

Tuesday, June 17, 2014

RIVERS READY FOR ACTIVITY

Another beautiful day on the local rivers for monitors checking the water quality was the norm again this week. Monitors found warm air and equal water temperatures, flowering Mountain Laurel, lots of animal tracks, schools of small fish, a Great Blue Heron on the river in the middle of Milford, ducks swimming in the middle of Wilton – also unfortunately, lush poison ivy and lots of trash left at a number of the 32 sites monitored along the Souhegan and Merrimack Rivers. The monitors, all volunteers, tested for E. coli, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, and air and water temperatures – and then picked up most of the trash.

The results of the tests were about what could be expected for this time of year and for the lack of rain immediately prior to the testing. Generally E. coli numbers rise, sometimes to unhealthy levels, after heavy rains following a dry spell. Dry weather for the three days preceding the testing, except for some showers in the headwaters for the Souhegan, showed the rivers in a generally healthy condition. E. coli counts went up above the 88 level deemed safe by the SWA as the Souhegan passed through the centers of the towns along the way - Wilton, Milford, and Amherst. But none were at an alarming level. The highest level, 387, was sampled from the conservation land across from the Amherst Country Club. Beaver Brook flows through the center of Amherst and probably brought the pollution level up. The test site is just below the mouth of the brook. A site just a short distance upstream at the Canoeport on Rte 122 was at a very acceptable 82 and the river diluted the bacteria to 108 downstream at the Canoeport on Boston Post Road, near the high school.

A level of 238, much higher than expected, showed up at Highbridge in New Ipswich, near Warwick Mills. There may be some disturbance here as the DOT prepares to redo the bridge and that may be the cause of the increase. Usually the upper stretch of the Souhegan from Ashburnham to the Horseshoe in Wilton tests OK.

Except for the Boston Post Road Canoeport, all of the usual swimming holes tested at an acceptable level. The program looks for bacteria levels below 88 to indicate completely safe swimming areas. Levels below 126 are probably OK for most swimmers, but gastrointestinal problems and ear and eye infections may occur for sensitive individuals. Levels above 126 should be avoided.

Watson Park in Merrimack is being tested on a weekly basis and the results are posted at the park. The level here was 56 this week.

The program tests the Merrimack River at 11 sites between Manchester and Tyngsborough. The results for the Manchester area were not available at his writing, but all of the results will be posted at www.nashuatelegraph.com/specialreportsrivertestresults/ and at www.souheganriver.org as soon as they

are available. The sites through Merrimack, Nashua, Hudson, and Tyngsborough all tested at an acceptable level. The access at Thorntons Ferry in Merrimack was slightly high at 108. All others were below 88.

The next test will be done on July 1. There are still sites in Milford and Wilton that could use a volunteer. Tests take about a half hour and are conducted early every other Tuesday morning through September. Anyone interested can contact Karen Mattor at swawatertesting@gmail.com for more information. Also anyone interested in doing a special project testing for macroinvertebrates can call for information. This could be a good Scout project for the summer.

The lab tests are all done by certified personnel at the wastewater treatment plants in Manchester, Milford, Nashua, and Merrimack. The program is coordinated by the Souhegan Watershed Association.

Here are the E. coli results for this week. Numbers lower than 88 are excellent; under 126 are acceptable for most people.

E-COLI MONITORING RESULTS FOR TESTS TAKEN ON JUNE 17, 2014

SOUHEGAN RIVER SITES:

1. Billy Ward Pond, Ashburnham #1 3.0, #2 <1
2. SoR 333 Water Loom Pond, New Ipswich 10.8
3. SoR 320 Highbridge, New Ipswich 238.2
4. SoR 309 Above Greenville Mill Pond, Greenville 98.5
5. SoR 296 Downtown Greenville upstream of WWTP 72.2
6. SoR 291 Green Bridge off Rte 31 below Greenville WWTP 47.3
7. SoR 218 Below the Horseshoe, Wilton 49.6
8. SoR 210 Downtown Wilton NA
9. SoR 201 Pine Valley Mill, West Milford 73.3
10. SoR 170 Behind Hayward Field, West Milford 125.9
11. SoR 155 Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club, Milford NA
12. SoR 146 Swing Bridge, Milford 290.9
13. SoR 133 Riverside Cemetery, Milford 107.1
14. SoR 130 Behind Lorden Plaza, Milford 117.8
15. SoR 122 Amherst Country Club 82.0
16. SoR 116 Amherst Conservation land Fairway Road, Amherst 387.3

