



**Lamprey River Advisory Committee  
Annual Report FY 2020 (Oct.1, 2019 - Sept. 30, 2020)**

About the Committee:

The Lamprey River Advisory Committee (LRAC) is comprised of volunteer representatives nominated by the towns of the Lamprey River watershed and appointed by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). These volunteers serve as liaisons to NHDES and have two main duties: 1) Create a river management plan that protects or enhances the values for which the river was designated for extra protection under the NH Rivers Management and Protection Program under RSA 483 and 2) Review and comment on development or redevelopment project applications for the quarter mile corridor that parallels each side of the main stem Lamprey River and five designated tributaries and that require a state permit such as a wetlands, shoreland, or alteration of terrain permit.

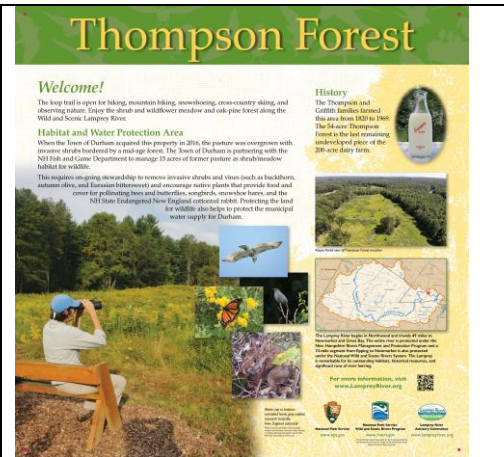
The LRAC also serves as a partner to the National Park Service to protect and enhance the “outstandingly remarkable values” for which a 23 mile segment of the main stem Lamprey River was designated by the U.S. Congress as a National Wild and Scenic River. As part of this partnership, the LRAC receives funding from the National Park Service (CFDA # 15.962 National Wild and Scenic Rivers System) to support its activities.

For more information about the Lamprey River and the LRAC, please visit [www.LampreyRiver.org](http://www.LampreyRiver.org).

Beginning in mid- March, the novel corona disease, COVID19, caused massive shut-downs across the United States and around the globe. This situation imposed many new challenges, curtailing in-person meetings and outreach, and complicating several projects. A prolonged drought resulted in very low flows in the river in late summer. Despite these obstacles, good progress was made that will help fulfill goals of the management plan going forward.

### History:

The LRAC was pleased to create and fund the kiosk panel at Thompson Forest in Durham. This former dairy farm is being transformed to managed shrub-meadow habitat and includes a walking trail through forest and field. A public tour was offered in November 2019. The LRAC contributed to the permanent protection of the site.



### Land Protection:

- The 10-acre Lord property in Durham was transferred to The Nature Conservancy, adding 0.3 mile of protected land along the main stem Lamprey River and creating an important addition to the 235-acre Lamprey River Preserve. With the addition of this project, the LRAC has contributed expertise and funding to protect 3743 acres along the river.
- The land protection workgroup created an updated land conservation map that shows what lands have already been protected and will guide future efforts to support projects that will result in better protection of wildlife and clean water resources.

### Outreach:

A full schedule of events, nature walks, and presentations was planned, but COVID19 made these gatherings risky and all were cancelled. Outreach efforts turned largely to computer-based modes.

- *Chick and Dee-Dee's Lamprey River Adventure* children's book was made available for free viewing via [www.LampreyRiver.org](http://www.LampreyRiver.org).
- Two new videos featuring an interview with naturalist author and artist David Carroll were completed and were made available for viewing on the website.
- River-related articles were shared with towns for e-newsletters.
- Work to update and upgrade the website was begun, with an anticipated go-live date in late 2020 or early 2021.

### Project Review:

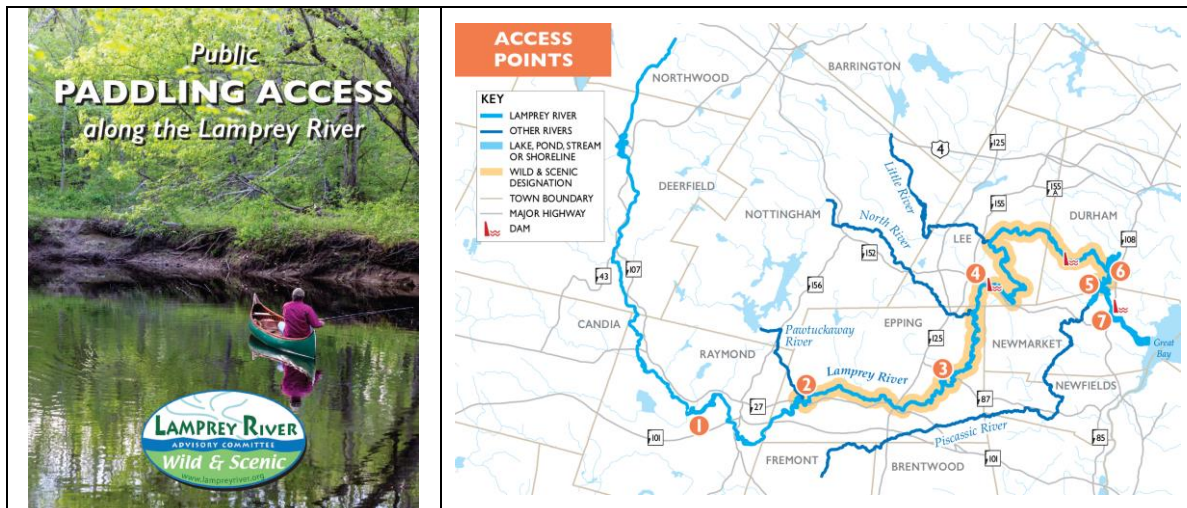
The committee reviewed and commented on 19 projects that required wetlands, shoreland, alteration of terrain, or a combination of permits from the New Hampshire

Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). The LRAC does not have the authority to grant or deny permits, but its comments must be considered by NHDES.

### Recreation:

With travel restrictions imposed by COVID 19, people spent significantly more time outside exploring the river and visiting local parks and conservation areas.

- The committee created a new public paddling access map and guide that includes sites from Raymond, Epping, Lee, Durham, and Newmarket. Two versions were developed: one for on-line viewing and one that can easily be printed at home and folded to fit in a pocket.



- The popular 2008 *Explore the Lamprey River* recreation map and guide that covers the Wild and Scenic towns of Epping, Lee, Durham, and Newmarket was updated.

- Funding was provided to the Town of Newmarket to purchase and install a kayak rack at Schoppmeyer Memorial Park. All town parks with canoe access in Newmarket are now equipped with LRAC-funded kayak racks. These racks hold town-owned kayaks that can be rented at a reasonable rate and allow more people to visit the river without having to own and transport a private boat.



- A grant to the Lee Conservation Commission was provided for trail improvements at Little River Park. The grant funds a kiosk, signage, bench, and a boardwalk crossing over a small stream on the trail. Work will be finalized in 2021.

- The LRAC had no role in this, but we were pleased to learn that the Town of Newmarket installed a kayak entry and exit assist device onto the dock at Schoppmeyer Memorial Park. The device is a first on the freshwater portion of the river and helps people with balance or strength issues to enjoy the river by boat.



The new kayak assistance device in Newmarket. The boat is placed or floated onto the two submerged horizontal bars. The kayaker can then use the hand rail overhead to provide stability for a safe, dry entry and exit.

#### Water Quality:

- The LRAC funded a UNH graduate student to study nutrient budgets along segments of the main stem Lamprey River. A key finding from most sampling stations showed a net accumulation of nitrogen. This indicates that natural processes that remove nitrogen are being outpaced by non-point source inputs, (those that cannot be easily traced to a particular source).
- A grant to the Raymond Conservation Commission was used to fund a wetland inventory and recommend zoning changes to maximize protection of the town's drinking water.

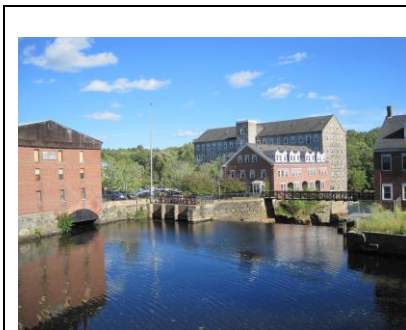
#### Wildlife and Ecology:

Volunteers with the Pawtuckaway Lake Improvement Association (PLIA) have documented and carefully removed variable milfoil for the past several years, but certain sections of the lake are not easily surveyed. Using a grant from the LRAC, the PLIA developed a pilot program using side-scan sonar to locate invasive variable milfoil in the lake. Water from the lake is routinely released into the Pawtuckaway River and then into the Lamprey. By containing this invasive weed in the lake, the chances of its escaping and taking hold in the Lamprey are greatly reduced. The protocols being developed will be shared with other lake and river groups, thus potentially benefitting the whole state.

#### Future Plans:

- The History Workgroup will work with the Durham Historical Association to study industrial archaeology at Packers Falls.
- The updated and expanded website will be used to connect residents and visitors to the river.
- The updated recreation map will be distributed to local libraries, recreation departments, camp grounds, and visitors to local fairs.

- Community Grants up to \$6000.00 will be awarded to worthy local projects that help to address issues identified in the *2013 Lamprey River Management Plan*.
- Project reviews will seek to protect the natural resources of the Lamprey River and its tributaries amid mounting pressure to accommodate commercial and residential development.
- The Town of Newmarket began repairs and improvements at the Macallen Dam in September of 2020. Key changes will include a higher and reinforced wall on the south side of the dam, improved floodgate control on the north side, and aesthetic improvements to the NH Fish and Game Department staging area at the top of the fish ladder on the south wall. The dam and staging area are among the most visible sites along the river and the annual Herring Aid event is held here every year. We look forward to a safer dam and engaging people in a more welcoming setting.



Macallen Dam pre-drawdown  
August 30, 2020



North wall Sept. 23, 2020.  
Note the old crib dam.



South wall Sept. 23, 2020