

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **“Wild and Scenic” Nashua Rivers Study Committee: Update and Input Session**

Have you always thought that our rivers are among the most scenic in New England? Are you impressed by the diversity of plants and animals found along our rivers? Join the Nashua River “Wild and Scenic River” Study Committee on Thursday April 27<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at the Nashua River Watershed Association’s River Resource Center, 592 Main Street, Groton, MA. There will be a general public information sharing and opportunity for input.

The Study Committee was formed after the U.S. Congress passed legislation authorizing the National Park Service to commence a study of sections of the Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Rivers to determine if they are eligible and suitable for designation as part of the federal Wild and Scenic Partnership River Program. For more information, please see the newly-created Study Committee website: [www.WildandScenicNashuaRivers.org](http://www.WildandScenicNashuaRivers.org).

The Study is expected to be about a three year process and is voluntarily undertaken by the towns of Ayer, Dunstable, Groton, Harvard, Lancaster, Pepperell, Shirley, and Townsend. The locally-appointed Study Committee is currently reviewing our rivers’ cultural history, outstanding biological and ecological resources, and extensive recreational opportunities.

Committee members are combing through any and all pertinent local, regional, state and federal records, reports, historical documents, and related data to clarify which resources are considered “outstanding and remarkable”. At the April 27<sup>th</sup> event, findings to date will be reported, and the views of attendees will be solicited.

A Study Report will be prepared on the Committee’s findings and a locally-developed Management Plan will be drafted with extensive community input. That Management Plan will be used to guide future ecological, recreational, historical and cultural protection efforts. Towards the end of the study process, town boards will deliberate on the Management Plan and its non-binding recommendations, and, ultimately each town will vote – at its Town Meeting – on whether it recommends that “Wild and Scenic” designation be pursued. It is expected that these votes will take place in the spring of 2018.

The April 27<sup>th</sup> event is an opportunity for any interested area resident to learn more about the Study, to give input, and to talk with Committee members. The Nashua River Watershed Association is playing a lead role along with the National Park Service. The towns have each appointed a Representative to the Committee, and the Committee also includes representatives from the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the MA Department of Fish & Game, the MA Division of Ecological Restoration, USGS, and volunteers.

For planning purposes, please RSVP to the April 27<sup>th</sup> event; walk-ins are welcome. To RSVP or for questions, please contact Al Futterman, NRWA Land Programs and Outreach Director, at 978/ 448-0299 or [ALF@NashuaRiverWatershed.org](mailto:ALF@NashuaRiverWatershed.org).

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