Valuing Local Knowledge

Weaving together red yarn, black chenille, and a feather, students in Professor Marijoan Bull’s spring 2012 GARP 0219-Land Use Planning class learned how to tye a “wooly bear” fly. Under the direction of volunteers from the Western Massachusetts Fly Fishermen’s Association, students completed the fly and came to appreciate the depth and breadth of the ecosystem knowledge of the fly fishermen. This group has gained experiential knowledge and a deep understanding of insect life, fish habitats, and the health of waterways from hours spent in the rivers, streams and tributaries of the region.

The workshop followed class readings and discussion on public participation and the value of local knowledge to land use decision making processes.