Newsletter Fall 2022

Lamprey River Management Plan: The Next Generation

According to the NH River Management and Protection Program established by RSA 483:8-a, one of the main responsibilities of a Local River Advisory Committee is to write a river management plan to guide the committee's work. To date, the Lamprey River Advisory Committee has had 3 plans: the original written in 1995 when a segment of the Lamprey River was first designated by the State of New Hampshire as a protected river and the committee was first formed; 2007 was the first revision; and 2013 when the full river and the five major tributaries were designated. The 2013 Plan has served the river and the committee well, but it is time to revisit and update the plan. The committee is actively engaged in reviewing what has been accomplished, what remains to be done, and what new issues need to be addressed.

Writing a river management plan is a big undertaking with big opportunities and potentially big consequences. Hearing comments and concerns from as many stakeholders as possible will result in a better plan than one written by a few. The Lamprey River watershed extends through fourteen towns, some that have a significant footprint, and others that do not. Big or small, each town has a stake in the management plan. All fourteen towns supported the 2013 designation and had a voice in the 2013 Lamprey River Management Plan. We hope that all fourteen towns will participate in the creation of the next management plan. Each town can have up to four voting representatives; currently, only the Town of Lee is fully represented. Some towns currently have zero representation on the committee. Their voices and concerns are not being shared or heard. If nobody steps up to participate, those concerns might need to wait until the next management plan revision.

Current Representation on the Lamprey River Advisory Committee

Barrington:1	Fremont: 0
Brentwood: 0	Lee: 4
Candia: 0	Newfields: 0
Deerfield: 0	Newmarket: 2
Durham: 2	Northwood: 1
Epping: 1	Nottingham: 1
Exeter: 0	Raymond: 1

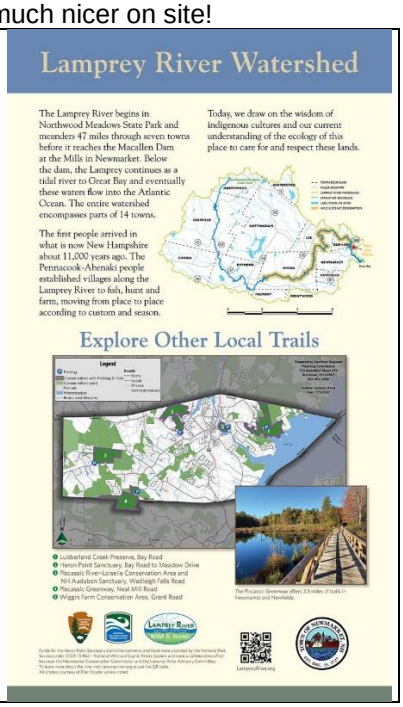
We welcome new representatives; we want to hear your concerns. Do you care about clean water? Do you like to paddle or fish on the rivers? Do you enjoy seeing and hearing wildlife along the rivers? Are you a local history buff? Do you enjoy sharing the river with others? Are you concerned about all the new development in the area? If you answered yes to any of those questions, then please let us know.

Good News at Heron Point Park, Newmarket

The Lamprey River Advisory Committee was pleased to award a Community Grant to the Newmarket Conservation Commission this past summer. Their grant application requested funding to improve the trail to minimize erosion, add needed signage, and improve safety on site by cutting two dangerous trees.

The Newmarket Conservation Commission will be hosting Conservation Connections again this fall on Oct 15th. Participants will hear a few presentations and then they can fan out to visit 3 or so conservation areas, including Heron Point. Check it out!

The beautiful, new kiosk signs are below, but they look much nicer on site!



50 Years of Clean Water

People often have fond memories of “simpler times” or “the good old days.” While such memories are important, they are not usually the full story. Sometimes simpler rules did not lead to happier times. For many of us of a certain age, stinking, ugly waterways

were around us, on the news, and sometimes causing illnesses. Swimming and fishing in many areas were dangerous activities.

In two famous cases in the late 1960s, two rivers in the US (the River Rouge in Detroit and the Buffalo River) caught fire due to excessive petroleum and sewage contamination. New Hampshire was not immune to heavy pollution. Industry and public sewers poured wastes, often completely untreated, into rivers. In Newmarket's industrial hey-day, townspeople could tell what day it was based on the color of the river, because the mills there would use different dye lots to color their textiles, and wastes would turn the river red, or green, or brown, etc.. Farther to the north, the paper mill in Berlin dumped tons of nauseating chemical waste into the river.	 Signs like this were once far more common than they are today.

