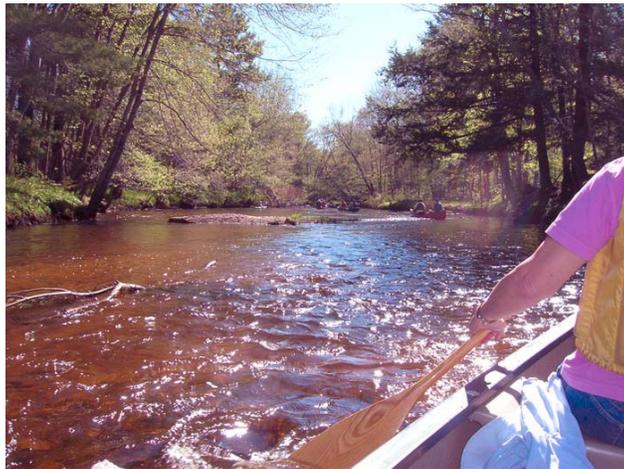


THE COCHECO RIVER

A Report to the General Court



**New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program
Department of Environmental Services
Office of the Commissioner
January 2009**



The Cochecho River

A Report to the General Court

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Cocheco River, a tributary of the Piscataqua River in New Hampshire, begins in northern Strafford County and runs southeastward, through the towns of New Durham, Middleton and Farmington and the cities of Rochester and Dover. The Cocheco River watershed is approximately 185.2 square miles and a 34.8 mile segment has been nominated for designation into the River Management and Protection Program (RMPP). As proposed by the nominating organization, the designation would begin from headwaters south of March's Pond in New Durham and continue to the tidal limits at the Cocheco Falls Dam in Dover. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) has reviewed the nomination and is recommending the Cocheco River for designation into the RMPP.

The Rivers Management and Protection Act (RSA 483) was enacted in 1988. The act states in part that:

It is the policy of the state to ensure the continued viability of New Hampshire rivers as valued economic and social assets for the benefit of present and future generations. The state shall encourage and assist in the development of river corridor management plans and regulate the quantity and quality of instream flow along certain protected rivers or segments of rivers to conserve and protect outstanding characteristics including recreational, fisheries, wildlife, environmental, cultural, historical, archeological, scientific, ecological, aesthetic, community significance, agricultural and public water supply so that these valued characteristics shall endure as part of the river uses to be enjoyed by New Hampshire people.

The act directs DES to receive and evaluate nominations for the designation of rivers or river segments into the RMPP to protect outstanding values and characteristics. Nominations approved by the DES commissioner must be forwarded to the next session of the General Court for review and approval. In fulfillment of this statutory directive, the nomination of the Cocheco River is hereby forwarded to the General Court.

DES recommends that the Cocheco River be designated as a protected river under the RMPP. DES further recommends that segments of it be variously classified as a "natural," "rural-community" or "community" rivers as described in the recommendations contained in this report, thereby affording it the full benefit of the applicable protection measures outlined in RSA 483. The outstanding statewide and local resource values and characteristics that qualify the Cocheco River for designation are described herein.

II. THE COCHECO RIVER NOMINATION

A. DESCRIPTION

The Cocheco River is part of the Piscataqua River drainage basin flowing near the boundary between Maine and New Hampshire. The Cocheco River watershed's 185 square miles is entirely within New Hampshire. Headwater streams arise in Strafford, Farmington, Middleton and New Durham, with the highest elevation at 730 feet. The river flows southeasterly through the cities of Rochester and Dover before becoming tidal and joining with the Salmon Falls River to form the Piscataqua River.

Scenic areas can be found from the headwaters area in New Durham to the tidal waters at the Cocheco Falls Dam in Dover. In the upper watershed the river flows from the hills as a small stream, gathering waters from tributaries as it descends to the Cocheco River valley in Farmington. From Farmington to Rochester, it flows as a small river in a forested river corridor. In Rochester the river emerges from the backyards of residential neighborhoods into the urban center of downtown Rochester. The Cocheco River then completes its freshwater journey at the tidal waters in Dover.

