

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For one hundred years, the National Park Service (NPS) has been about preserving what is best about America for the future. The inclusion of Wild *and* Scenic Rivers as part of that heritage did not happen as quickly as it did for wild land areas and historic monuments, but rivers, too, are a resource that all Americans value and share and want to protect. The US Congress acknowledged this truth with the passage of the *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act*, October 2, 1968.

As part of the 100th anniversary of the NPS, the Wild and Scenic Lamprey River in southeast New Hampshire was selected to share its history and accomplishments as a model of river protection and management that employs a partnership among the NPS, the State of New Hampshire, municipalities, and citizen volunteers. Even before the Lamprey River's designation by the US Congress as a Wild and Scenic River on November 12, 1996, citizens recognized the outstanding resources of the river and worked hard to ensure its future. This hard work has continued and the partnership management team has adapted to new challenges as they arose.

This *Twenty Years of Progress on the Wild and Scenic Lamprey River* tells the story of how the people who care most about the Lamprey River successfully beat the odds and prevented the construction of a hydroelectric power facility during a time when hydroelectric power was viewed as a national energy policy priority. It recounts the history of dedicated volunteers who used their skills and time to create and implement a river management plan. It celebrates the many accomplishments of these people to protect and manage the river for the future:

- permanent protection of ecologically significant lands along the river
- improving access to the river for passive recreation
- engaging researchers to tease out the details of critical habitats, species of concern, water quality, and history
- outreach and education to inform children and adults about the river
- review of proposed development projects that could adversely affect the river and its resources

This report was written with many audiences in mind with the hope of inspiring continued action and support for “our” Wild and Scenic Lamprey River, America’s Wild and Scenic Lamprey River, and for future Wild and Scenic Rivers. The process of designating a river as Wild and Scenic requires time and commitment, but the process of actually managing and protecting that river requires even more time and commitment. When and where governmental entities lack the personnel and time to protect recognized resources, such as a Wild and Scenic River, citizens often willingly donate their talents and time to meet that need. Protection of a shared resource benefits the common good. Those citizens who undertake this task should be provided with basic tools and support to get the job done. This, too, is about preserving what is best about America for the future.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Wadleigh Falls, Lee

Photo by S. Petersen

For twenty years the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee has taken care of this Wild and Scenic River. We have had many volunteers donating many dedicated hours. We have been engaged in outreach and education about the Lamprey in our communities. Our land protection efforts have been very successful; we were able to add almost 537 acres and 5300 feet of main stem Lamprey River frontage in 2016, resulting in a 20 year total of almost 3500 acres and 16.1 miles of permanently conserved land on the river. We have completed a major analysis of water quality data over a 23 year time frame that encompassed not only the Wild and Scenic portion of the river but the entire main stem. We have continued to engage in projects studying the wildlife and habitat in the river corridor and we have recently undertaken an archaeological study of an old mill site dating back to the 1700s.

I expect that the future efforts of the Lamprey Rivers Wild and Scenic Advisory Subcommittee will continue with much the same emphasis as above. I anticipate that funding will continue to be a challenge as we are almost solely dependent upon the National Park Service. We are taking aggressive action to pursue new revenue sources to reduce our dependency on the National Park Service and to expand the scope of our projects on the river. While we hope that land conservation will remain a priority, our funds are dwindling and securing outside funding sources is challenging. As a result, our level of involvement in land protection will be scaled down.

Future projects will include efforts to enhance recreational use of the river and explore increasing public access to conserved lands in a responsible way. We hope to demonstrate to the communities the value of the Lamprey as an asset to our way of life and to the New Hampshire values that many of our residents value highly. Because of our efforts over the past twenty years, and with help from the National Park Service, much of the shoreland on the river remains undeveloped and “wild.” It represents what we are trying to pass on as a legacy to succeeding generations.

Joseph Foley, Lamprey Rivers Wild and Scenic Advisory Subcommittee chair

PARTNERSHIP WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

“It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dams and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes.”