The thinking was that "The solution to pollution is dilution" and "The river makes it go away." Neither is true; the problem just goes somewhere else. Too often, the people who suffered most from water pollution were not the people who created it.

The Clean Water Act, signed Oct. 18, 1972 was probably the single most important piece of legislation to address the very real problem of water pollution in this country. It was not the first legislation addressing water, but its amendments to existing laws gave the government the ability to act. The following summary is from www.epa.gov.

The 1972 amendments:

- *Established the basic structure for regulating pollutant discharges into the waters of the United States.*
- *Gave EPA the authority to implement pollution control programs such as setting wastewater standards for industry.*
- *Maintained existing requirements to set water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters.*
- *Made it unlawful for any person to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters, unless a permit was obtained under its provisions.*
- *Funded the construction of sewage treatment plants under the construction grants program.*
- *Recognized the need for planning to address the critical problems posed by nonpoint source pollution.*

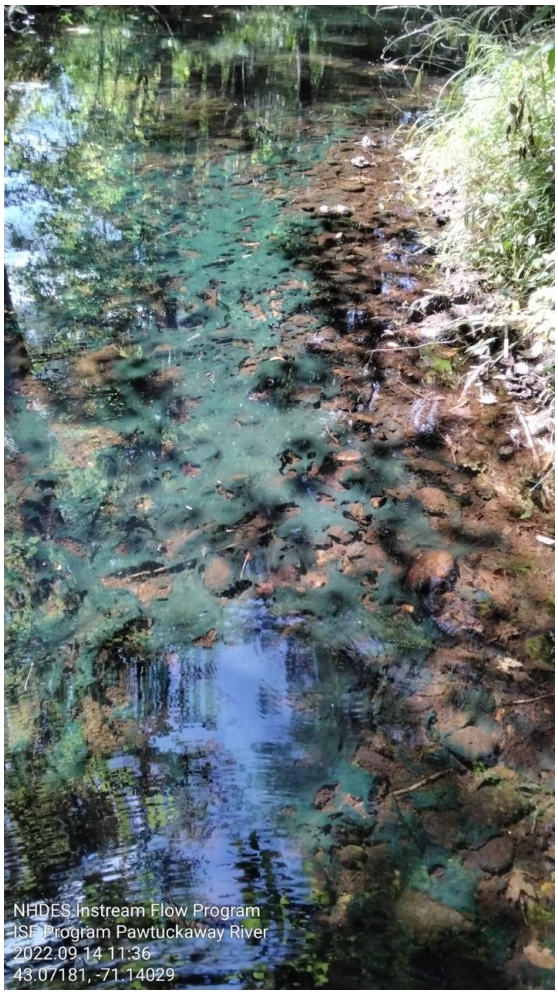
The key amendments addressed "point sources", meaning anything that comes from a pipe. This forced industry to treat wastes. It forced municipalities to treat sewage. In this regard, the Clean Water Act has been very effective. Now, fifty years later, our nation's waters still need help. At present, much of the pollution is called "nonpoint source", meaning it comes from developed surfaces (roads, sidewalks, roofs, parking lots, etc.), lawns, agricultural fields, construction sites, failing septic systems, air pollutants,

airports, etc.. In other words, human alterations to the land and our activities are now causing the bulk of pollution. Addressing this whole range of activities all over the landscape is a huge undertaking, one for which we are all responsible.

Nobody wants to see or smell sewage or weird chemicals in their rivers, lakes, or ocean. Nobody wants to see fish gasping for oxygen in polluted water. Nobody wants invisible poisons lurking in drinking water. Surveys across geographic areas, political leanings, and other variables consistently indicate that clean water is a priority for most people. Will we collectively have the will to address nonpoint source pollutants, so that in the next fifty years, people can look back and celebrate truly clean water? We hope so!

What Is This Yuck? This Water Doesn't Seem Clean!

As part of research being undertaken to monitor stream flow, NHDES found some suspicious growth in the Pawtuckaway River in Nottingham on Sept. 14, 2022. The scum was identified by NHDES as benthic cyanobacteria *Oscillatoria,* a potential toxin producer. (Benthic means it grows as a mat on top of sediments, versus in the water column.) Nottingham Police posted signs warning dog owners to keep their pets out of this material.



According to NHDES, cyanobacteria blooms are typically driven by excess phosphorus and nitrogen. Drought and warmer temperatures also can increase cyanobacteria growth.

This material will eventually degrade on its own and should not pose a threat as the material gets washed downstream.

If you ever see something that does not seem right in the rivers, please report it to NHDES!