

Questions concerning Wild and Scenic Designation for Towns

1. Why should we designate rivers in the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed as Wild and Scenic?

- a. Authorizes and funds development and implementation of a comprehensive management plan for the rivers.
- b. Identifies and protects outstanding cultural and natural resources, including water quality.
- c. Maintains free-flowing river segments by prohibiting federally licensed dams.
- d. Draws attention to designated rivers and their resources.
- e. Can help promote economic development, tourism, or recreational use, as prescribed in the management plan.
- f. Provides added oversight by the National Park Service for projects that require federal permits or involve federal funding.
- g. For land owners, may increase property values near the river.

2. Other benefits of designation:

- a. Prior to designation, the National Park Service provides funding for a study of the river's "outstanding values".
 - i. Rivers designated as "Study Rivers" rivers are protected as if already designated Wild and Scenic.
 - ii. The study phase develops a long term partnership between agencies, citizen groups, local governments and other interested organizations for management of designated rivers.
- b. Once designated Wild and Scenic:
 - i. Management plans for designated rivers receive yearly appropriations for implementation.
 - ii. Rivers compete more favorably for federal and other grants for restoration projects.
 - iii. The state's congressional delegation may request appropriations from a Special Projects Fund for extra ordinary projects related to management plan implementation.
 - iv. Formalizes a long term partnership between agencies, NPO's, local governments and other interested organizations for management of designated rivers.

3. Other questions:

- a. When will a study bill be introduced?
 - i. We will submit a bill by early summer but may not know until sometime after that when it will be approved and how much the funding will be (likely by October).
- b. Do all the towns need to indicate support?
 - i. As part of the process to get the bill submitted and approved, the W&S committee will be doing presentations to the towns. We will attempt to address any concerns before a bill is submitted. Our goal is to have full support from every town. This will greatly help our legislators in getting the study bill passed.
 - ii. When the study bill is passed we will be convening a steering committee to

conduct the study. We will be seeking town and other agency representatives to participate in the study committee.

- c. Will designation effect what I can do on my property?
 - i. Designation will not stop development. Designation itself would only effect federally licensed or assisted water resource projects that would impact the river's outstanding values.
 - ii. Designation will not rezone private land or change property rights. Land use controls on private land are solely a matter of state and local jurisdiction.
 - iii. Designation does not require landowners to provide access to their land.
- d. Will designation affect recreation activity?
 - i. Recreation is one of the many outstanding values of the Study Rivers and it will be addressed in the study and in the management plan. We hope to enhance recreational activity where appropriate and protect existing recreational opportunities.
 - ii. The state will continue to manage such things as hunting and fishing.
- e. Will this affect agriculture?
 - i. Agriculture is an important cultural and natural resource in the watershed. Agricultural impacts and outstanding values will be addressed during the study process. We may be able to use the Pawcatuck Water Use Optimization model to better manage water resources.