B. RIVER VALUES AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Rivers Management and Protection Program identifies a number of river-related values and characteristics that may qualify a river for designation. The Cocheco River supports many of these, including a variety of natural, managed, cultural, recreational and other resource values. Some are significant at the local level; others are significant at either the state or national level. The resource values that qualify the Cocheco River for designation include geology, wildlife, vegetation and natural communities, fish, water quality, natural flow, open space, impoundments, water withdrawals, wastewater discharges, hydroelectric, historic and archeological, community river resources, boating, other recreation, public access, scenery, land use and land use controls.

1. Natural Resources

a. Geologic Resources: The formation of the Cocheco River began about 18,000 years ago, as the last glacier scraped its way across New Hampshire. The region's geology has a major influence on the landscape and characteristics of the Cocheco River watershed. Major geologic units in the watershed include the Kittery Formation, Littleton Formation and Concord Granite. The bedrock is overlain by glacial and marine deposits. Following the last glaciation, coastal waters inundated the region and left marine deposits throughout the watershed. The bedrock and surficial deposits are important sources of water to communities, industry, commercial facilities, and private homes. The potential yield of water from bedrock wells is highly variable from site to site, but the Cocheco watershed has moderate to high yielding bedrock wells. Larger aquifers are found in the New Durham, Farmington and Rochester areas. Nearly 20 percent of the watershed is overlain by stratified-drift aquifers, about 10 percent of these aquifers are considered to be potentially high yielding water sources. The geology of today's Cocheco River landscape changes dramatically throughout the watershed. In the upper watershed, glacial till and bedrock make up the majority of the near subsurface materials. Clay, which can be seen in today's riverbanks, was widely deposited in the river valleys as marine sediments during submersion of inland areas by the sea. In Rochester, the Cocheco River valley is a broad sand plain with significant sand and gravel deposited over glacial till. Just downstream of Farmington, the character of the river's geology changes significantly. Here, thick sand and gravel deposits left by retreating glaciers occupy the river

bottom and valley. Sand and gravel has been commercially extracted for decades for use in construction. Many of the sand and gravel deposits near the mainstem of the river are considered highly productive aquifers, which could yield appreciable groundwater for public drinking water supplies.

b. Wildlife Resources: The Cocheco River corridor contains several areas of the highest quality habitat in New Hampshire and in a biological region, as defined by the *New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan 2006*. The areas identified as highest quality habitat in New Hampshire and in a biological region within the Cocheco River corridor are numerous and consistently present throughout the entire length of the corridor. Over 100 bird species have been identified in the Cocheco River corridor. A variety of wildlife are dependant upon the resources of the river, including moose, otters, fishers, beavers, muskrats and deer.

The Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire's Coastal Watersheds (2007) by The Nature Conservancy recognizes four Core Focus Areas and their supporting landscapes located wholly or partially within the Cocheco River corridor, including: Cocheco headwaters (New Durham, Middleton), Blue Hills (Farmington), Rochester Heath Bog (Rochester), Rochester Neck (Rochester). A Conservation Focus Area is an area that is considered to be of exceptional significance for the protection of living resources and water quality in the coastal watersheds. The river's riparian corridor provides critical connections between the Cocheco Headwaters and Blue Hills Core Focus Areas and supporting landscape, and within the Rochester Neck Core Focus Area and supporting landscape. The Core Focus Areas and Supporting Landscape areas, and the forested lands that form connections between them, provide stopover areas and essential habitat for migratory birds and mammals. The federally endangered bald eagle has been found in Dover area as recently as 2006.

