

Small Staff, Big Changes

In an organization with only three people, to have two positions turn over at the same time is a big deal. This month, we are wishing both Shawn and Heather the best as they move on to new adventures, and we are welcoming new staff Taylor and Sam.

While you may think of Shawn as nearly synonymous with FWR, we hope you're as happy for her as we are that she has seized a perfect opportunity. You may not have had a chance to meet Heather in her short time with us, but her work this summer was absolutely invaluable, as she jumped into a lot of big responsibilities while we tried to respond to the flooding. We are going to miss them both!

We are also excited to work with Taylor and Sam to make plans for 2024. There are a lot of projects on the docket already: four dam removal projects in design, two culvert replacements in design, more Storm Smart visits, six riparian planting projects, and more! Our new team is eager to learn together this year, and to ensure that Friends of the Winooski will continue to be a strong and dynamic partner in cultivating watershed health.

Best wishes to Shawn!

Shawn White started working with us more than a decade ago as a volunteer, planting trees on our riparian restoration sites. She gradually became more involved, working as a contractor, and since 2015 as an employee. Shawn's knowledge of the plants of Vermont has been invaluable to us, as has her unflappable demeanor and genuine enjoyment of teaching folks about our watershed.

Shawn has just started a new position as the Watershed Forestry Coordinator at UVM. She is excited about the opportunity to share the knowledge and experience she has gained here with all of the watershed groups and other riparian restoration partners across the state. One of the fun aspects of the position is that she'll continue to support Friends of the Winooski in our work to improve our riparian planting efforts.



Best wishes to Heather!

While Shawn was one of our longest-serving employees, Heather just joined us this spring. She

has started her new job at the NRCS Field Office in Middlebury, where she is working as a Soil Conservationist.

Heather is excited to continue working to protect water quality in the Lake Champlain basin for generations to come. She is grateful to Friends of the Winooski for inspiring her to continue in the natural resources field.



Welcome Taylor!

Taylor Litwin was born and raised in Upstate New York, where her family shared with her their love of and curiosity for nature. Her environmental career began at SUNY Oneonta, where she traveled near and far conducting field work and completed a dual bachelor's degree in environmental science and geography. This led her to accept a position in Hawaii as a grant writer for a small environmental nonprofit, working closely with the farming and ranching community to fund sustainable agriculture projects.

Her next position would lead her to Utah, where she worked alongside the National Park Service conducting vegetation monitoring and grassland restoration studies.



With a desire to learn more about restoration ecology, Taylor then attended the University of Utah for a Master's of Science degree in environmental humanities and global sustainability. In her most recent role as Stewardship Director for a Salt Lake City-based nonprofit, she worked to protect the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest by mitigating invasive plant species and promoting native biodiversity.

She is thrilled to be planting her roots back in the Northeast, the region that shaped her early passion for stewardship. She enjoys skiing, reading in coffee shops, road trips, making cozy soups, and now exploring Vermont's trails!

Welcome Sam!

Sam Puddicombe grew up in Vermont exploring the Green Mountains by foot and ski. Looking for different and bigger terrain, he went to the University of British Columbia where he studied agricultural sciences and food systems. While in school he began farming, which he did in various capacities both in BC and Vermont, and continues on a smaller scale at a Montpelier community garden.

This spring, he began working as a fisheries technician for Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. Here he learned how wonderful it is to work along Vermont's waters and support

the creatures that call them home. He also learned this summer, as all of Vermont did, how much work needs to be done in order to live more safely around our rivers and streams.



Sam is excited to integrate his knowledge of aquatic organisms, river processes, and GIS with his experience working with soils and plants. He currently lives in Montpelier.

Stream Wise Wrapped

Paul Eley and Sarah Waring, on Long Meadow Brook in East Montpelier, are our final Stream Wise Award property of 2023. We visited 12 properties this year, and hosted a community Stream Wise event in Huntington.

If you would like to get on the list for a visit in 2024, or if your town or group is interested in co-hosting an event, please let us know!

Even if your property isn't ready for an award, we can offer you a lot of recommendations and resources to help you grow a healthier riparian buffer on your land.



Growth & Development Campaign

We are proud to share that the Board of Directors has acted to continue to improve as an employer by offering -- for the first time -- salaried positions with paid time off and a health care stipend. They are investing their confidence in our ability to maintain the level of project work and fundraising required to sustain a professional organization. They have also supported our Executive Director (with funding from the Lake Champlain Basin Program) to spend the time to complete Common Good Vermont's Non-Profit Management Certificate to ensure we can grow and thrive responsibly.

We hope that you invest in us, too: individual donations form the foundation of our success. **Please give today for a strong start to 2024!**

Make a secure online donation, one-time or monthly, at our [website](#). Everyone who sets up a monthly donation in December will receive their choice of a [hat or tote](#).

We can accept gifts of stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, which may provide tax advantages to donors. Please contact Michele Braun, Executive Director, for our receiving account information. michele@winooskiriver.org or 802-279-3771.

If you prefer to mail a check, please write it to Friends of the Winooski River, and mail it to us at 21 Marvin St, Montpelier, VT 05602 (PO Box was destroyed in the flood).

Thank you so much!! Your support has helped us grow, surely and steadily, for 25 years.

DONATE

Friends of the Winooski River | winooskiriver.org
working together for a clean, healthy, resilient watershed



Friends of the Winooski River | 21 Marvin St, Montpelier, VT 05602

[Unsubscribe info@winooskiriver.org](mailto:info@winooskiriver.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by michele@winooskiriver.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!