- 17. SoR 095 Boston Post Road Canoeport, Amherst 108.1
- 18. Sor 070 Seaverns Bridge, Merrimack 81.6
- 19. SoR 057 Indian Ledges, Merrimack 81.6
- 20. SoR 034 Turkey Hill Bridge, Merrimack 85.5
- 21. SoR 001 Watson Park, DW Hwy, Merrimack 55.7

MERRIMACK RIVER SITES:

- 1. Mer 600 Above Amoskeag Dam, Manchester 20.9
- 2. Mer 590 Arms Park, Manchester 23.8
- 3. Mer 580 Upstream of Piscataquog River, Manchester NA
- 4. Mer 570 Goffs Falls, Litchfield 37.9
- 5. Mer 560 Depot Street, Merrimack 60.2
- 6. Mer 550 Upstream of Souhegan River, Merrimack 82.0
- 7. Mer 540 Thorntons Ferry, Merrimack 107.6
- 8. Mer 530 Greeley Park, Nashua 62.0
- 9. Mer 520 Taylors Falls Bridge, Nashua 39.9
- 10. Mer 510 Sagamore Bridge, Hudson 36.4
- 11. Mer 500 Pheasant Lane Mall, Hudson NA
- 12. Mer 490 Upstream of Tyngsboro Bridge 18.7

DISSOLVED OXYGEN RESULTS FOR TESTS TAKEN ON JUNE 17, 2014

SOUHEGAN RIVER SITES:

- 22. Billy Ward Pond, Ashburnham #1 8.36, #2 8.49
- 23. SoR 333 River Road above Water Loom Pond, New Ipswich 8.19
- 24. SoR 320 Highbridge, New Ipswich 8.63
- 25. SoR 309 Above Greenville Mill Pond, Greenville 8.40
- 26. SoR 296 Downtown Greenville upstream of WWTP 9.04
- 27. SoR 291 Green Bridge off Rte 31 below Greenville WWTP 9.11
- 28. SoR 218 Below the Horseshoe, Wilton 9.34

- 29.SoR 210 Downtown Wilton NA
- 30.SoR 201 Pine Valley Mill, West Milford 8.58
- 31.SoR 170 Behind Hayward Field, West Milford 8.43
- 32.SoR 155 Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club, Milford NA
- 33.SoR 146 Swing Bridge, Milford 8.44
- 34.SoR 133 Riverside Cemetery, Milford 8.49
- 35.SoR 130 Behind Lorden Plaza, Milford 8.26
- 36.SoR 122 Amherst Country Club 8.55
- 37.SoR 116 Amherst Conservation land Fairway Road, Amherst 8.07
- 38.SoR 095 Boston Post Road Canoeport, Amherst 7.81
- 39.Sor 070 Seaverns Bridge, Merrimack 7.81
- 40.SoR 057 Indian Ledges, Merrimack 8.40
- 41.SoR 034 Turkey Hill Bridge, Merrimack 8.13
- 42.SoR 001 Watson Park, DW Hwy, Merrimack 9.21

MERRIMACK RIVER SITES:

- 13. Mer 600 Above Amoskeag Dam, Manchester 8.86
- 14. Mer 590 Arms Park, Manchester 9.02
- 15. Mer 580 Upstream of Piscataquog River, Manchester NA
- 16. Mer 570 Goffs Falls, Litchfield 8.91
- 17. Mer 560 Depot Street, Merrimack 8.68
- 18. Mer 550 Upstream of Souhegan River, Merrimack 8.65
- 19. Mer 540 Thorntons Ferry, Merrimack 8.38
- 20. Mer 530 Greeley Park, Nashua 8.78
- 21. Mer 520 Taylors Falls Bridge, Nashua 8.64
- 22. Mer 510 Sagamore Bridge, Hudson 8.80
- 23. Mer 500 Pheasant Lane Mall, Hudson NA
- 24. Mer 490 Upstream of Tyngsboro Bridge 8.86

Flow on Upper Souhegan was 45 CFS and expected flow for this date is 103

Flow on Lower Souhegan was 106 CFS and historic flow for this date is 144

Flow on Merrimack was 3730 CFS and historic flow for this date is 3350

RAINFALL - Clear.

Water temperatures: Souhegan 19C; Merrimack 21C