

Over the course of the last 20+ years, the Lamprey River Advisory Committee (LRAC) has been tasked with promoting the restoration, conservation, and wise development and use of the natural resources of the Lamprey River Watershed. During that time, LRAC has organized itself into Working Groups in order to efficiently administer the dual programs of the Federal Wild and Scenic Program and the State Designated Rivers Program. There are seven Working Groups, one of which is the Recreation Working Group. Members of the Recreation Working Group are outdoor enthusiasts with many years of combined experience in hiking, camping, canoeing/kayaking and allied activities.

With the Sweet Trail (a four-mile footpath located in Durham and Newmarket) encompassing the finest elements of the perfect outdoor experience, the Recreation Working Group began to ask whether or not it was possible to create a similar experience along the shores of the Lamprey River.

Canoe Access Sign Installation



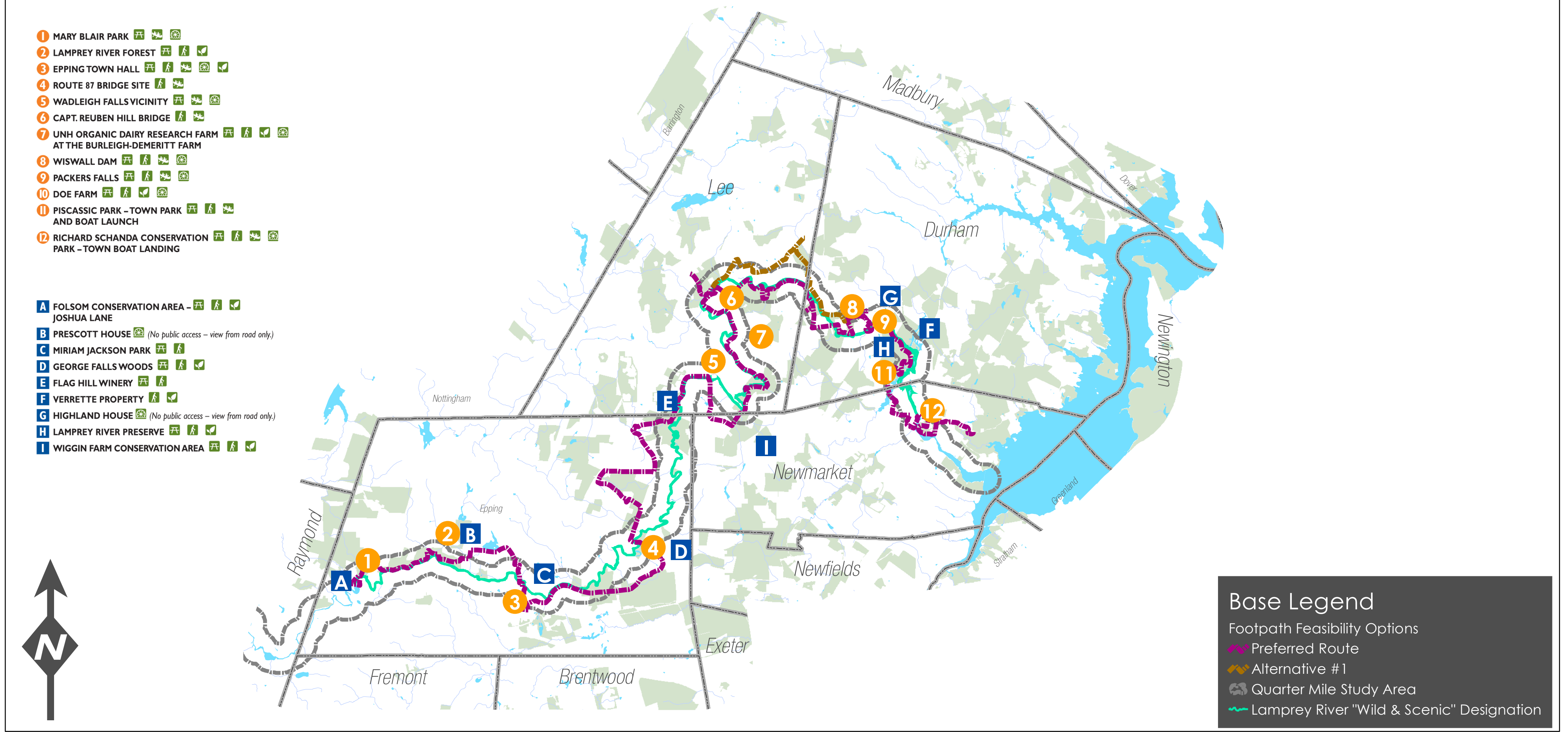
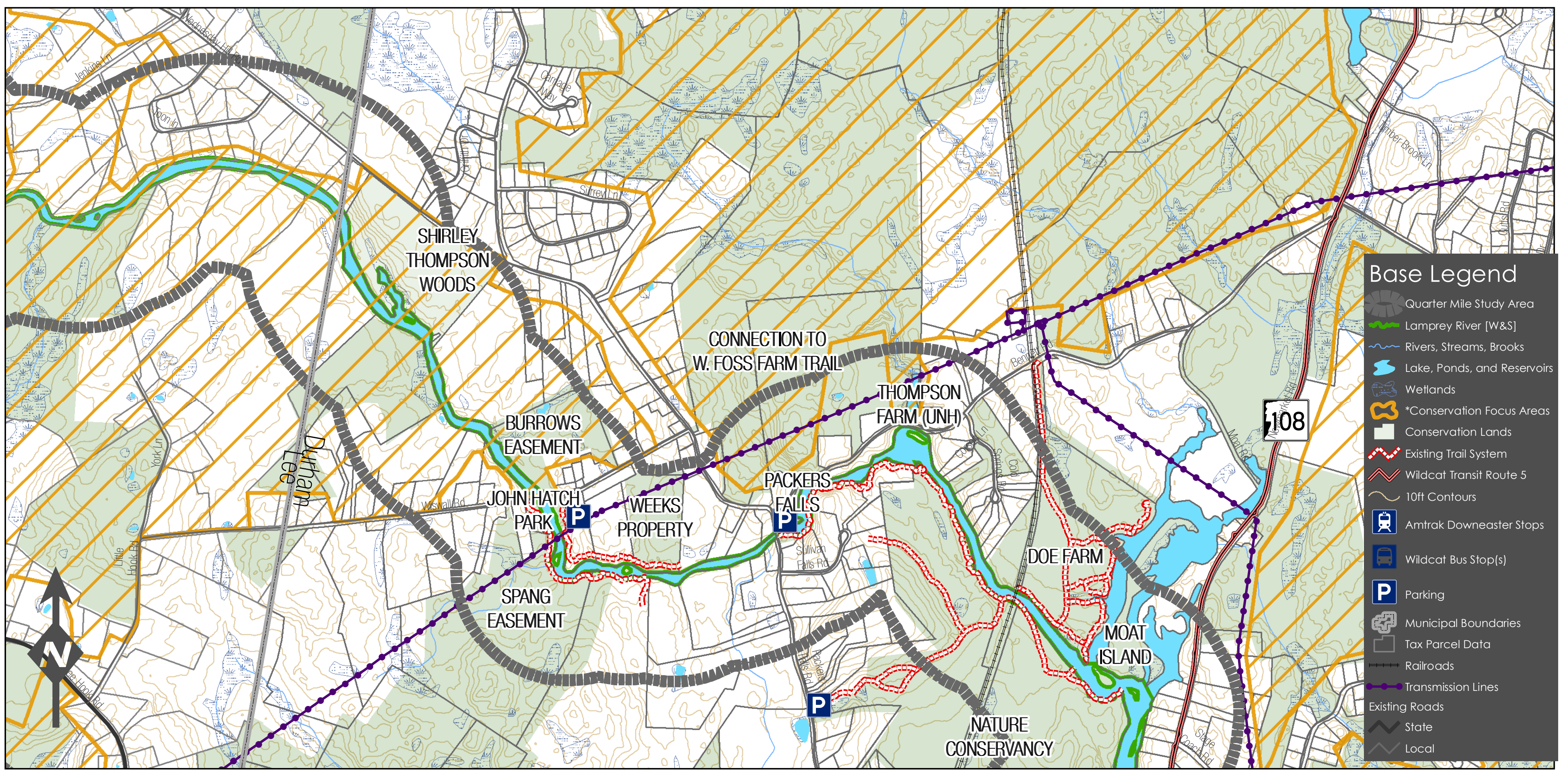
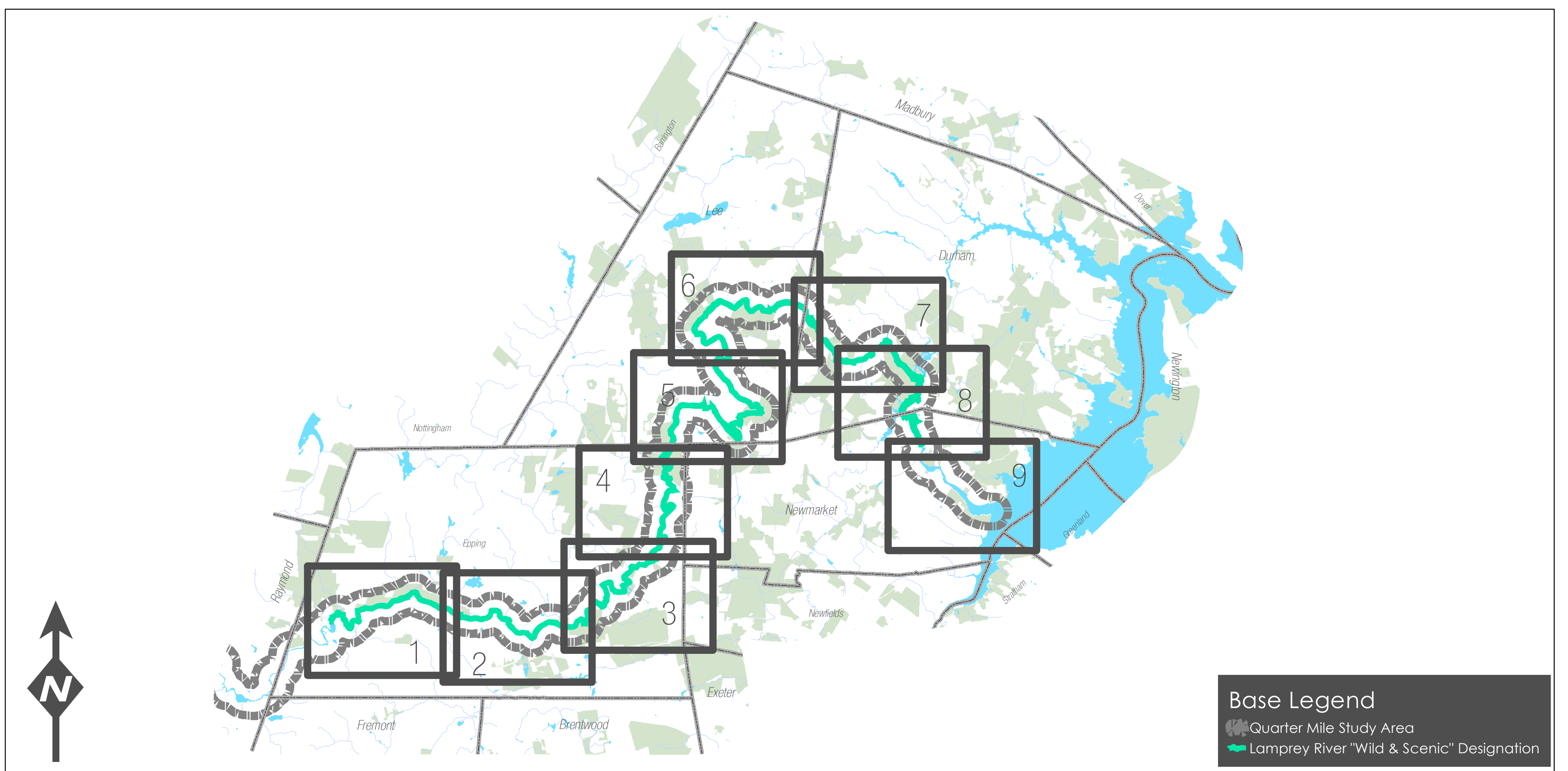
Pictured From Left to Right: Dick Lord (LRAC Durham Rep), Preston Samuel (LRAC Lee Rep), Kevin Martin (LRAC Former Chairman), Jake Poirier (UNH Undergraduate Student) Photo Credit: Dick Lord



