FRIENDS OF THE MAD RIVER

-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --
6/13/2017

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Beating the Heat in the River!

Sampling results from the first round of Friends of the Mad River's Mad River Watch water quality monitoring show no sites with elevated *E. coli* levels as of Monday morning, June 12. This is not surprising because prior to sampling, there were several days of without rain to carry pollutants off the land and into the stream. Until the next rain, enjoy beating the heat in the river!

Floating Joy in Warren. Photo by Kate Wanner

The flow condition of the Mad River at the time of sampling Monday morning was low and steady (LS), measuring approximately 205 cubic feet per second (cfs) at the US Geological Service flow gage in Moretown. The flow peaked at 1,640 cfs in the late evening hours of June 6 and has been declining since. The median flow for this date in the last 89 years is 243 cfs.

Remember that rains can cause *E. coli* levels to fluctuate, even on a daily basis, as water carrying pathogens moves down the watershed. FMR's *E. coli* sampling results are only a snapshot in time intended to give you a sense of the conditions that lead to high pathogen levels in the water so you can be informed. **You** are your best protector - use common sense and don't swim for several days after a rain. It is estimated that at the level of 235 colonies *E.coli* per 100 mL water, approximately 8 out of every 1,000 swimmers are likely to contract a water borne illness related to fecal contamination.

The Mad River

The Mad River is generally safe for swimming and boating. The federal Clean Water Act, septic regulations, lots of money, careful land stewardship, and the hard work of many people are to thank. But, there are times – particularly after a rainfall event – when it is possible that our river and streams might make you sick. Also, certain regions of the Mad River suffer from persistent water quality problems that contribute to poor aquatic wildlife habitat, harmful algal blooms, polluted groundwater, and exacerbated flooding. Our community has work still to do.

Friends of the Mad River (FMR) has run the Mad River Watch water quality monitoring program for the last three decades to get a sense of the watershed's overall health, provide public health information to river users, and identify areas needing improvement. Throughout the summer, community volunteers collect samples of water from 33 river and tributary sites and then FMR and Vermont's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) laboratories analyze the samples' bacteria and nutrient levels. We post *E. coli* data in the Valley Reporter, on our Facebook and web sites, and on signs at a dozen swimholes across the Valley so that people have information to make their own recreational health decisions. We post total phosphorus, nitrogen, and turbidity data on our website at summer's end when we receive it back from the state lab. Over the decades, we've also used this data to guide many successful clean-up efforts.

Many thanks to this week's Mad River Watch samplers: Charlie Baldwin, Richard Czaplinski, Susy Deane, Jula Fender, Annie & Hazel Macmillan, and Michael Ware. Thanks to Susanne and George Schaefer who drove water samples to the DEC's lab in Burlington for phosphorus, nitrogen, and turbidity analysis and to Sally Boudreau for posting data at swimholes across the watershed. The Mad River Watch Program would not be possible without these dedicated volunteers! Paula Baldwin is our Lab Coordinator for her second year this summer!

The river connects our Mad River Valley community and its clean water is a measure of our success as stewards of the land. For more information about *E. coli* and the Mad River Watch program and to view our most recent complete data report please visit the *Friends of the Mad River* website at www.FriendsoftheMadRiver.org. Results are also available on Facebook ("Friends of the Mad River") and on sign posts at swimholes across the Valley. *Friends* is a community-supported organization, and depends on the generous contributions of its members to continue the Mad River Watch and other important programs; learn how to become a member and donate securely online at our website.

See Data Below

Mad River Watch Data - June 12, 2017

SITE LOCATION	SITE #	Water Temp. °F	*E.coli* per 100ml *
Blueberry Lake	BBL	68	20.1
Warren Falls (Mad River)	1	58	3.0
Warren Store (Freeman Brook)	4	59	12.2
Warren Riverside Park (Mad River)	7	59	5.2
Lareau Swimhole (Mad River)	19	60	34.2
Couples Club Field (Mad River)	19.2	60	6.3
Waitsfield Covered Bridge (Mad River)	20	62	6.3
Tremblay Road (Mad River)	21.5	61	8.4
Meadow Road Bridge (Mad River)	23	62	20.1
Moretown Village Swim Access (Mad River)	27	62	52.9
Ward Swimhole (Mad River)	29	65	14.2

*** > 235 *E.coli* /100ml =** Not suitable for recreation, according VT Department of Health and EPA

Flow and Weather Analysis

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River Flow

LS - low and steady: It has not rained in several days and the water is low.

Thanks to this week's volunteers!

Samplers - Charlie Baldwin, Richard Czaplinski, Susy Deane, Jula Fender, Annie & Hazel Macmillan, and Michael Ware.

E. coli Lab Coordinator - Paula Baldwin

Posting Results - Sally Boudreau

Transporting Samples - Susanne & George Schaefer