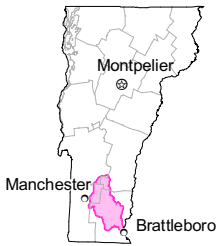
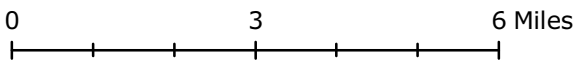


The West River Watershed

Southeastern Vermont

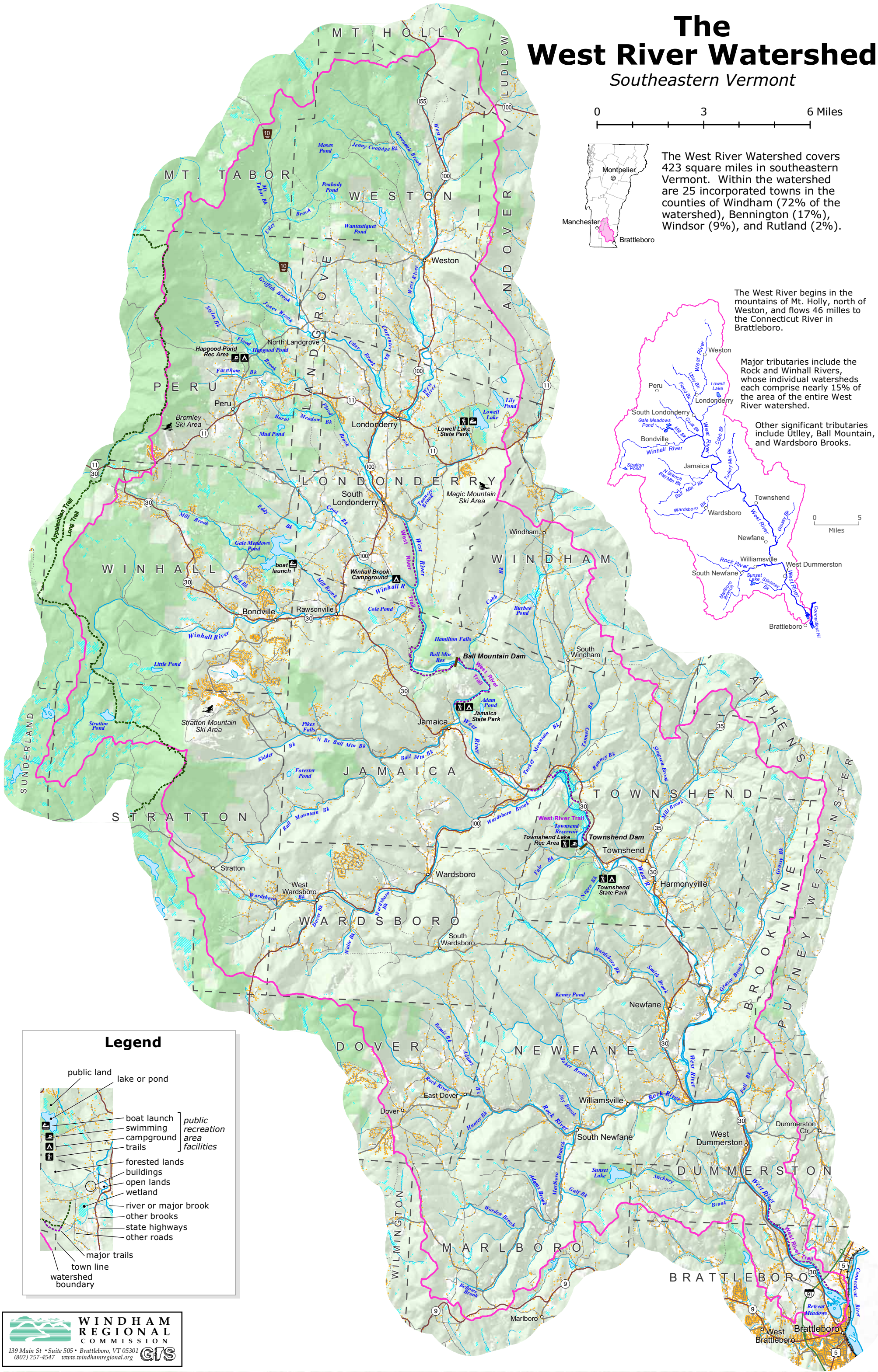
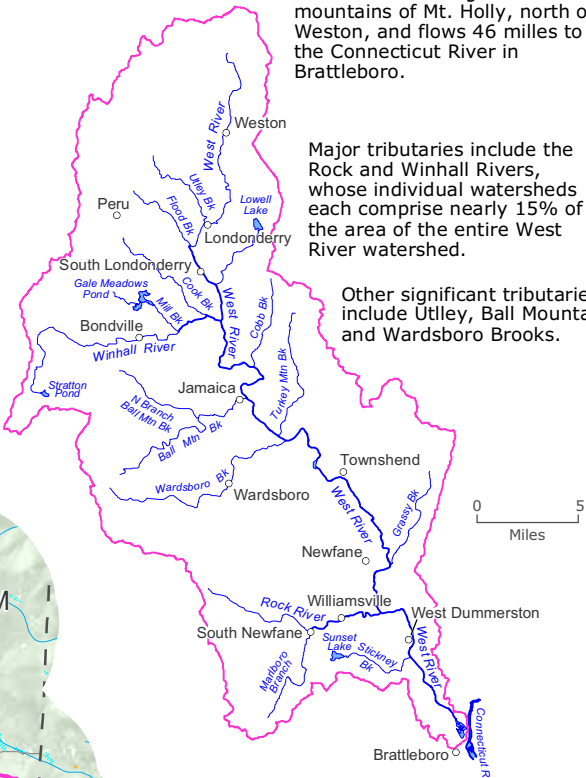