TAKE A HIKE!



DETERMINING THE FEASIBILITY OF A REGIONAL WALKING TRAIL ALONG THE LAMPREY RIVER



Due to the river's Federal Designation, the National Park Service offers significant funding opportunities for planning and land acquisition projects. In 2016, the National Park Service celebrated its 100-year anniversary. As part of their centennial goals of renewed stewardship and engagement, a community assistance program titled "A Call to Action" was instituted, which enabled LRAC to apply and receive a grant to commission a study that would investigate the feasibility of a trail from Epping to Newmarket.

2016

Funding Received:

\$6,000

National Park Service CENTENNIAL

Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) was contracted by the LRAC to prepare a series of maps within the project area. These maps were used during a series of listening sessions in each of the four Wild and Scenic towns.

After reviewing the maps produced by SRPC, LRAC met with three of the four conservation commissions in the project area to evaluate the amount of interest for the plan, and to discuss any concerns that the groups might have. In general, the commissions were supportive of the plan.

Next, LRAC met with three land trusts who own properties or easements in the project area, including: Southeast Land Trust of NH (SELT), the Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Forest Society (SPNHF).

As part of their continued effort to engage private interests, LRAC contacted representatives of the three riverfront campgrounds within the project area (all three campgrounds are located in Lee).

Finally, LRAC conducted listening sessions in each of the four towns within the study area to determine the preferred location for the footpath. The dates of those meetings are as follows:

- September 16, 2015 – Durham Police Station
- September 17, 2015 – Lee Public Safety Complex
- September 21, 2015 – Newmarket Town Hall
- September 22, 2015 – Epping Town Hall

Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data available through the planning commission, SRPC digitized the project area that included a 1/4 mile corridor along the Lamprey River from Mary Blair Park in Epping to the Nature Conservancy's Lubberland Creek Preserve in Newmarket. Overall, this corridor is 23 miles long that would offer serious hiking opportunities without the need to travel long distances from the region.

SRPC's objective was to provide data that would help both the LRAC and local trail advocates investigate the feasibility of a walking trail that would generally follow a path of the river through the four Wild and Scenic towns (Epping, Lee, Durham, and Newmarket).

SRPC staff worked closely with the LRAC to coordinate production of suitable base maps that were modeled after the topographic maps published by the US Geological Service; however, they contain additional terrestrial information and detail available only from the composite GIS data maintained by the planning commission.

DATA DRIVEN PAGES

Using Data Driven Pages: This project was a prime candidate for the use of the ESRI ArcGIS tool known as Data Driven Pages. First released with ArcGIS 10.0, Data Driven Pages allows a user to automate the generation of a multi-page map series from a single map document.

How Data Driven Pages Work: Data Driven Pages work from what is known as an index layer. The index layer for this project is shown in the "Reference Extent Map". The index layer that is created defines the extent of each page within the map series by creating a polygon. Data Driven Pages then uses the index layer to "drive" the creation of the pages in the map series. Use of this feature allows for the map layout and symbology to be preserved seamlessly from map-to-map. For this project the index layer that was developed was a simple rectangular grid, however other variations can include extents of linear features as part of a strip map, or irregularly shaped polygon features.

RESOURCE LAYERS

SRPC and the LRAC utilized a number of datasets to evaluate the feasibility of a footpath along the Lamprey River. Datasets were identified as either constraints on where the path could NOT easily be planned OR as key areas of access and integration with other existing resources. Those datasets included:

Key Integration Elements:
Existing Trail Networks: Existing trail networks, mapped by SRPC and community volunteers were identified as integration areas in effort to link regional trail systems.

Public Transit Routes and Stops: Wildcat and COAST Bus Route stops represent an opportunity to promote the use of alternative transportation to access natural resources and trail networks.

Conservation Lands: Land currently in conservation with public access permitted were prioritized as connections.

Parking Lots: Parking areas were mapped in effort to connect the proposed walking trail with existing vehicular infrastructure and access

Key Constraint Elements:
Steep Slopes: Areas indicated as having steep slopes according to USGS derived 10-foot contours were avoided where possible.

Railroads: Rail line crossings, due to the nature of their complexity, were avoided.

Conservation Focus Areas: Identified as part of the 2007 Land Conservation Plan for NH's Coastal Watersheds, Conservation Focus Areas were avoided as they can contain sensitive habitats and large tracts of unfragmented lands.

Wetlands: Wetlands identified by the National Wetlands Inventory were avoided due to habitat sensitivity.

Existing Water Bodies and Features: National Hydrography Dataset, streams, brooks, lakes, and ponds were avoided where possible.

Roads: Crossing of transportation infrastructure was minimized where possible.

At the end of this project, the deliverable was a final report. This report included all base maps with trail routing preferences developed by the advocacy groups and a short letter-type narrative that summarized the project.

Within the report there was a detailed narrative describing the preferred location for the footpath on a segment-by-segment basis. It should be noted that this is a conceptual layout and many of the property owners have not been contacted or agreed to participate in certain locations. Also, no on-the-ground evaluations have yet been conducted on the environmental factors that would be affected by such locations.

The concept of the Lamprey River Footpath is a very aggressive plan, and not something that will be accomplished overnight. Consensus for the plan will have to be built through the public participation process on a town-by-town basis.

Data Sources:
Base features are from USGS 1:250,000 scale Digital Line Graphs, or archived in the GRANIT database. Digital data is not GRANIT represent the efforts of the contributing agencies to record information from the cited source metadata. Complex Systems Research Center (CSRC) under contract to the Office of Energy & Planning (OEP), and in consultation with cooperating agencies, maintains a continuing program to identify and correct errors in these data.
Neither OEP nor CSRC make any claim as to the validity or reliability or to any implied uses of these data.
Digital file contents from SRPC database. Data should be used for planning purposes only. Data was derived from various sources and was not independently verified. Street names are represented by SRPC staff. These names may not accurately reflect current street names.
Approved by the Strafford Regional Planning Commission
10/20/2016 11:23:52 AM
Date: 10/20/2016 Author: LRAC
Path: C:\Users\jacob\Documents\LRAC\LampreyRiver_Footpath\LS_Footer\LS_Footer.mxd