



Quinnipiac River Watershed Association

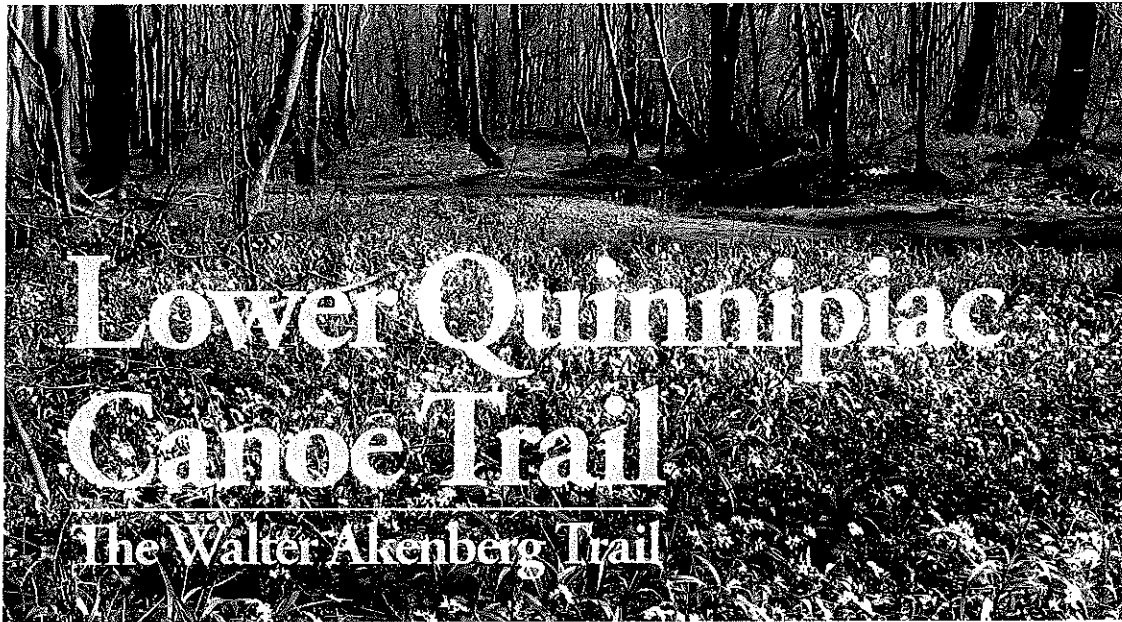
Final Report

RE: Grant Number: **20110105 - Quinnipiac Urban River Stewardship**

- Urban River Stewardship Signs had been installed at North Haven, New Haven and Wallingford.
- Trail Guide Produced (see attached)
- QRWA Volunteer do site inspection and verify that there is public access launch in at Sackett Point Road in North Haven, Bird Blind is on New Haven Land Trust's Q Meadows in New Haven, and the Fish Way Site at Wallace Dam in Wallingford was completed.

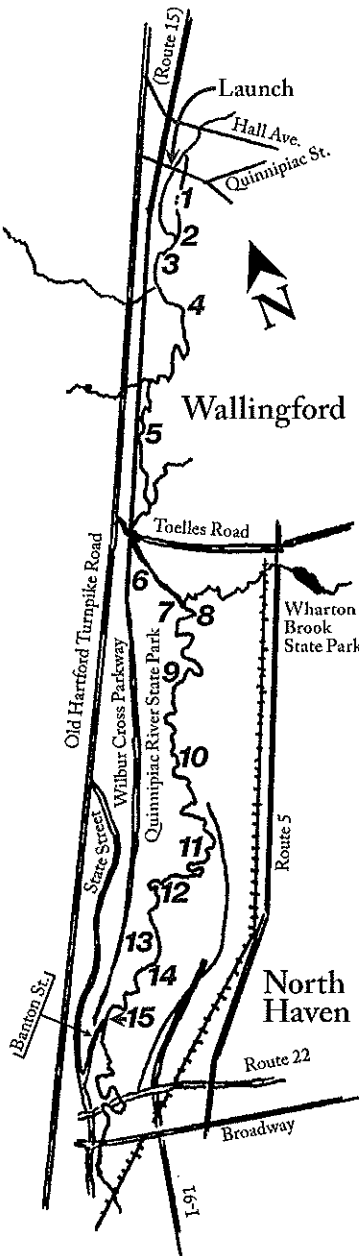
www.qrwa.org

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Quinnipiac Street, Wallingford To Banton Street, North Haven