The West River Watershed covers 423 square miles in southeastern Vermont. Within the watershed are 25 incorporated towns in the counties of Windham (72% of the watershed), Bennington (17%), Windsor (9%), and Rutland (2%).

The West River begins in the mountains of Mt. Holly, north of Weston, and flows 46 miles to the Connecticut River in Brattleboro.

Major tributaries include the Rock and Winhall Rivers, whose individual watersheds each comprise nearly 15% of the area of the entire West River watershed.

Other significant tributaries include Utley, Ball Mountain, and Wardsboro Brooks.



Legend



The West River Watershed

Southeastern Vermont

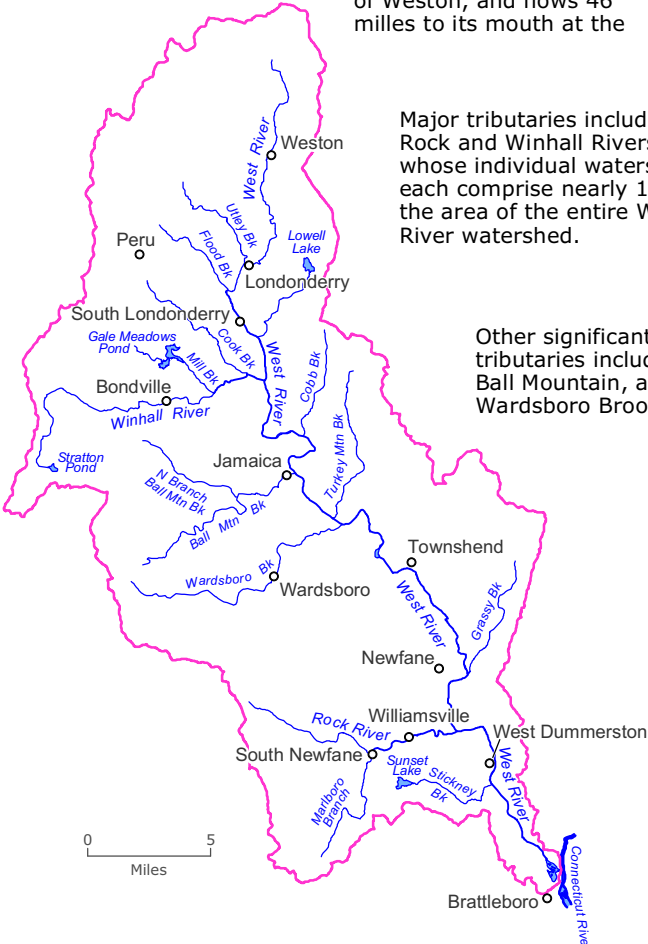


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Special designations

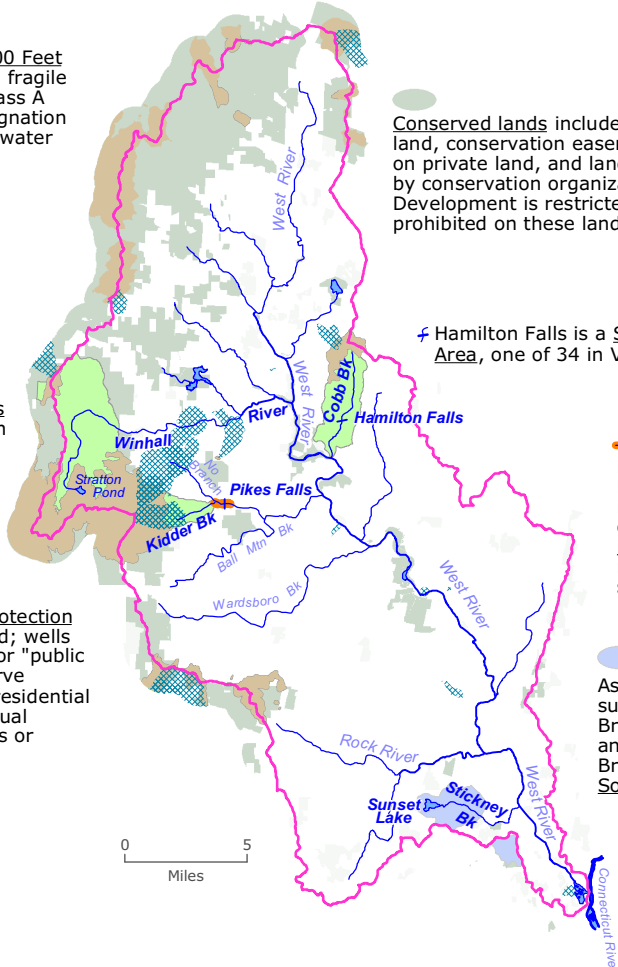
Many locations in the West River Watershed have special protections to preserve water quality, and in some places, recreational and scenic value:

Lands Over 2500 Feet in elevation are fragile areas where Class A watershed designation helps maintain water quality.