c. Vegetation and Natural Communities: The dominant ecosystem types within the river corridor are dry coastal forest and moist coastal forest. These ecosystem types are also widespread throughout the watershed. Bogs, an uncommon ecosystem type, are also present within the watershed in many of the Core Focus Areas identified in *The Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire's Coastal Watersheds* and in the *New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan*. The Nature Conservancy, the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau and New Hampshire Audubon have recently completed an ecological inventory of the Cocheco River in the Dover area, which identified seven exemplary natural ecological communities within the river corridor. The New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau has record of six rare plants known to occur in the river corridor, including wild lupine, small spike rush, inflated sage, piled-up sedge, river bank quillwort and Engelmann's quillwort.

d. Fish Resources: Overall, the Cocheco River has a diverse and healthy population of returning anadromous fish, and is one of the three most productive rivers for river herring of the monitored Great Bay tributaries. The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department identified 17 species using the Cocheco River fish ladder. River herring migrate up the Cocheco to spawn in fresh water via the fish ladder at Cocheco Falls in downtown Dover. Since 1989 there has been a general increase in the migration of this species reported by New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. An Atlantic salmon fry stocking program was initiated in 1988 in the Cocheco and Lamprey Rivers to produce a recreational fishery. The program was terminated in 2003 because it was not producing returns to fulfill the project goals. There remains a residual run of American shad in the Cocheco River. The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department considers the Cocheco River one of the three of the most productive anadromous fish river systems along the New Hampshire coast.

e. Water Quality: The Cocheco River has been designated as Class B water by the New Hampshire General Court. The 2008 assessments from the Section 305(b) and 303(d) Surface Water Quality Report

developed using the 2008 Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology (CALM) show that nearly 50 percent of the assessment units (AU) for the Cocheco River are impaired and two AU sites require maximum daily load monitoring for pollutants that can cause poor water quality. All sites reported drinking water that meets water quality standards by a relatively large margin.

f. Natural Flow Characteristics: The headwaters in New Durham are approximately seven miles above downtown Farmington. This uppermost reach has the greatest drop in elevation of the entire watershed, approximately 610 feet. The reach is characterized by shallow, fast-flowing water with a sand or gravel substrate. Below Farmington, the Cocheco River meanders along a small wetland area, then through large glacial outwash deposits where sand and gravel excavation still occurs today. From above Farmington to the Little Falls Road bridge in Rochester, the river drops approximately 15 feet in elevation in 6.6 miles. Its width averages about 25 feet and the average depth increases from about two feet to approximately five feet. The segment below Little Falls bridge is characterized by alternating sections of flat, slow moving water with sediment deposits behind dams, and rapid areas of fast-moving water over scoured rocky substrate. The segment from the wastewater treatment plant outfall to Watson-Waldron Road dam in Dover is a typical meandering, mature river basin with varying depth and occasional deep pools. River width averages 60 feet, with a range from 30 to 100 feet. Near the middle of this segment, a major tributary, the Isinglass River, joins the Cocheco River from the west. From Watson Road to Whittier Falls, there is a noticeable drop in elevation marked by bedrock scouring and fast water. The last 3.3 mile segment from Watson Road Dam to the head of tide at Cocheco Falls dam in Dover has fewer meanders and backwater areas than the previous segment. The U.S. Geological Survey maintains a gage station on the Cocheco River in Rochester. From 1996 to 2006, the average annual discharge ranged from a low of 70.2 cubic feet per second in 2002 to a high of 266.0 cubic feet per second in 2006.

g. Open Space: There are 524 acres of protected land in the river corridor and 5,909 acres of protected land in the watershed, a combination of privately owned and publicly owned properties, and easements held by nonprofit organizations. There are also a number of areas in the river corridor that are open, or undeveloped, with no protection, including an area from the headwaters in New Durham to the Spring Street crossing in Farmington. The predominant land use type is forested and open wetlands. This segment contains a portion of the Cocheco headwaters Core Focus Area and supporting Landscape. The segment near route 11 contains the Rochester Heath Bog Core Focus Area and Supporting Landscape. From NH Route 16 and through the downtown area of Rochester to NH Route 125, there are large blocks of forested lands within the river's floodplain, particularly at its confluence with the Isinglass River. The city owns several large parks and parcels within the river corridor including Hanson Pines Park, the Ferguson property, and Pickering Ponds, which have mostly forested or vegetative riparian areas along the river. Also, the city of Dover continues to work on planning the Riverwalk Project, which will potentially include plantings and enhancement of riparian areas along the river. The segment north of Dover is characterized by large forested and agricultural areas, including the Strafford County Farm.

2. Managed Resources

a. Impoundments: Eleven impoundments are present in the river corridor, including five currently active sites. A current water source for the city of Rochester is the Berry River in the Isinglass River watershed. Water from this source is stored in both the Rochester Reservoir, in the Axe Handle Brook subwatershed of the Cocheco River, and in Round Pond, in the Isinglass River watershed. The city has the ability to transfer water between these impoundments, across these subwatershed boundaries.

b. Water Withdrawals and Discharges: There are fourteen registered water withdrawals from the Cocheco River and two watershed transfers from the Isinglass and Berry River. Of these, three withdrawals are for hydropower, and two are for public water supply, and the remaining are for commercial or institutional use. There are three municipal wastewater discharges to the Cocheco River; the municipal discharges are located in Farmington, Rochester and Dover. An additional five discharge sites are from industry and mining.

c. Hydroelectric Resources: There are three existing hydroelectric power production facilities on the Cocheco River; two in Dover and one in Farmington. All three facilities are regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. There are three breached hydroelectric sites in Gonic and Farmington.

3. Cultural Resources

a. Historic and Archaeological Resources: The Cocheco River corridor has an extensive history starting with aboriginal populations, about 3,000 to 5,000 years ago, to European settlement beginning in 1640 with the formation of the village of “Cocheco,” now know as Dover. Historically, many nomadic Native Americans set up sites by the river falls to take advantage of fishing and convenient transport by canoe while hunting large game. The Cocheco River played an important role in the American industrial revolution. The river powered early development of the great mills at the Cocheco Falls at Dover Landing. Many buildings in the area were constructed between the mid to late 1700s and early to mid 1800s. Notably, nine buildings located within the river corridor are listed on the National Register of Historic Places; they are the Strafford County Farm, County Farm Bridge (abutments/site), William Hale House, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, the Dover U.S. Post Office, Public Market, Michael Reade House, Sawyer Building, and the Rochester Commercial and Industrial District.

b. Community River Resources: The importance of the Cocheco River as a community resource is reflected in the local planning and protection efforts of the communities along the river. The river is discussed in each municipal master plan and is recognized as a significant community resource in the most recent master plan update for each community. Dover and Rochester have provisions within their town plans for river walks that provide residents and visitors the opportunities to see and enjoy the diversity of the Cocheco River.

4. Recreational Resources

a. Fishery: The primary freshwater habitats in Dover on the Cocheco River is above the dams. The river supports a warm water finfish population that includes: American eel, Lamprey white sucker, yellow perch, Eastern chain pickerel, Eastern brook trout, small-mouth bass and common shiner. The Cocheco is stocked at its upper reaches by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department for rainbow and brook trout. The fish ladder located at Cocheco Falls allows diadromous fish species to access freshwater sections of the Cocheco River that are critical to their survival, as well as, supplies a seasonal forage base for resident fish during the juvenile stage.

b. Boating: The Cocheco River affords canoeists and kayakers with a mixture of natural and urban experiences. The first navigable reach of the river starts where the Cocheco Road crosses the river in Farmington and where there is a well-marked canoe launch. The upper section has five miles of largely undeveloped winding riverfront. The middle section flows through the heart of Rochester and offers views of the city not visible elsewhere. The river through Dover provides for excellent flatwater canoeing and kayaking with varying landscapes.

c. Other Recreation: There are several publicly owned recreation areas in the river corridor. These areas offer a mix of recreational opportunities, including hiking, nature study, picnicking, swimming, river access, recreational fields and urban river walks. Publicly owned recreation areas include the Farmington Town Forest, the Strafford County Farm in Dover, the Cocheco Riverwalk in Dover, Maglaras Park in Dover, Pickering Ponds in Gonic, the Riverwalk in downtown Rochester, and many other state, federal or local parks. In 2004, the Dover City Council authorized the purchase of a former railroad bridge off Washington Street along with the surrounding tracks for a future community trail to link with a city-wide walking/bike path utilizing the abandoned B&M rail tracks along the Cocheco River.

d. Public Access: Public access for fishing, kayaking and canoeing can be found along the Cocheco River in Dover, Rochester, Gonic and Farmington. There are also several private campgrounds along the river that provide access for registered campers.

5. Other Resources

a. Scenery: In New Durham, the mainstem of the Cocheco River descends from the headwater wetlands as a small forested stream. From Little Falls Bridge to the North Main Street Bridge in Rochester, a surprisingly green river corridor slips right into the urban center. On the east bank, Hanson Pines Park, with its large stand of white pines is a haven within the city. The arched bridge at North Main Street is a focal point in the urban downtown. Trails at the Strafford County Farm in Dover provide views of the old covered bridge abutments and the river corridor as well as adjacent fields and a wildlife reserve. Other significant scenery involves a mix of natural and manmade features, such as the historic mills along Dover's Riverwalk.

b. Land Use: Land use in the river corridor is a complex mix of rural development, forestland, wetlands, and heavily settled urbanization. Rapid suburbanization is decreasing the area of open lands in middle and lower portions of the subwatershed. In the lower Cocheco River reach, there is rapid growth in formerly rural areas of Dover, Somersworth and Rochester.

c. Land Use Controls: All corridor communities have master plans, overlay districts and zoning ordinances that apply to the Cocheco River. Ordinances and regulations vary from community to community, however, all four riverfront communities have regulations regarding building, septic system and wetland setbacks. In 2008, the town of New Durham strongly supported protection of the Cocheco River and its watershed by adopting a Conservation Focus Area ordinance and a Steep Slope Protection District ordinance.

d. Water Quantity: The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that there are 85.7 square miles of drainage basin upstream from the discharge monitoring station on the Cocheco River near Rochester. The Rochester gage has been collecting discharge measurements since March 1, 1995.

e. Riparian Interests/Flowage Rights: Flowage rights and mill privileges were associated with many of the historic dams and water withdrawals from the mills. Some of these rights and privileges include the Milton Water Works, Farmington Water Works, Rochester Water Works and Dover Water Works.

III. CONSIDERATION FOR PROTECTION OF INSTREAM FLOW

A. INSTREAM FLOW RULE STATUS

RSA 483 directs DES to implement instream flow protection on all designated rivers, and to adopt administrative rules for this purpose. In 2002, additional legislation authorized a pilot project to be developed on the Lamprey and Souhegan Rivers. Rules were promulgated for these two rivers in 2003. No protected instream flows can be developed on other designated rivers until these pilot assessments are completed and the results assessed by the legislature. Although excluded from instream flow protection by existing rules, future rules will include other designated rivers in the development and implementation of protected instream flows. The result will be water management plans for each affected water user and dam owner in a designated river watershed. These water management plans describe specific actions to be taken under certain river flow conditions so that the protected flows are maintained. Water management plans have three main components to protect flow: 1) conservation, 2) water use changes, and 3) operation of impoundments.

B. INSTREAM FLOW ASSESSMENT

The existing instream flow rules include a requirement for assessing monthly water use in relation to mean monthly stream flow for all designated rivers. The method uses a general standard to compare the water use uniformly between all the designated rivers. The general standard is determined from the monthly stream flow and sets a standard for aggregate water use depending on that flow. The general standard is not a protected flow, but instead is a means for comparing the level of water use and identifying the locations of intense water use within a watershed and between the designated river watersheds.