— *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, October 2, 1968*

National Wild and Scenic Rivers are designated by the US Congress or the secretary of the Department of the Interior based on their “outstandingly remarkable resources” such as scenic, recreational, natural, or similar river-related values. The river and its outstanding values are to be preserved and enhanced for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

National Wild and Scenic Rivers are classified into three categories:

Wild River Areas – Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.

Scenic River Areas – Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.

Recreational River Areas – Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

A subset of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers – *Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers* – predominantly flow through private, municipal, or state land, with little or no federal management. Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers are administered by the secretary of the US Department of the Interior through the National Park Service (NPS) in partnership with local governments, councils, and non-governmental organizations. Local communities protect their Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers and outstanding river-related resources through a collaborative approach, often supported financially by cooperative agreements with the NPS.

The Lamprey is a Partnership Wild and Scenic River administered under a locally approved management plan. The designated Wild and Scenic segment of the river flows through four towns: Epping, Lee, Durham, and Newmarket. The entire 23.5 mile segment from the former Bunker Pond Dam in Epping to the confluence of the Piscassic River in Newmarket is classified as a Recreational River Area. Very little of the land

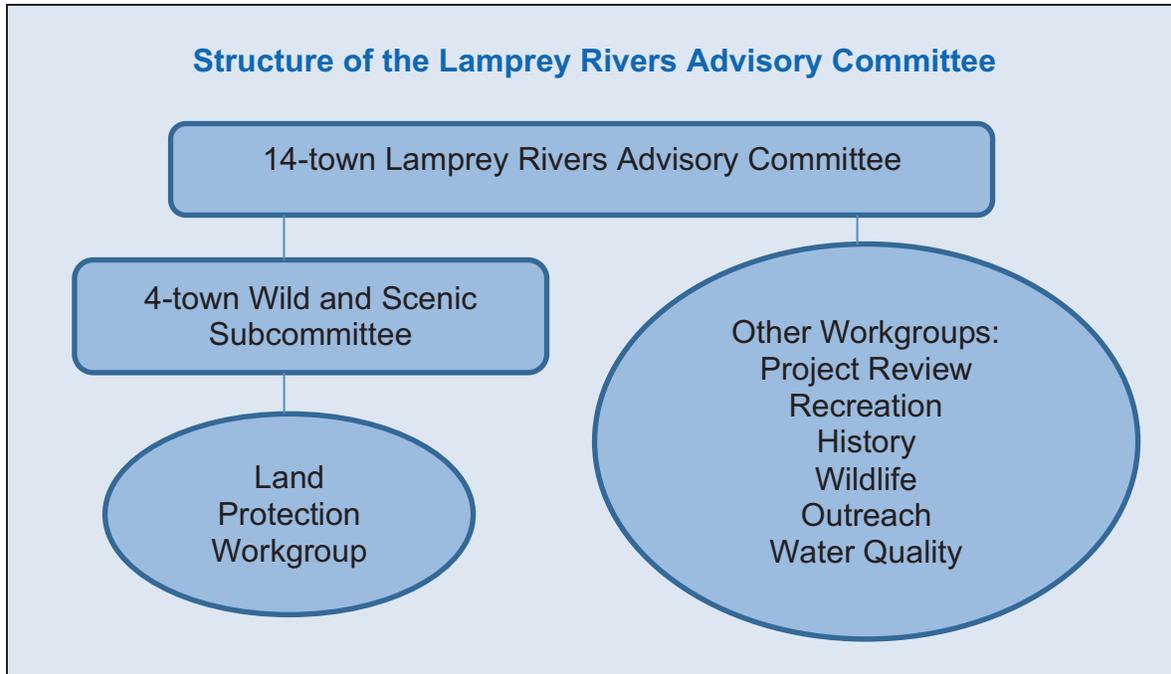
along the river is under public ownership; almost all of it is privately owned. Because direct management by the NPS is not possible, management occurs through a partnership among the towns, the NPS, state agencies, and non-governmental organizations. With state and NPS assistance, the Lamprey communities are better able to protect their river and its outstanding river-related resources.



Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee

The Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee (LRAC) is the lead local body responsible for managing the Lamprey Wild and Scenic River. The LRAC also has advisory responsibilities for river segments designated under the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program. Each town in the Lamprey River watershed can have up to four representatives with various interests such as municipal officials, landowners, agriculture, business, conservation, and recreation. Within this fourteen town coalition, the four towns of the Wild and Scenic designation form an autonomous subcommittee. Although there is much overlap, the Wild and Scenic Subcommittee bears the sole responsibility and authority to determine how funding provided by cooperative agreements with the National Park Service is expended.

Committee members are volunteers nominated by their local municipal government and officially appointed for a three year term by the commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. At the end of their terms, members may seek renomination and reappointment. The LRAC currently has three members who have served since the creation of the committee twenty years ago: Dick Lord, Sharon Meeker, and Kitty Miller.



The full committee and the Wild and Scenic Subcommittee generally meet ten times per year at municipal buildings that satisfy accessibility requirements. Announcements for these meetings are posted on-line and at town offices. All meetings are open to the public. Most workgroups generally meet monthly. Final meeting minutes are posted on-line and provided to all town clerks. Workgroup meeting notes are included as part of the full committee minutes.

The LRAC officially approved bylaws on October 14, 2008. These bylaws were amended January 26, 2012 to address expansion of the LRAC resulting from extension of the state-level designation from two to fourteen towns to encompass the entire watershed. Functions of the committee described in the bylaws and elsewhere include the following:

- Provide a forum for discussion of river-related issues;
- Monitor watershed activities and proposals that could affect the Lamprey River, its tributaries, and river-related resources;
- Advise the secretary of the US Department of the Interior through the NPS on the Wild and Scenic River designation, federal actions potentially affecting the Lamprey River, and implementation of the Lamprey River Management Plan;
- Advise the commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services on matters pertaining to the management of state-designated rivers;
- Promote protection and enhancement of the Lamprey Wild and Scenic River;
- Conduct education and outreach; and
- Prepare an annual report on the activities of the Committee, status of river protection and enhancement, and implementation of the most recent update of the Lamprey River Management Plan.

By the Numbers: Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee

Item Description	Count
current Wild and Scenic communities represented	4
current other watershed communities represented	4
percent of local communities participating	57%
annual reports compiled and submitted	19
active appointed and associate members	14
Wild and Scenic Subcommittee meetings per year	~10
watershed-wide committee meetings per year	~10
workgroup meetings per year	≥60
volunteer hours performed by committee members per year	~1500

River Profiles

As a freshly hired staff member at the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire (SELT), I was nervous at my first meeting with LRAC, but I immediately recognized that the partnership among LRAC, NPS and the Land Trust was a strong one. The LRAC brought a lifetime of experience and local knowledge to the table and the membership was diverse — representing all of the Wild and Scenic towns and stakeholder groups. The NPS staff provided friendly and sound guidance while allowing the LRAC to determine its own course of action. The Land Trust provided the capacity and expertise to help implement the shared land protection goals.

During the drive home that evening I reflected on the meeting and was filled with inspiration. This diverse group of federal, regional, and local representatives was coming together around the kitchen table and working with one another to protect something they all had a stake in — the Wild and Scenic Lamprey River. To me, the partnership was a model of resource management that I had learned about in graduate school and I was excited to have the opportunity to be a part of a group that was successfully implementing it.

Eight years after that first meeting, the evening drive home is still as inspiring as the first — being able to look back at almost 3500 acres and 16 miles of conserved land along the river will do that! The partnership of LRAC, NPS and SELT is a testament to the great and lasting work this model of river management can achieve.

David Viale, Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire