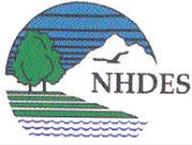


News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services funds effort to update the 2001 *Ashuelot River Corridor Management Plan*.

Concord, NH - The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services has awarded funding to the Ashuelot Local River Management Advisory Committee (Ashuelot LAC) and the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) to update the Ashuelot River Corridor Management Plan. The grant for \$16,100 was made available via pass through funds that DES receives from the US Environmental Protection Agency on a bi-annual basis to conduct water quality planning activities. Funds are awarded through a competitive process to regional planning commissions and the Connecticut River Joint Commissions Inc.

The Ashuelot River Corridor Management Plan was first published in 2001. The essence of the plan is to ensure a balance between protection of legitimate community interests and the rights of property owners along the river, in order to protect and improve the existing resource values of the river and its corridor. The plan proposes a management approach with the mission of protecting plentiful clean water, thriving riparian and aquatic habitat for wild plants and animals, providing balance for continued development of land use and water uses, recreation, and other public needs.

In 1992, area residents with the support of federal, state and local officials, nominated the Ashuelot River for enrollment in the state's "Rivers Management and Protection Program" (RMPP) by the New Hampshire legislature. The nomination was based on an inventory of natural and cultural resources that define the character of the river corridor. While some of these resources are common to rivers around the world, many are unique to the Ashuelot. The nomination was approved and in 1993 DES convened the Ashuelot LAC. The RMPP stipulates that LACs' duties include the development of an advisory plan for the management and protection of the natural and cultural resources of each designated river corridor.

"I am very pleased with the Ashuelot LAC's efforts and the assistance provided by the Southwest Region Planning Commission. They should be commended for being the first LAC to update their management plan." Steve Couture, DES Rivers Coordinator who oversees the RMPP continued, "They have been focused and successful in getting their original plan adopted by local towns and I look forward to watching them accomplish the same feat with the implementation of their updated plan!" The updated plan is available online at

<http://www.des.nh.gov/rivers/documents/AshuelotRiverCorridorManagementPlan.pdf>.

The Ashuelot River is located in southwestern New Hampshire and is one of fourteen designated rivers. For more information about the RMPP please contact Steve Couture, DES Rivers Coordinator at (603) 271-8801 or scouture@des.state.nh.us or visit the RMPP home page at <http://www.des.nh.gov/rivers/>

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