The Cocheco River water use assessment identified 14 registered sources reporting water withdrawals and eight registered discharges reporting returns of water to the environment in 2006. (One water user, a water transfer, reported no activity in 2006.) Of these there are three hydropower uses. During 2006, water use exceeded the general standard on the Cocheco during every month except May and November. The general standard is not a limitation. Although the apparent exceedance of the general standard understandably raises concerns in the respective communities, an important point to understand is that under the proposed rules the general standard will be utilized as a framework for prioritizing watersheds through which designated rivers flow that are in need of additional study for establishing watershed-specific instream flow standards and development of a water use management plan.

Based on the analysis completed for the nomination, it is apparent that the Cocheco River would be one of many designated rivers watersheds that does not meet the general standard under existing rules. Any changes in water usage by the Cocheco River corridor communities would not occur immediately upon designation, but in the future after full study and public input.

IV. LOCAL SUPPORT

The communities of the Cocheco River Watershed express strong support of the river's ecological functions and services in their master plans as well as in ordinances and regulations that require river setbacks and buffers, limited uses and development disturbance near the river, and water quality standards. There is strong local support for the designation of the Cocheco River into the Rivers Management and Protection Program. The Cocheco River Watershed Advisory Coalition, with the help of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission, initiated the effort to designate the Cocheco River into the RMPP. The Coalition notified the municipal officials of the river communities of the merits and intent to nominate the Cocheco River as a designated river in the RMPP. These efforts culminated in May 2008, when the Cocheco River Watershed Advisory Coalition submitted its nomination to the Department of Environmental Services. Throughout the process the majority of public testimony and letters have supported the nomination. There has been one letter of opposition from the city of Rochester and one letter requesting tabling the nomination by John Webster of Southern New Hampshire Hydroelectric Development Corporation. At the public hearing on the nomination, which was held in Rochester on July 23, 2008, the testimony was overwhelmingly supportive.

V. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cocheco River supports a variety of significant state and local resources. To better protect and manage these resources, the Department of Environmental Services recommends the following actions.

Recommendation 1: The General Court should adopt legislation that designates the Cocheco River for inclusion in the Rivers Management and Protection Program and designates the Cocheco River as follows:

1. As a natural river from the Cocheco River headwaters south of March's Pond in New Durham to Spring Street crossing in Farmington (6.39 mile segment).
2. As a community river from Spring Street crossing in Farmington to 0.7 miles south of Cocheco Road Bridge north of Route 11 in Farmington (3.71 mile segment).
3. As a rural-community river from south of Cocheco Road Bridge north of Route 11 in Farmington to Little Falls Bridge crossing in Rochester (4.46 mile segment).
4. As a community river from Little Falls Bridge crossing in Rochester to England Road in Rochester (10.45 mile segment).
5. As a rural-community river from England Road in Rochester to Whittier Street crossing in Dover (8.14 mile segment).
6. As a community river from Whittier Street crossing in Dover to head of tide at Central Avenue dam in Dover (1.45 mile segment).

Under the provisions of RSA 483, designation of the river will provide increased protection with respect to the construction of new dams, damaging channel alterations, water quality impairment, and the siting of solid and hazardous waste facilities in the river corridor. Designation will also require the establishment of a protected instream flow to maintain water for instream public uses including water quality, fisheries, recreation and scenic values. A local river management advisory committee will be established to coordinate management and protection of the river at the local and regional levels, and will provide the residents in the riverfront communities with a direct avenue for formal input into state decisions affecting the river. Finally, designation will result in the development of a long-range management plan for the river that coordinates state planning and management of fisheries, water quality and quantity, and recreation.

