

## Background

### The Lamprey River Advisory Committee

The Lamprey River Advisory Committee (LRAC or the Committee) is mandated by both the [New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program](#) and the [National Wild and Scenic Rivers System](#) to participate in the management of the Lamprey River and five of its main tributaries: North Branch, Pawtuckaway, North, Little, and Piscassic rivers. Each of the fourteen towns in the Lamprey River drainage area is eligible to have up to four Committee members. Members are nominated by the governing bodies of their towns and then are appointed by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services for a three-year term. Members, serving as volunteers, represent the interests of local government, business, agriculture, conservation interests, recreation, and river landowners. The Lamprey River Advisory Committee is distinct from the Lamprey River Watershed Association (LRWA), a nonprofit membership group operating throughout the watershed. The two organizations often collaborate in efforts to enhance protection of the Lamprey.

### Designations

The Lamprey River and five of its main tributaries have been designated for special protection by the State of New Hampshire through the [NH Rivers Management and Protection Program](#). In addition, the section from the former Bunker Pond Dam in West Epping to the confluence with the Piscassic River in Newmarket has been designated for protection by the US Congress under the [Wild and Scenic Rivers Act](#).

These designations and subsequent protection resulted from the efforts of local citizens who documented the Lamprey's outstanding natural and cultural resources and earned the unanimous support of the fourteen towns. In addition to the recognition already achieved at the state level, there is also interest in extending Wild and Scenic designation to upstream towns. With sufficient public support, and with the assistance of LRWA and LRAC, these initiatives might move forward.

#### 1. [New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program](#)

The New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program (RMPP) was enacted in 1988 to protect the state's most significant rivers or river segments. In 1990, the section of the Lamprey River which runs through Lee and Durham was among the first rivers designated into the RMPP. In 2011, the entire Lamprey and five of its major tributaries were designated. The RMPP provides for the establishment of a local advisory committee on each designated river to implement river management and protection policies at the local level.

The Lamprey River Advisory Committee serves as the local advisory committee for the Lamprey River. The Committee is legislatively responsible for four main duties per RSA 483:

- Advise the NHDES commissioner, the advisory committee (Rivers Management Advisory Committee), the municipalities through which the Designated River or segment flows, and the municipalities within tributary drainage areas on matters pertaining to the management of the river or segment and tributary drainage areas.
- Consider and comment on any federal, state, or local governmental plans to approve license, fund or construct facilities that would alter the resource values and characteristics for which the river or segment is designated.
- Develop or assist in the development and adoption of local river corridor management plans. Local planning boards may adopt such plans as an adjunct to their local master plans.
- Report biennially to the Rivers Management Advisory Committee and the commissioner, and annually to municipalities on the status of compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, local ordinances, and plans relevant to the Designated River or segment, its corridor, and tributary drainage areas. NHDES offers the committee technical assistance in developing and implementing the management plan.

The State of New Hampshire assumes responsibility for assisting the local advisory committee and provides the following protections for the Lamprey:

- a prohibition against the construction of new dams, the use of flashboards on existing dams, and interbasin transfer of water from the Lamprey River
- protection of water quality and maintenance of adequate year-round flows in the river to support a full range of natural resource needs and also human uses
- mandatory setbacks for new solid and hazardous waste facilities.

Otherwise, the state program does not regulate local zoning or confer special regulatory powers to state agencies relative to protected rivers.

## 2. Designation under the [Wild and Scenic Rivers Act](#)

The broad purposes of federal designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act are two-fold:

- Establish federal policies for the watercourse which ensure that federal actions are consistent with protecting the resources for which the river was designated.
- Provide for financial and technical assistance from the National Park Service in implementing the River Management Plan.

Most of the 228 rivers in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System flow through federally-owned land and are managed by the federal agency that manages the land. In contrast, many of the designated rivers in the East flow through private lands. These rivers, including the Lamprey, are called “Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers”, because their management occurs through a partnership of the National Park Service and a local river management advisory committee. According to Jamie Fosburgh (former resource planner for the Northeast Region

Rivers Program of the National Park Service), Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers share the following characteristics:

- No lands are federally owned.
- The River Management Plan is written and implemented through a broadly participatory process.
- Management and use of lands adjacent to the river continue to be the responsibility of landowners, subject only to existing state and local regulations.
- The National Park Service reviews federally funded, sponsored, or licensed projects to ensure federal consistency with the plan's river protection goals.
- The costs and responsibilities for managing and protecting the river's resources are shared among all of the partners—local, state, federal, and non-governmental.

The [1995 Lamprey River Management Plan](#) was developed as a part of the National Wild and Scenic River Study of the Lamprey. The plan included specific provisions related to Wild and Scenic designation, all of which were carried forward in the [2007 Update](#) and the [2013 Update](#). These provisions, together with the National Park Service's June [1995 Draft Report to Congress](#), and the text of federal legislation in 1999 and 2001 designating the portions of the Lamprey into the federal system, provide the full background and context for the National Wild and Scenic River designation of the Lamprey.

Twenty-three and a half miles of the Lamprey River are designated as a Wild and Scenic River, from the former Bunker Pond Dam in Epping to the confluence with the Piscassic River in Newmarket. The area of oversight is approximately one quarter mile on each side of the river.

The following seven sections comprise the details of the plan. The plan is deliberately ambitious, representing a full menu of initiatives seen as desirable, rather than a commitment to accomplishing some or all in the next decade. In many instances, successful collaboration will be essential to the accomplishment of the plan's identified actions and goals. The Committee often will play a supporting role to others who possess the necessary expertise, staff, authority, or resources to complete a particular job.