



COURTESY PHOTO

THESE HAPPY PADDLERS just returned from a beautiful paddle two miles up the Salmon Falls River last Sunday, July 22, with Linda Schier (third from right) of the Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance and Rebecca Hanley (seventh from right) of the UNH Outdoor Education program.

Weekend watershed “paddles” a success

WAKEFIELD — The Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance (AWWA) and University of New Hampshire Outdoor Education Department guided local residents and summer visitors on two “Paddles” this past weekend.

On Saturday, July 21, 11 hardy adventurers were met at the boat launch of Lovell Lake at 9 a.m. by Linda Schier of AWWA and Rebecca Hanley of UNH on a beautiful warm, sunny morning. After introductions and ice-breaker activities, Hanley led the group into the small harbor and showed them warm-up exercises to prepare them for the day’s kayaking and canoeing on the lake. She taught them proper techniques, called a “draw stroke” and a “drive stroke” for turning, and how to hold the paddle and stroke to move forward using the most efficient body movements.

After an opportunity to practice their new skills, Schier led the group through a marsh where they could observe a myriad of aquatic plants and insects, especially dragonflies and damselflies. Some used an aqua-scope, which allowed them to see the underwater pondweeds very clearly. The procession then moved out onto the lake proper and toured the northeastern shoreline. The halfway point was at a project site where the AWWA Youth Conservation Corps is currently installing BMPS (Best Management Practices) to control storm water erosion. At this juncture, Schier demonstrated the technique for using small, hand held bioscopes to observe the zooplankton she

had screened from the lake in her plankton net. The participants were excited to see the tiny critters which inhabit the lake and are at the bottom of the food chain.

This respite gave some an opportunity to swim in the clear water of Lovell Lake before returning to the boat ramp. A challenge in the form of “Bingo” cards was used to sharpen observation skills as the paddlers returned, hunting for many interesting items such as various birds, turtles, beavers, insects, and plants.

Sunday’s trip on the Salmon Falls River began just north of the dam on Hopper Road and progressed as far upstream as was navigable. This group of 19, also led by Linda Schier and Rebecca Hanley, had a similar experience in terms of learning paddling skills and observation techniques, but were in

a very different milieu than the Saturday excursion. The river in July is teeming with thick plant growth, much of it in full bloom and beaver activity, as well as many different birds and turtles. They, too, had an opportunity to view zooplankton swimming in the tiny bioscopes, and to play “River Bingo” on the return trip downstream.

The trips were made possible by AWWA and UNH Durham and introduced many participants, some from as far away as Tennessee and California, to the joy of kayaking and learning about our local waters. UNH provided kayaks, paddles and Personal Flotation Devices for those participants who needed them, though many brought their own equipment and both days had canoes participate as well.

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Public Notice Town of Effingham

The Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing to discuss charging fees for disposal of tires and electrical components at the Effingham Transfer Station. All interested parties are encouraged to attend. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, July 31, 2012 at 7:00 pm in the public meeting room of the Municipal Office Building at 68 School Street. Any questions can be directed to the Selectmen’s office during regular business hours. The telephone number is 539-7770.