

Statement of Management Philosophy

The Lamprey River and its major tributaries (Little, North, North Branch, Pawtuckaway, and Piscassic rivers) have been recognized as significant ecological, historic, recreational, and water supply resources by the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program. In addition, the lower 23 miles of the main stem Lamprey River have been designated under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Both programs require an advisory management plan to aid in protecting and managing the resources of the rivers.

The Lamprey Rivers Management Plan must provide balance among its three main goals:

1. Protect the ecosystem and associated ecological services of the rivers and their corridors.
2. Promote responsible community use of the rivers and the surrounding land.
3. Respect the interests and rights of property owners while enlisting their support as guardians of the rivers' assets.

The population of the Greater Seacoast area is increasing. The rivers and the land surrounding them face increasing pressure from development and recreational use. As the natural landscape changes, maintaining and improving the current condition of the rivers will be more challenging.

The Lamprey River and its tributaries contribute a significant amount of water to Great Bay. The Great Bay Estuary and tidal portions of the Lamprey River are showing signs of decline and do not meet federal Clean Water Act criteria for several indicators. Special attention must be paid to mitigating the increase in nitrogen, sediment, and other pollutants that reach the waterways, as well as addressing areas of low dissolved oxygen. Good planning must include climate change science to predict the adverse effects and proper response to severe storm events. The condition of the rivers and Great Bay reflects the actions of individuals, business and commercial interests, and communities that populate the land surrounding these bodies of water.

Engaging the public and working together to attain the management plan goals are critical to our shared future. Central to this work will be encouraging the public and various partners to view the rivers as important and worthy of the collective efforts that will be needed for protection now and into the future. The future of the rivers and Great Bay as community assets rests squarely on the willingness of individuals, commercial interests, and towns along the river to be knowledgeable and careful stewards. We must all learn to “tread lightly” in the watershed if we are to meet this challenge successfully.