

Lamprey River Advisory Committee
Overseeing the Lamprey Wild and Scenic River
2008 Report

In 2008, the Lamprey River Advisory Committee (LRAC) continued to be the eyes, ears and voice for the Lamprey River. LRAC conserved seven river corridor parcels and embarked on a project to eradicate Japanese knotweed, while participating in a variety of other river activities. Kevin Martin (Epping) stepped down as Chair of the Committee, after three years of outstanding leadership. Sharon Meeker (Lee), a longtime member of LRAC, took Kevin's place as Chair.

The Lamprey River Advisory Committee accomplishments in 2008 include:

Land Conservation

2008 was a banner year for land conservation for the Lamprey River Advisory Committee. Working with landowners to conserve their land is often a long term process. This was true for the seven projects which came to fruition in 2008. A total of 462 acres with almost a mile of river frontage plus a mile of tributary frontage was placed under conservation easement in 2008. In recognition of this tremendous success and in appreciation of all of the landowners who have placed their Lamprey River land in conservation over the past eleven years, LRAC and our partners hosted a festive and well attended landowner appreciation event at the Lee Grange Hall. Since LRAC began in 1997, 1,927 acres and 12 miles of river frontage had been conserved by the end of 2008, with every \$1 of LRAC funds being matched by \$3

Recreation

A beautiful new recreation tour map and brochure was created, printed, and distributed. A copy was sent to each riverfront landowner in the four Wild and Scenic towns (Epping, Lee, Durham and Newmarket). The tour features twelve stops and nine points of interest (see brochure at www.lampreyriver.org).

The Recreation Subcommittee is currently working to create an information kiosk at one of the recreation tour stops – Mary Blair Park. Similar kiosks will be installed, in cooperation with each town, at many of the other recreation tour stops.

The Recreation Subcommittee has also begun the process for building a hand-carry boat launch on the former Thibeault property, which is just above Wadleigh Falls in Lee.

Invasive Species Eradication

LRAC, in partnership with the Lamprey River Watershed Association (LRWA), organized an ongoing effort to eradicate Japanese knotweed from the river. This invasive plant has been appearing in more and larger stands along the river, taking over significant areas of native habitat. In 2008 LRAC and LRWA researched knotweed, made connections with others in the region who are working on this problem, and hired a coordinator. Two areas were

identified for pilot projects: Wadleigh Falls and the Epping Town Hall to the Route 125 Bridge. After obtaining landowner permission, volunteers cut and hauled knotweed at both sites. A permit was received from the Division of Pesticide Control to spray appropriate herbicide at both sites. The LRAC gratefully acknowledges the support given the project by the Lee and Epping Conservation Commissions and volunteers from Lee, Durham, Epping, Kingston, and Barrington. Two grants were secured from the Department of Agriculture's Integrated Pest Management program: \$4,500 for phase I in 2008 and \$12,500 for phase II in 2009. Currently, we are working on a strategic plan for the entire watershed, based on the Streamwalk inventory that was conducted in 2008 by LRWA volunteers.

Wiswall

LRAC has followed and participated in the design process for the Wiswall Bridge replacement. LRAC has spoken up for the bridge aesthetics, historical integrity, recreation access, and impact to the river. Through this process, the Wiswall mills area has been declared an historic district by the state. LRAC will continue to participate in this process, with a focus on creating an informational/historical kiosk in Wiswall Park. LRAC also continues to participate in committees responsible for creating fish passage at Wiswall Dam.

Wildlife

A turtle survey was conducted by David Carroll, comparing data and observations collected over the past fifteen years. Unfortunately, turtle populations appear to be in decline. This is inevitably the result of increased development of the land near the river. LRAC would like to conduct more investigations of turtles and other wildlife, to help guide land conservation priorities and land management recommendations.

Water

Water quantity as well as water quality is an important focus for the LRAC. Funds were voted to help support Professor William McDowell's Lamprey River Observatory which specializes in nutrient analysis of the river. In addition, two members from the LRAC participate in the state's Instream Flow Study which is working to determine how best to protect flow levels to accommodate public and private water needs. Work continues to assist towns in developing a reasonable water conservation plan and to have it in place before additional water is taken from the Lamprey River.

During National River Cleanup week, LRAC sponsored a public cleanup of the Lamprey River at Wadleigh Falls.

The Lamprey River Advisory Committee has a long range management plan for the 23 miles of the Lamprey River from West Epping to the Piscassic River in Newmarket. This part of the river is under the protection of the National Park's Wild and Scenic Rivers program. In addition, the river in Durham and Lee is designated for protection under the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection program. The LRAC meets at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. All meetings are open to the public. For information, see www.lampreyriver.org, or call Chair, Sharon Meeker, (603) 659-5441.

Lamprey River Advisory Committee:

Lee: Sharon Meeker (Chair), Kitty Miller, Joachim Barth

Epping: Kevin Martin

Newmarket: Sara Callaghan

Durham: Richard Kelley, Cynthia Belowski, Jim Hewitt, Richard Lord, Bill Hall

At Large: Brian Giles

www.lampreyriver.org