Conserved lands include public land, conservation easements on private land, and land owned by conservation organizations. Development is restricted or prohibited on these lands.

The watersheds of Cobb and Kidder Brook, along with a portion of the Winhall River's, are specially designated Class A watersheds, to maintain their high water quality.

Groundwater Source Protection Areas dot the watershed; wells supply drinking water for "public water supplies" that serve municipalities, private residential communities, or individual facilities such as schools or restaurants.



Hamilton Falls is a State Natural Area, one of 34 in Vermont.

Four thousand feet of the North Branch of Ball Mountain Brook at Pikes Falls is designated an Outstanding Resource Water due to its natural, recreational, and scenic values.

As part of the water supply for the Town of Brattleboro, Sunset Lake and portions of Stickney Brook are a Surface Water Source Protection Area.

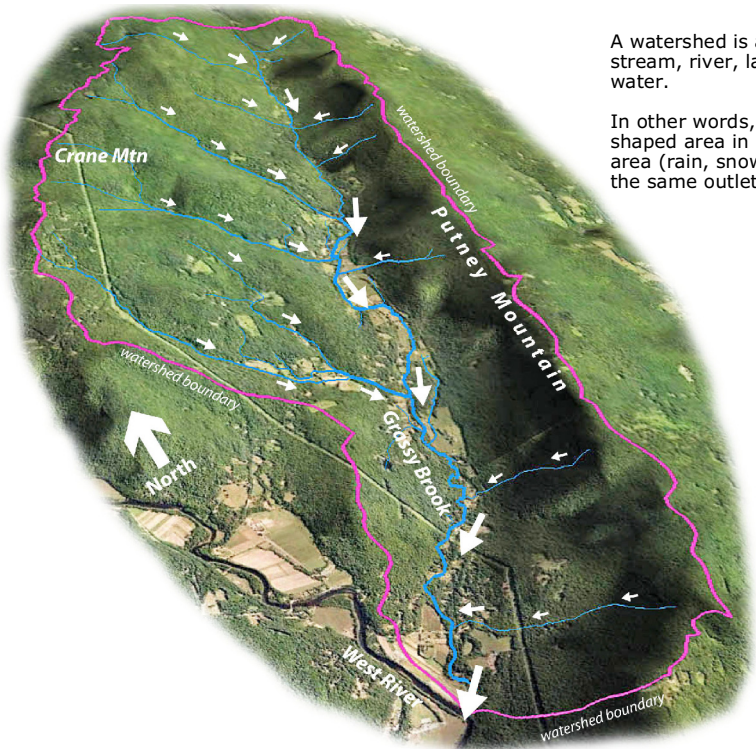
What is a watershed?