- 1 Former Wallace Silversmiths factory and dam. (see history: Wallace Silversmiths)
- 2 Extensive flood-borne debris indicates flood storage value of this woodland.
- 3 U.S. Geological Survey Gaging Station (operational 1930 – present). Device provides real-time river levels at http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ct/nwis/uv/?&site_no=01196500 (or use link at our website, qrwa.org)
- 4 Wallingford municipal secondary sewage treatment plant outfall. Each municipality has an outfall on the river, and DEEP regularly tightens standards to improve water quality. Downstream from treatment plant, river splits; right fork is more passable.
- 5 Former Wallingford municipal sanitary landfill is on left bank, near powerline. In earlier, less enlightened decades, riverside wetlands were used as dumping areas for municipal waste. Today a large, covered mound like this one is located next to the river in each municipality. Just downstream on the right bank is an exposed intrusion of basalt or trap rock, part of the formation that created the Sleeping Giant.
- 6 Quinnipiac River State Park, undeveloped. (see history: QR State Park)
- 7 Wharton Brook enters the Quinnipiac on left.
- 8 On the left side elevated above the river is the North Haven Sand Plains, a state-designated natural area. (see history: Sand Plains) Below this point the river begins looping back on itself, and has recently cut through a neck of land to create a shortcut. Left fork is the old loop, which leads to unimproved canoe take-out at 121 Defco Park Rd. Right fork is river's new shortcut. Eventually the river will abandon its old loop, leaving an oxbow.
- 9 Pine Brook empties into the Quinnipiac on right.



- 10 Former site of Pratt and Whitney Aircraft Inc. (see history: Pratt & Whitney)
- 11 Natural gas line crossing.
- 12 Pine plantation river overlook on right. The pines, planted by a farmer in the 1920's on a red sandstone ridge, are a known roosting site for owls.
- 13 Staircase and other relics mark former Banton Street community, a modern ghost town. (see history: Banton Street—A Vanished Community)
- 14 Stone wall and steps are near the end of former Banton Street community. On left bank was a site of archaeological significance, Rice's Sand Pits (destroyed). Skeletons found here were sent to Peabody Museum.
- 15 Banton Street canoe launch behind Wilbur Cross Parkway northbound service station. Exit here.

M. Mushinsky/QRWA revised 2011



Funded by
The National Recreational Trails Program, CT
The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Produced by
Quinnipiac River Watershed Association:
Mary Mushinsky; interns Eric Rivera, Tyler Flower, Aila Dingle and Francisco Yoc;
layout Ed Waters

Map: Walt Hylwa, updated QRWA 2011

Thanks to the late Walter Akenberg, Mark Mushinsky, and Sandy and Paul Stetson; also Tim Gallogly, Jim Kennedy, George Fletcher, Tyler Fletcher, Walt Heinz and Russ Thompson

Additional assistance: Lori Lundquist, CT DEEP; Ron Walters, RWA; Dom DeGennaro; Alan Fredericksen, Town of North Haven

A Brief History

Wallace Silversmiths, Wallingford

A carding factory in 1842 (to prepare fiber) preceded the silver industry at this site. In 1847 Simpson Silverplate was the first in the country to apply the electroplating process to hollowware, an affordable substitute for real silverware. Robert Wallace, who as an apprentice had mastered the art of producing spoons and flatware, joined with Samuel Simpson to produce German flatware and later nickel-silver plated and silver-plated steel flatware. The industry brought prosperity to Wallingford and employed waves of immigrant families. The company grounds once included Walco Park, a scenic riverside picnic area for silver workers and the community. The 150-year old company was sold in 1983, and in 1987 owners moved the corporate headquarters from Connecticut. Dams that powered the old silverware industry prevented fish from reaching spawning areas. QRWA and partners are installing a fishway at the old Wallace Dam to help spawning fish bypass the structure.

Quinnipiac River State Park, North Haven

The park is 313 acres of undeveloped forest. Uses are hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing and canoeing/kayaking. The park is an excellent bird watching area. Saw-whet and other owls, turkeys, great blue herons, kingfishers, wood ducks, otters and white tailed deer can be seen in the park. Coyotes may visit. A CT blue-blazed trail, the oldest in CT, traverses the floodplain on the right (west) side. The park was established after construction of the Wilbur Cross Parkway (Route 15) cut off these agricultural bottomlands from the homesteads on Upper State Street and Hartford Turnpike. It also includes the vanished neighborhood of Banton Street.

