



# Merrimack River Watershed Council, Inc.

*The Voice of the Merrimack*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Earth Day Focus: State of the Merrimack River**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual “State of the Merrimack River” report will be presented to the public during the Earth Day Celebration! of the Merrimack River Watershed Council (MRWC) on Saturday, April 25, at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, 6 Plum Island Turnpike, Newburyport, MA.

Christine Tabak, executive director, and Tracie Sales, water resources manager, both of the MRWC, will discuss the water quality of the Merrimack River via data collected over the past year through its river monitoring program – MAPP (Monitoring, Analyzing, Protecting, and Promoting) Program. They will present data analysis and possible solutions and ideas going forward including information regarding the safety of the river for boating and swimming. The presentation and question and answer session will take place at 2PM in the main auditorium.

The MAPP project has three facets: (1) measure the river’s water quality and identify potential sources of pollution; (2) confirm sources of pollution and reduce it through both traditional and creative methods; and (3) educate watershed constituents on how to protect this important resource.

The Merrimack River provides drinking water to more than 300,000 Massachusetts residents, and runs for about 50 miles beginning at the NH/MA state line in Tyngsborough to the estuary in Newburyport. It runs through major population centers in Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill - all three Environmental Justice Communities.

Concerned citizens are encouraged to volunteer to help monitor the Merrimack’s water quality in the 2009 season. MRWC training and monitoring will begin in May. For more information, please contact Tracie Sales, MRWC Water Resources Manager, at 978-275-0120, x13, [tsales@merrimack.org](mailto:tsales@merrimack.org).

As “the Voice of the Merrimack,” the MRWC mission is *to protect the Merrimack River and promote the wise use of its watershed*. It is the first volunteer group in over two decades to monitor the Merrimack’s main stem, and is the only advocate of the Merrimack River in Massachusetts, independent of commercial or regulatory interests. MRWC monitors the river’s water quality with support from the Financial donations from Massachusetts Environmental Trust, the Stevens Foundation, the Davis Conservation Foundation, the EnTrust Fund and the Cabot Family Charitable Trust have provided the resources necessary for the continued success of the MAPP Project in its second year. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided the Global Positioning System units needed for this project through its equipment loan program as well as donating laboratory bacteria analysis as an in-kind contribution.

Prior to the presentation, a family scavenger hunt will be ongoing throughout the day beginning at 11AM on the grounds of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, and other activities will take place.

The event is free and all are welcome.

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