A watershed is a region drained by a stream, river, lake, or other body of water.

In other words, it is a bowl or basin-shaped area in which all water within the area (rain, snowmelt, etc.) will flow to the same outlet point.

The image to the left shows the Grassy Brook watershed, a 14.75 square mile sub-watershed of the West River.

Grassy Brook, located primarily in Brookline, drains this 14.75 square mile valley between Putney Mountain on the right (east) and Crane Mountain on the left (west), and discharges its flow into the West River.



Grassy Brook watershed, Brookline (image from Google Earth)

Monitoring water quality in the West River Watershed

- Since 2003, a volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program has been organized by the Southeastern Vermont Watershed Alliance (SeVWA).

Data are collected at nearly two dozen sites throughout the West River Watershed (along with sites in the Williams River, Saxtons River and Whetstone Brook watersheds).

The monitoring has included the following parameters: *E. coli*, pH, Conductivity, Total Phosphorus, Nitrate/Nitrite Nitrogen, Total Suspended Solids, and Turbidity.

- Water quality monitoring data are analyzed, publicized, shared with local and state entities, and archived for long term analysis.

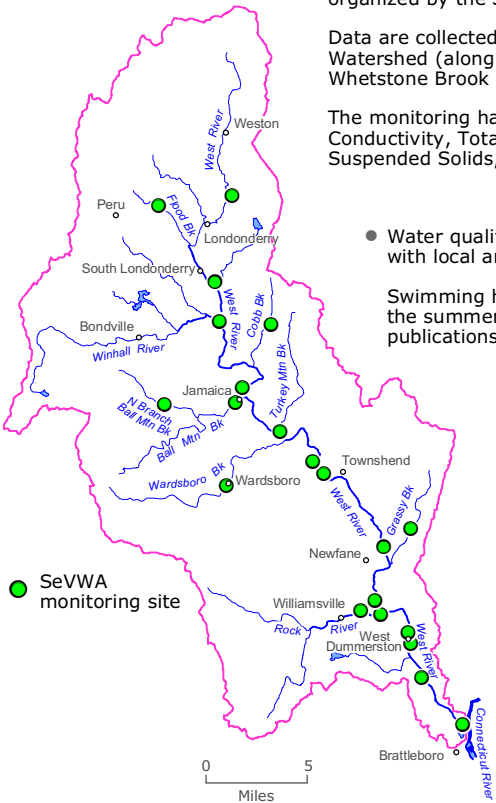
Swimming hole *E. coli* results are posted every two weeks during the summer in local communities, appear in local news publications, and are available at sevwa.blogspot.com.

- Overall, the quality of waters in the West River Watershed remains high.

After heavy rains, levels of *E. coli* can spike, particularly in the lower portions of the watershed, to levels where swimming is not advised; normal conditions usually return within a few days.

The main sources of pollutants in the Watershed are non-point, or dispersed, such as septic systems, agricultural run-off, and sediment from roads, driveways, and ditches.

Other threats to waters include acidification, thermal modifications, habitat alteration, flow and water-level regulation, and exotic invasive species.



Your local watershed organization:

The **Southeastern Vermont Watershed Alliance** (SeVWA, formerly known as West River Watershed Alliance or WRWA) is a grassroots nonprofit watershed monitoring and educational organization that works with individuals, communities and towns to help ensure clean and healthy rivers and other bodies of water.

For more information on SeVWA, go to sevwa.blogspot.com.

For more information on the West River:

Marie Levesque Caduto, Watershed Coordinator
ANR / Dept. of Environmental Conservation
100 Mineral Street, Suite 303
Springfield, VT 05156-3168
802-885-8958, Marie.Caduto@state.vt.us

For additional watershed maps:

www.windhamregional.org/gis/watershed-maps

