
ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



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Responsibilities of Riparian Landowners Along Designated Rivers

What are my responsibilities as a riparian landowner on a designated river?

As a riparian landowner, not only do you have the very special privilege of living along a river, but you live along a designated river! The actions that you take on your property can affect the river, either negatively or positively. First and foremost, keep in mind best management practices (see below) when working on any projects on your riverfront property. Also, keep in mind that there are certain activities, such as adding fertilizers and pesticides to your lawn, that can be harmful to the river if not properly applied. If you have questions on how to be a good river steward, the Local River Management Advisory Committee and DES are there to help. They are resources that can help you make decisions to effectively manage your riverfront property.

As a riparian landowner, does the Rivers Management and Protection Program give me any special protection in terms of littering and trespassing?

Riparian landowners constantly face issues regarding liability, trespassing, littering, and erosion, all of which frustrate landowners and negatively impact property. Rivers that are designated into the DES Rivers Management and Protection Program indirectly benefit by gaining an increased public respect for the river and property rights due to heightened recognition of this valuable resource. River designation also promotes greater public awareness and understanding about the unique problems and issues that riparian landowners face today, which in turn may bring technical assistance, funding, and other support to help address such concerns. Since other statutes directly cover issues pertaining to trespassing and littering on private property (RSA 207, RSA 635, and RSA 163-B), the Rivers Management and Protection Act does not place additional restrictions on trespassing or littering on private property along designated rivers. Similarly, RSA 483 covers neither landowner liability for injuries that occur along privately owned riparian lands, nor activities that may cause damage to other riverfront property owners. These issues are covered strictly under RSA 212, RSA 508, RSA 79-A, and RSA 162-C.

Are there any further regulatory restrictions placed on land along designated rivers?

Rather than restricting river access and placing further growth restrictions along a river, designating a river into the Rivers Management and Protection Program primarily benefits the river through increased public education, awareness, and river corridor planning. One of the added benefits that designated rivers have over other rivers in New Hampshire is that each Local

River Management Advisory Committee has the opportunity to comment on all state permit applications for projects along their designated river corridor within a quarter-mile buffer, and they can develop river corridor management plans that can be adopted at the local level.

Where can I learn more about the RMPP?

More information about the Rivers Management and Protection Program can be found online at <http://www.des.nh.gov/rivers> and in the following fact sheets:

R&L-2 The New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program

R&L-14 The New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program: River Classifications and State Regulated Protection Measures As They Apply To Each Classification

Best Management Practices for Riparian Landowners

Maintaining your septic system

www.des.nh.gov/gw/gw_archive/gw-13.htm

Properly disposing of household hazardous wastes

www.des.nh.gov/factsheets/hw/hw-3.htm

Using water conservation practices

www.des.nh.gov/factsheets/ws/ws-26-3.htm

Minimizing the use of lawn fertilizers

www.des.nh.gov/factsheets/sp/sp-2.htm

Implementing erosion control methods

www.des.nh.gov/factsheets/sp/sp-1.htm

Riparian buffers

www.crjc.org/riparianbuffers.htm

Eliminating the use of pesticides

www.des.nh.gov/factsheets/sp/sp-3.htm

Creating wildlife habitat on your riparian property

www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/oneMonthPlan.cfm

For More Information

For further information about the N.H. Rivers Management and Protection Program go to <http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/rivers/index.htm> or contact Steve Couture, Rivers Coordinator, 29 Hazen Drive, PO Box 95, Concord, NH 03302-0095; (603) 271-8801; steven.couture@des.nh.gov.