

FRIENDS OF THE MAD RIVER



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Rain Elevates Bacterial Counts in Mad River

With crisp fall temperatures in the air, Friends of the Mad River's Mad River Watch (MRW) Program results from the sixth and final round of water sampling show four sites with unfavorable swimming conditions as of Monday morning. Tremblay Road Pines and Meadow Road bridge in Waitsfield as well as the Village swim area and Ward Access in Moretown were well over the DOH/EPA accepted "swimmable" *E. coli* level of 235 colonies per 100 ML of water. 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.

After five sampling days without substantial rain, this is the first of the season that captured the impacts on the water quality of stormwater running off the landscape. Rains carry sediments, nutrients, and pathogens from the land into the river and streams, increasing *E. coli* levels (among other pollutant levels). During dry weather, the pollutants don't reach waterways. After an overnight rain, the flow condition of the Mad River at the time of sampling Monday morning was high and had just started declining (HD), flowing at 264 cubic feet per second (cfs) at the USGS flow gage in Moretown. All four *E. coli* violations occurred in lower half of the watershed, consistent with historical trends that the lower watershed is more impaired for *E. coli*. Yet, it is also possible that pollutants from the upper watershed had already moved downstream and weren't captured in our mid-morning sampling. The median for this date is 76 cfs.

Friends of the Mad River'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. This weekend looks to be a wet one, so you and your good judgement are your best protector - use common sense and don't swim for at least 24 hours after a rain.

Many thanks to this week's Mad River Watch volunteers: Richard Czaplinski, Susy Deane, Annie & Julia Fender, Annie & Hazel Plewak, Kinny Perot, Fran & Gary Plewak, 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 ten swimholes across the watershed. The Mad River Watch Program would not be possible without these dedicated volunteers! Thanks also to Paula Baldwin for an excellent first year at the helm of FMR's lab!

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. Thanks to our members who make the Mad River Watch Program possible for the benefit of the whole watershed community! Learn how to become a member and donate securely online at our website.

Data on next page.

Mad River Watch Data

August 22, 2016

SITE LOCATION	SITE #	Water Temp. °F	<i>E.coli</i> per 100ml *
Blueberry Lake	BBL	73	24.0
Warren Falls (Mad River)	1	62	19.0
Warren Store (Freeman Brook)	4	63	33.0
Warren Riverside Park (Mad River)	7	63	9.0
Lareau Swimhole (Mad River)	19	63	65.4
Couples Club Field (Mad River)	19.2	62	80.0
Waitsfield Covered Bridge (Mad River)	20	64	98.0
Tremblay Road (Mad River)	21.5	62	328.2
Meadow Road Bridge (Mad River)	23	66	920.8
Moretown Village Swim Access (Mad River)	27	65	435.2
Ward Swimhole (Mad River)	29	68	579.4

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

Flow and Weather Analysis

The flow condition of the Mad River at the time of sampling Monday morning was high and declining (HD), measuring approximately 264 cubic feet per second (cfs) at the USGS flow gage in Moretown. The flow peaked at 269 cfs at 6:30 that morning. The median flow for this date is 76 cfs. **Four sites - from Tremblay Rd downstream - tested above DOH/EPA safe *E. coli* level of 235 colonies per 100 mL of water.**

River Flow

HD - high and declining: After reaching a peak flow, dry weather has returned and the flow is falling.

Thanks to this week's volunteers!

Samplers - Richard Czaplinski, Susy Deane, Annie & Julia Fender, Annie & Hazel Macmillan, Kinny Perot, Fran & Gary Plewak, and Michael Ware

E. coli Lab Coordinator - Paula Baldwin & Corrie Miller

Posting Results - Sally Boudreau

Transporting Samples - Susanne & George Schaefer