Much of the Cocheco River is being recommended for either the "community river" classification or the "rural-community river" classification. Community rivers are defined under RSA 483 as "... those rivers or segments which flow through developed or populated areas of the state and which possess existing or potential community resource values, such as those identified in official municipal plans or land use controls. Such rivers are readily accessible by road or railroad, may include existing impoundments or diversions, or potential sites for new impoundments or diversions for hydropower, flood control or water supply purposes, and may include the urban centers of municipalities." "Rural-community rivers" are defined under RSA 483 as "... those rivers or segments which flow through developed or populated areas of the state and which possess existing or potential community resource values such as those defined in official municipal plans or land use controls. Such rivers have mixed land uses in the corridor reflecting some combination of open space, agricultural, residential, commercial and industrial land uses. Such rivers are readily accessible by road or railroad and may include impoundments or diversions." The Cocheco River as it flows through the towns of New Durham, Middleton and Farmington and the cities of Rochester and Dover is flanked by rapid population growth and developing landscape ranging from open spaces to commercial walk ways along the river. The Cocheco River Watershed Coalition, the Rivers Management Advisory Committee and the Department of Environmental Services have all determined that the river segments recommended above for "community river" and "rural-community river" classification meet the definition of a "community river" and

“rural-community river” and should be so designated.

The remaining segment of the Cocheco River is being recommended for “natural river” classification. “Natural rivers” are defined under RSA 483 as “... free-flowing rivers or segments characterized by the high quality of natural and scenic resources. River shorelines are in primarily natural vegetation and river corridors are generally undeveloped. Development, if any, is limited to forest management and scattered housing.” The proposed “natural river” segment meanders through the town forest of Farmington and is adjacent to a large parcel of conservation land. The Cocheco River Watershed Coalition, Rivers Management Advisory Committee and Department of Environmental Services have determined that this segment meets the definition of a “natural river” and should be so designated.

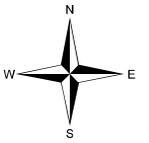
Designation of the Cocheco River under the Rivers Management and Protection Program will express the intent of the General Court regarding its future management and protection, and will focus attention on the river as a natural resource of both statewide and local significance. This attention will help to ensure greater scrutiny of plans or proposals that have the potential to significantly alter or destroy those river values and characteristics that qualify the Cocheco River for designation.

Recommendation 2: The towns of New Durham, Farmington, Middleton, Rochester and Dover should continue to work together toward the protection of the Cocheco River through the adoption and implementation of a local river corridor management plan.

While legislative designation of the Cocheco River will improve the protection and management of the river itself, continuing efforts at the local level will be needed to address the use and conservation of the river corridor (the river and the land area located within a distance of 1,320 feet of the normal high water mark or to the landward extent of the 100 year floodplain). A growing recognition by local citizens and officials of the Cocheco River’s valuable contribution to the overall quality of life in their communities is evidenced by their desire to see it designated into the Rivers Management and Protection Program. Citizen appreciation and concern for the river should be reflected in the decisions and actions of local officials. The Department of Environmental Services will provide technical assistance to the local river management advisory committee and to the local officials in the riverfront communities on the development and implementation of a local river corridor management plan.

In summary, the establishment of a clear policy and specific instream protection measures by the General Court, and a continuing commitment on the part of local governments and residents to protect and manage the river corridor through sound land use decisions will ensure that the outstanding resources of the Cocheco River will endure to be enjoyed by the people of New Hampshire for many years to come.

