

## Instructions

### QUINNIPIAC RIVER FUND GRANT AWARD - FINAL REPORT QUESTIONS

This form is to be completed by all nonprofit organizations that received a grant through the Quinnipiac River Fund.

## Grant Details

### Grant Details

Organization Name

Southwest Conservation District, Inc.

Grant Description

to support cleaning logs and debris from a blocked access for boats in the Quinnipiac River.

Total Grant Amount

3,650.00

## Report Questions

1. List the specific objectives/outcomes of the project and tell how they were met during the grant period. Also, provide an update on any special conditions of the grant (if applicable).

We were able to purchase the equipment needed to clear river blockages on the Quinnipiac River mainstem. This section is used by the QRWA (partner org) to host their canoe and kayak race event each spring.

The clearing of tree blockages took place over several weekends in the fall of 2020. Small crews used the new equipment (chainsaws, polesaw and PPE) to cut fallen trees at several locations. Sections of tree that did not block boat passage were left in the river to provide habitat for fish and other aquatic species.

These tools will enable the QRWA to maintain passage in the river from future treefalls for years to come.

The grant also provided for stream bank stabilization at the stream bank which marks the end of the boat course. A crushed stone and permeable fabric boat ramp was installed by QRWA members. This installation will reduce sedimentation into the river from canoe and kayak users exiting the river at this portage location. This ramp will also make it easier for all users to exit the river at this site which is primarily a mud flat that gets saturated which makes for difficult walking and moving of boats.

This ramp is also going to be marked by a sign for the location as a portage for canoes and kayaks in similar fashion to other locations on the River.

The race was cancelled due to COVID last spring, but due to the tree clearing efforts and increased vaccination rates, the race has been scheduled for May 16th 2021. Without the new equipment, the tree clearing crew would have had a much more difficult time clearing the course to be ready for the race later this spring.

2. Please share your successes, challenges and any lessons learned through the implementation of your project. Were there any unintended consequences or lessons learned that may affect how you operate your program moving forward?

This project was very successful for both partner organizations to develop a new relationship which has already led to further ecological work in the City of Meriden and new connections for the Quinnipiac River. An example is the SWCD connection with a QRWA Board member who is the teacher at Lyman Hall HS who is the partner for our recently awarded invasive plant removal grant. This relationship did not exist prior to the work funded for the tree clearing project.

Another success is the clearing of the river for boat passage. There were many areas that were completely blocked by tree fall and literally impassable by boat. This was accomplished by many hours of field work by QRWA members and volunteers.

A challenge was getting field work done in a timely manner with snowpack and frozen ground lasting long into the late winter. the boat ramp work was not completed in the fall as planned and we had to wait for the snow to melt for proper placement of crushed stone and sign installation at the finish of the race course. This work is finalizing as I type this report.

A second challenge was actually not a negative item, but did cause for some changes in budgeting and project scope. We were able to receive the crushed stone as a donation from a location stone company (savings \$800) and also the City of Meriden waived their permit fee for the project (savings \$200). So we were actually able to finish the project with roughly \$680 to return back to the Fund after a permitted restructure of budget to pay a stipend to workers that installed the boat ramp.

3. What are the opportunities and needs of your organization as it continues to move forward with its work to positively impact the Quinnipiac River?

We will need to continue to monitor the River for future tree fall events that could block the section for non-motored boat access in the future. There will

also be needs to publicize the future races that are organized by QRWA in effort to get more people aware of the River as a resource for recreational use.

Generating more awareness of the Quinnipiac River and its connection to our everyday decisions is a huge need for positively impacting the River. Funding to develop a community based social marketing program focused on reduction of pesticide or fertilizer use could greatly benefit the quality of stormwater runoff and other inputs to the river. The partnership of the SWCD and QRWA along with included municipal staff could create the opportunity to implement such a program in the future.

An opportunity created by this grant is the use of tree cutting equipment for years to come as the purchases were of quality tools which should have several years of useful life for additional work. With better equipment the work is less challenging and there are fewer equipment failures. This can be enticing to the volunteers who have been doing this work in the past for the QRWA river clearing efforts.

Another opportunity is the partnership that was created between SWCD and QRWA from this project. We are already moving forward with additional projects including the development of a Natural Resource Inventory for Meriden that will include large sections of the Quinnipiac watershed.

## Attachments

**Financial information (required):** Please provide a detailed accounting of how the specific grant dollars were spent based on the budget submitted in the grant application.

Detailed Accounting

Expense Tracker Quinn Grant 2020.xlsx

**Pictures (optional):** Please attach 1 to 3 pictures of activities that have occurred throughout the grant period (with a description for each) as a result of grant funding. All pictures should be submitted in JPEG format and may be uploaded to [www.thequinnipiacriver.com](http://www.thequinnipiacriver.com) and used in Foundation publications.

Picture 1

20201008\_130618.jpg

Description

QRWA member clearing some of the last sections of a tree that blocked the river. Fall 2020 photo

Picture 2

20201008\_130441.jpg

Description

Canoe loaded with tree clearing equipment and volunteer member of QRWA.

Picture 3

Description