

**Bennington Informal Public Forum**  
**Bennington Public Library**  
**June 7, 2007**  
**6:30 -8 pm**

**Open Discussion:**

**1). What would you consider the watershed's most valuable asset?**

- Residents
- Fishery
- Clean water contributed by the tributaries
- Esthetics
- Wildlife habitat
- Farms and Farmland
- Drinking Water
- Boating and Swimming on Lake Paran
- Other Recreational Opportunities
- Many businesses depend on clean water both ground & surface water
- Having good groundwater is a tremendous asset
- Hydro-Electric as a potential source of energy
- Diversity of Habitat

**2). What are the threats to these assets?**

- Forest Fragmentation
- Invasive Plants
- Lack of Buffers
- Presence of Dams for the Fisheries
- PCB's and Pollutants
- Cost involved in Remediation
- Poorly designed development –we need development designed around floods –attenuation assets
- Non-point Source Pollution and all it contains i.e. pesticides, nitrogen and phosphorous and detergents
- Impervious surface and groundwater recharge
- Lack of an understanding of what we have in this watershed as assets
- Illegal Dumping
- Preserving public access (public trust?)
- Over Use and Inappropriate Use.

**3). How can these threats/concerns be addressed/resolved in the next five years?**

*(Skipped in the consideration of time)*

**4). What are the different uses of the waters throughout the watershed?**

- Municipal uses: (drinking, waste disposal)
- Recreational Uses
- Economic Uses

- Fisheries
- Tourism
- Agricultural
- Ecosystem Service
- Educational (i.e. –land use)

**5). What is your vision of the local waters?**

- Watershed that's ecologically sound and adds to quality of life of its residents
- Clean, plentiful and accessible/available for generation forward.
- Cows out of the streams.
- A policy relating surface water, groundwater, land use and water quality.
- A champion, a voice for the river.
- Hold the line on degradation already present.
- Landowner Stewardship of Water Resources – (outreach needed)
- Laws – i.e. buffers
- Landowner land use 101 and laws formulating lesson therein...
- Welcome Wagon for Riparian Landowners: new landowners guide?

**6). What educational events/ trainings would be helpful?**

- Groundwater
- Native/ Invasive Plants
- Land/ Water Connection
- What is healthy stream?
- Low impact development
- Effective communication/advocacy (increase participation)
- Assessment/ Report Card –models we can aspire too
- Share the Good News... (whatever it is...)
- Celebrate the Assets –e.g. Walloomsac Fisheries
- “Go to” people for various issues...who is out there to help
- Protocols for interventions (NEGEF)
- Inventory potential partnerships