

**Lamprey River Advisory Committee  
Overseeing the Wild and Scenic Lamprey River  
Annual Report, FY 2010**



**T**he new Wiswall Bridge in Durham opened to traffic in June. The abutment on the left was faced with locally quarried granite that formerly comprised supports for the old bridge. LRAC contributed funding for the facings.

Photo by S. Petersen

The Lamprey River in Epping, Lee, Durham, and a small portion in Newmarket was designated into the National Park Service's Wild and Scenic Rivers Program more than a decade ago. In Durham and Lee, it was also classified a "rural" river under the New Hampshire River Management and Protection Program (RSA 483). Through 2010, there were eight committee members, appointed for three year terms, who represented three of the four towns, as well as one additional member who represented the National Park Service. Meetings were open to the public and were held on the second Tuesday of every month, with agendas posted on the website ([www.lampreyriver.org](http://www.lampreyriver.org)) and in the four town halls.

This past year, in addition to her normal duties, the committee chair was active in the work of the Lamprey River Nomination Committee that seeks recognition of the whole river by the State of New Hampshire for its River Management and Protection Program.

**Land protection** continued to be an important part of the committee's work. Acting with partners such as the Southeast Land Trust, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, town conservation commissions and others, the LRAC has leveraged \$10,000,000 to protect nearly 2,000 acres with 13 miles of river frontage over the past eleven years. In 2010, the LRAC closed on two land conservation projects and placed an additional 28.55 acres with 1,525 feet of frontage on the North River under conservation easements. One key project that was nearing completion at the end of FY 2010 secured approximately 500 acres of prime wetlands and forest on the Lamprey in Epping. Work to protect other important parcels will continue in 2011.

The **recreation** sub-committee lost its chair in 2009, but plans for a canoe launch on land donated to the town of Lee by the LRAC were completed and work is expected to begin in 2011. Several exploratory walks for families were a part of the recreational offerings this year.



High school students explored a beautiful vernal pool in Newmarket, finding fun and adventure along with wood frog egg masses and young salamanders.

Photo by S. Petersen

The **outreach and education** sub-committee, chaired by Sharon Meeker, provided an important part of the LRAC's program to assist the public and schools in learning more about the river. The education and outreach specialist worked with Newmarket High School to explore and document two vernal pools and conducted a summer dragonfly program for children and their families. She wrote several articles for outreach purposes that were also published in the local press. In 2011, she will be working on updating the website and continuing her work planning outreach programs.

In support of outreach and education, the LRAC again funded four small grants. The projects included planning and developing a system of low impact trails throughout the town of Deerfield, creating a tool lending library for removal of invasive plants, educational programming to build rain barrels and sign a low nitrogen pledge, and creating a web-based map of historic mills that helps viewers bring history to life. The LRAC and several partners sponsored a road salt conference that brought together various stakeholders to discuss the effects of over-salting roads and how salt application could be reduced. A DVD of the conference was funded by the LRAC and made available to the towns. The "Lamprey River Curriculum" and "Lamprey Through Time" video (now in DVD format) were available free of charge to teachers and both could be viewed on the website.

Sharing the historical significance of the river was undertaken by the LRAC's **history and archaeology** sub-committee, chaired by Richard Lord. As it has since 1999, the LRAC worked with the Town of Durham to create a park at the Wiswall mill and dam site. Several members of the LRAC assisted the newly formed Wiswall Historic Interpretive Committee (WHIC) in its advisory capacity to extend the historic district at the Wiswall site and plan informational kiosk panels for the park. The LRAC funded the facing of one side of an abutment for the new Wiswall Bridge to increase the historical and aesthetic value of the bridge and river as seen from John Hatch Memorial Park.

The first two programs of the three part series on "A Sense of Time and Place along the Lamprey" were presented. The first, featuring a Native American storyteller and dinner,

took place in Lee in January and was well attended by people of all ages. The second, featuring a video and historical walking tour of historical mills led by two small grant winners from 2009, took place in September and attracted a diverse audience. The third, focusing on current issues pertaining to the river, is being planned for winter. In addition, the LRAC offered administrative support to efforts by the Town of Lee to save and nominate a prominent but neglected house at Wadleigh Falls to the NH Register of Historic Places.

The **ecology and wildlife** sub-committee, chaired by Kitty Miller, funded two studies to update and/or augment previous wildlife work. The fish survey documented what fish occur where in the river and its tributaries. The fresh water mussel survey documented mussel populations along the river, paying special attention to sites where the endangered brook floater mussel has historically occurred. To combat the ecological menace presented by invasive knotweed, the LRAC continued to be a pro-active force for a regional, best-practice response.

The **water quality and quantity** sub-committee, chaired by Jim Hewitt, continued its important work monitoring the quantity and quality of the waters of the Lamprey. Municipal withdrawals of water and nitrogen reduction issues will be important topics in 2011. Sponsored in part by the LRAC, Michelle Daley of the University of New Hampshire's Lamprey River Observatory continued her work to monitor and conduct water quality research projects in 2010.

Utilizing the Wildlife Action Plan and the Coastal Conservation Plan to augment the updated LRAC management plan land protection priorities, the committee will continue to be a strong presence in multiple, on-going efforts to protect and conserve land along the Lamprey River. The LRAC plans to fund small grants again in 2011. Partnering with the Lamprey River Watershed Association and others, the LRAC will continue to support knotweed eradication efforts, volunteer water quality monitoring, and outreach efforts. Recent scientific investigations show that nitrogen loading (coming mainly from run-off from the land and failed septic systems) are problems for the river and the Great Bay Estuary. The LRAC plans to continue to promote a watershed approach to those problems in addition to more intensive outreach to the four towns represented in the Wild and Scenic portion of the river.

#### 2010 LRAC members included:

At-large: Brian Giles

Durham: Bill Hall, Jim Hewitt, Richard Kelley, Dick Lord

Epping: n/a

Lee: Sharon Meeker, Kitty Miller

Newmarket: Sara Callaghan

#### Specialists:

Laurel Cox, land conservation

David Viale, land conservation

Suzanne Petersen, outreach and education

National Park Service: Jim MacCartney

Durham Conservation Commission Liaison: Steven Burns

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Respectfully submitted by  
Sharon Meeker, Chair,  
Lamprey River Advisory Committee