North Haven Sand Plains

The sand plains are a state-designated natural area of which only small remnants remain. Over 50 acres of fragile sand plains, botanically and geologically unique, were located here after receding glaciers melted back, leaving thick beds of finely sorted sand. Small fragments remain on the left bank in Wharton Brook State Park and the industrial area along Route 5—the best,

perhaps only remaining example of this ecological community type in Connecticut. The unique terrain is vegetated with sumac, scrub oak, pitch pine and prairie grasses. In some areas there are simply bare patches of sand resembling a miniature desert.

Pratt & Whitney Aircraft

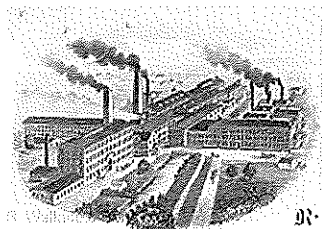
The CT aerospace manufacturer, producing civilian and military engines, was a major employer in North Haven and surrounding municipalities. From 1945 to 1970 the population of the town quadrupled due to Pratt & Whitney and Marlin Firearms. The North Haven factory had its own sewage treatment plant, sludge pits and metal hydroxide sludge lagoons on site. The property is slated for eventual redevelopment and the North Haven Trails Committee plans to create a segment of the Quinnipiac Linear Trail near the former employee athletic fields on the east side (left bank) of the river.

Banton Street, A Vanished Community

Connecticut's first non-structural flood control project acquired a whole neighborhood of flood-prone homes in 1976. At least 38 dwellings were removed and the families relocated. Banton Street was once an idyllic summer community which acquired the nickname, "Little Savin Rock." Some homes dated to the 1920's. Children played on small sandy beaches and carved their names in beech trees. After World War II, residents built new homes and weatherized old ones for year-round use. Historically, flooding was a minor nuisance. But increased flooding of the area as the Quinnipiac watershed became more developed resulted in a state buy-out of homes. This modern day ghost town is now part of Quinnipiac River State Park. Walls, staircases and remnants of docks are still visible along the river banks, and former domestic shrubs and flowers grow wild among the cellarholes.

Walter Akenberg

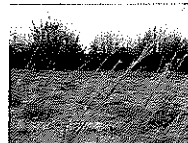
This water trail is respectfully dedicated to the memory of Walter Akenberg of Meriden, who spent many happy hours as a QRWA volunteer to remove debris and improve public access to this beautiful but difficult to enter park. It was Walter's wish that families could experience the wildlife and scenery of Quinnipiac River State Park, an oasis of wilderness in a densely populated region.



Grand Baroque silverware



Saw-whet owl



Wild turkeys



Canoe trail



Walt Akerberg (left) and Dom DeGentia

Paddlers' Information

Length of segment:

Approximately 5 miles

Travel time:

Allow 2.5-3 hours or more (blockages will extend time)

Access points:

Below dam at Quinnipiac St., Wallingford; town-owned parcel at Defco Park Rd, North Haven; Banton Street canoe launch off State St., North Haven

Travel and safety

- Before your trip, check water flows at www.qrwa.org. Follow link to USGS river gage at Wallingford. Best water flows for touring are between 150-200 cu ft/sec. River becomes more challenging with faster water flow. Slower flow and lower water levels will expose logs and gravel bars that may impede canoe passage. Avoid rising and high water levels.
- Use life jackets (PFD's) at all times. While the river is mostly shallow, there are some deep holes.
- This is a forested segment that has been changed by human activity. Unnaturally fast rises in river flow from rain sheeting off paved streets and parking lots erodes the river banks and topples trees across the river. Stop, pull over and scout any blockage from a safe upstream distance. Then use caution to go around or under downed trees, portaging around the blockage if necessary for safety. Please report complete blockages to QRWA.
- Be prepared if you tip over! Dry clothing, cell phone and food should be stored in a waterproof container. Bring drinking water. We recommend you paddle with a partner or group.
- Bring throw rope and first aid kit. Bring mosquito repellent, long sleeves and sturdy footwear that can get wet.
- Quinnipiac River State Park is a seasonal hunting area, extending from xxx through xxx. Wear bright orange to enhance your visibility if paddling during hunting season.
- Take all trash out with you. If you can pick up some of the floatable trash that entered the park, it will help keep it clean!



To participate in river trips or conservation activities, contact:

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