

Public Hearing Minutes

Nomination of the Lamprey River, North Branch River, North River, Pawtuckaway River and Piscassic River into the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program

August 31, 2010

Epping Elementary School, Epping, NH

7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Members Present

Ken Kimball, Chair
Michele L. Tremblay, Vice Chair
John Magee
Frederick McNeill
Jim Ryan
Larry Spencer

Representing

Recreational Interests
Conservation Interests
NH Fish & Game Department
Municipal Government
NH Fish & Game Commission
NH Association of Conservation Comm.

Term

Dec. 28, 2011 V
Dec. 28, 2011 V
Indefinite NV
Nov. 16, 2011 V
Sept 28, 2012 V
Oct. 12, 2010 V

DES Staff Present

Laura Weit-Marcum
Jenn Rowden
Carolyn Guerdet

NHDES Acting Rivers Coordinator
NHDES Lakes and Rivers Asst. Planner
NHDES Administrative Assistant

7:15 Opening

Chair Ken Kimball opened the meeting with the introductions of the Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) present. Chairman Kimball reviewed the agenda for the evening. He noted that if those in attendance didn't testify at this meeting they could submit written comments up until September 14th. He also reviewed the purpose and the nomination process. Following the public hearing, the DES Rivers Coordinator and the Rivers Management Advisory Committee will make their respective recommendations to the DES Commissioner. The DES Commissioner will review the nomination and must make a determination whether to forward the nomination to the General Court for legislative approval within 45 days.

Laura Weit-Marcum, Acting Rivers Management Coordinator gave an overview of the Rivers Management Protection Program. The LAC that will be formed will have representatives from all the communities along these rivers. They are advisory only and will develop a management plan and review permits for projects that fall within ¼ mile of the river.

A history and review was given by Jim Hadley. He introduced the other members of the committee: Dawn Genes, Cheryl Killam, Isobel Parks, Sharon Meeker, Mike Kappler, Dick Snow and others. This process began in June 2009 and includes 14 towns within the watershed. Dawn Genes gave an overview of the rivers within the 214 square miles of this watershed. She then reviewed the work that had been done on the nomination.

Representative Mike Kappler shared that with the Oyster River and Exeter River are also seeking nomination, and with the Lamprey that is already a designated river, the total watershed surrounding the Great Bay Estuary would be protected.

Chairman Kimball then opened the floor for a question and answer period.

1) It was asked what the nomination meant. Laura answered that it offers more protection to the rivers and establishes a Local Advisory Committee (LAC), which provides an avenue for communication amongst the communities within the watershed. 1) Each town would receive a voice in river management 2) increases likelihood of funding & technical support and 3) offers a problem solving venue and a floor for collaboration and cooperation.

2) What effect on the wastewater treatment facilities? Laura explained there is no change to these facilities and that the RMPP actually reinforces existing laws.

3) Can this be reversed? The General Court can reverse the decision.

The floor was then opened for public comment. All comments received were in favor of the nomination and were given by the following:

- 1) Brian Giles, Lee and Lamprey River Advisory Committee, spoke in support listing 1) value to community
- 2) protection of water quality 3) concerted voice for the watershed.
- 2) Representative Amanda Merrill spoke in support and wanted to recognize the work of the nomination committee.
- 3) John Terninko spoke in support as prevention works and correction doesn't work.
- 4) Cheryl Killam, chair of the Raymond Conservation Commission, gave their support.
- 5) Chris Mills represented the Nottingham Water Alliance which fully endorses this nomination.
- 6) Representative Mike Kappler thanked everyone and spoke in support.
- 7) Dick Lord, a Lamprey River LAC member for 19 years, said it had been a positive experience and strongly endorsed.
- 8) Erick Berglund, Deerfield Conservation Commission, read a letter of support from Katherine Hartnett.
- 9) Derek Sowers, Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP), thanked the volunteers and read a letter of support from PREP.
- 10) Lelia Mellen, National Parks Service, commended New Hampshire for having such a program and noted that she has been working with this nomination committee.
- 11) AJ Shattuck spoke in overwhelming support and was impressed with the community and environmental aspect of this.
- 12) Michelle Daly, NH Water Resources Center, spoke in support.
- 13) Carl Spang, President of the Lamprey River Watershed Association, spoke in support of the remarkable process and the watershed approach to this nomination.
- 14) Jenn Rowden, resident of Epping, spoke in support of the bottoms-up approach.
- 15) Cheryl Killam thanked Dawn and Lelia for their hard work.
- 16) Sharon Meeker noted all that has been learned about a watershed and that they can wisely make plans as they move forward together.

Chairman Kimball then closed the comment period. He thanked all those involved for their tour and everyone for coming and their show of support. He reminded all in attendance that the RMAC will take written comments until September 14th. And the RMAC meeting September 28th is open to the public if they would like to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.