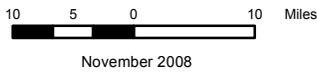
Locus Map: Cocheco River Watershed



Locus Map Cocheco Watershed

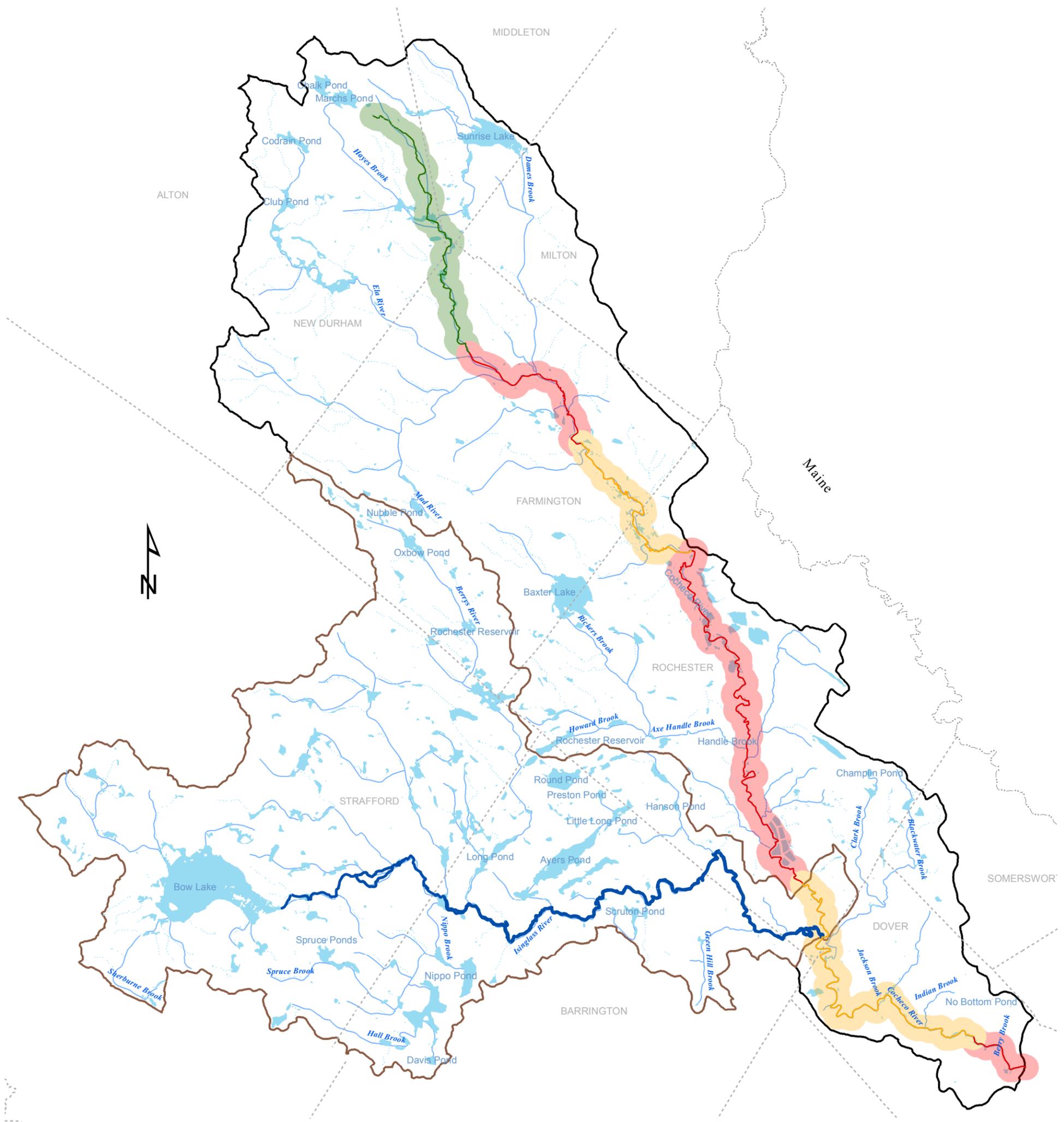
Cocheco River Classification

-  Community
-  Natural
-  Rural Community
-  Cocheco Watershed Area
-  Designated Rivers
-  Isinglass River
-  Cocheco
-  Wetlands
-  Town Boundaries
-  County Boundaries



The coverages presented in this map are under constant revision. They may not contain all of the potential or existing data available. NHDES is not responsible for the use or interpretation of this information. Not intended for legal purposes. November 2008.

Cocheco River Watershed Base Map



Cocheco River Watershed Area

Designated River Classification

Quarter Mile Buffer



Community Classification



Natural Classification



Rural Community Classification

Wetlands



Wetlands, Lakes, Ponds

Isinglass River



Designated Reach



River, Brooks, Streams



Intermittent Streams



State boundary



Town boundary



Isinglass Watershed Area



Cocheco Watershed Area

