access points and provide signage along the Elk River in West Virginia. The project was part of a larger effort to improve recreational opportunities and related amenities on Baker's Island in Webster Springs. The location is a convenient take-out for 24 miles of class III whitewater and world-class trout fishing upstream of the town, and a put-in for a similar segment running 30 miles downstream to Sutton Lake. Fantastic rural scenery adds to the attraction.

The access area was infested with Japanese knotweed, which had to be eliminated to make the access usable. Work parties in the autumn of 2007 killed and removed the knotweed roots to prevent re-infestation. They also removed large rocks and debris from the boat access ramp and spread gravel to improve river access at that point.

The Association used its funds to purchase materials and signage to improve the public access point. Local volunteers donated all the labor and some materials. Highland Interpretation developed a professional display with information about paddling and fishing the Elk River. The display helps visitors to the area decide what sections to paddle or fish and provides useful information to help them while they explore the area.

The first weekend in April each year is Webster Wildwater Weekend. This festival draws hundreds of paddlers from throughout the Eastern and Midwest United States to compete in the downriver and slalom races as well as explore other area paddling opportunities. The slalom racecourse is set up along the river left channel around Baker's Island, and ends at the public river access area made usable with the CFS grant funds.

Wesselman Nature Society—Indiana

In 2006, the Wesselman Nature Society's Canoe Evansville program was the only paddling-based waterway education program within 100 miles of Evansville, Indiana. This program provided local residents with paddling instruction and environmental education, and also maintained many of the area's water trails and access points. Canoe Evansville fulfills its stewardship responsibilities with volunteer labor.



The Sebago Canoe Club created the Young People's Open Paddle program, with the goal of taking kids from the area of Brooklyn out onto Jamaica Bay. The response was overwhelming.

In order to maximize volunteer hours, Canoe Evansville applied for a \$680 CFS grant to purchase two TV/VCR combo units, mounting brackets and wiring for their shuttle buses. Installing this equipment in the buses enabled them to play safety and orientation videos for their volunteers while driving them to clean-up sites. With the orientation completed, volunteers were able to begin working immediately upon arrival, making the most of the volunteer labor available.

West Virginia Wildwater Association—West Virginia

The West Virginia Wildwater Association (WVWA) is a paddling club that promotes the safe enjoyment of the state's abundant whitewater resources. In 2005, WVWA received CFS two grants for important river conservation projects. While

ACA generally does not award two grants to the same organization in one year, we made an exception in this case because of the nature and time-sensitivity of the proposed projects. Our grants helped WVWA protect two of the most popular river access points in the state:

Cheat River Access

WVWA partnered with other organizations to improve and protect a valuable access point for the Cheat River in Jenkinsburg, WV. Along with donations from other sources and matching grant from the state, a \$1,000 CFS grant played a critical role in this project.

WVWA used its grant funds to improve the trail from the lower parking lot, where private paddlers park, to the put-in at the river. Decades of abuse by all-terrain vehicles had turned the trail into a badly eroded gully. Club volunteers graded the trail and added drainage humps to re-direct runoff. They then added a layer of stone to the tread and mulch to the sides. The Association also surrounded the parking lot with huge stones to discourage unwanted ATV traffic, while leaving space for those wanting to walk down to the river. The whitewater paddling community is very excited about these access improvements.

Gauley River Access

Also in 2005, ACA awarded the Association an \$816 grant to assist with improvements to the Woods Ferry Road access to the Gauley River. Woods Ferry Road is the only public put-in and take-out spot in a 26-mile section of the river. Previously, two small outfitters maintained the access road. However, WVWA determined that additional road repairs were needed to ensure safe and ready access to the river, so they partnered to organize work crews to repair and reopen a long-abandoned stretch. The work was done with hand tools to minimize environmental damage. After reopening the road, WVWA began collecting donations to cover road maintenance costs.

White River Watchers of Madison County—Indiana

The White River Watchers (WRW) are a river protection organization in Madison County, Indiana. Their mission is to protect the White River ecosystem for present and future use through community involvement and education. WRW received CFS grants for river cleanups in 2005 and 2006. About 50 volunteers turned out for the first cleanup on June 11, 2005 and

spent four hours removing trash and debris from the river and its banks. The haul was impressive: 40-50 tires, two washtubs, very large drainpipes, automobile parts, silt-filled 55-gallon drums, and miscellaneous debris. Of particular interest was a wooden wagon wheel from the 1800s, which was donated to Madison County Historical Society for future display. Since the river cleanup is an annual event, WRW used their \$600 grant to purchase equipment that could be used in future years.

WRW scheduled another cleanup for June 2006, but had to cancel due to high water. Instead, club officers cleaned small stretches of the river throughout the summer, during which they collected large amounts of trash and 50-75 used tires. The Watchers' \$1000 CFS grant allowed them to purchase cleanup tools and tire cutting services, in addition to renting the Dumpster. The club supplemented their ongoing cleaning efforts with a larger group cleanup on September 10, for which they had 75 volunteers, including a local Boy Scout troop. At this event, they hauled out another 100 tires and large amounts of junk. The cleanup lasted about four hours, but several club officers stayed longer to help remove tires from the drop-off site. Debris that could not be recycled was hauled away in a 30-yard Dumpster that the Watchers rented.

Wintergreen Adaptive Sports—Virginia

Wintergreen Adaptive Sports is a non-profit organization that provides outdoor sports opportunities and instruction to persons with disabilities in central Virginia. Wintergreen's 20 volunteer paddling instructors provide two-day paddling programs during the summer, the first day includes flatwater instruction on Lake Monocan, the second day is a day trip on the James River.

Although the conditions on Lake Monocan are excellent for instruction, accessing the lake is difficult for people who use wheelchairs, canes or crutches. Participants must ascend and descend a steep, unpaved hill to reach the water's edge, and the passage of wheelchairs and crutches is damaging the hillside and threatens to increase erosion into the lake. To remedy this, Wintergreen proposes to construct a wheelchair accessible walkway leading to a small sandy beach that could be used by disabled persons and others. The beach area would be used to transfer class participants from chairs to boats and back again.

In the fall of 2008, ACA awarded Wintergreen a \$1,000 CFS grant to assist with this project. Construction will take place in the spring of 2009. A final report on this project will be included in our next CFS report.