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Tracie Sales, Rivers Coordinator
NH Department of Environmental Services
29 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Ms. Sales:

I write on behalf of American Whitewater in support of efforts to nominate the Warner River for designation under the state's Rivers Management and Protection Program. The Warner River is a highly valued whitewater boating resource that should be protected and enhanced through inclusion in the Program.

Founded in 1954, American Whitewater is a national non-profit organization with a mission to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely. American Whitewater is a membership organization representing whitewater enthusiasts, river conservationists, and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates across America including the Merrimack Valley Paddlers. The organization is the primary advocate for the preservation and protection of whitewater rivers throughout the United States, and connects the interests of human-powered recreational river users with ecological and science-based data to achieve the goals within its mission.

On both a national and a state level, American Whitewater has worked to protect outstanding resource waters including headwater streams through the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and other river protection statutes. In New Hampshire, we recently led efforts to protect riparian land used for access to the Contoocook and Winnepesaukee rivers, working with local communities to create conservation easements and land donations to preserve access for future generations of boaters. We also worked to support efforts that led to the removal of an obsolete dam on the Contoocook River to improve the recreational use of the river and aquatic habitat.

On behalf of its affiliate paddling clubs and several thousand boaters within reach of the Warner River, American Whitewater strongly supports the efforts by Trout Unlimited and other organizations and agencies to include the Warner River in the state's Rivers Management and Protection Program. The Warner river is a gem of a whitewater run, treasured by countless whitewater boaters in the northeast region. Considered an introductory "creek run", the Warner is an excellent place to learn more advanced

kayaking maneuvers, attracting boaters from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and elsewhere to the river and benefitting the local economy. The river is also used by college outdoors programs and school groups as an outdoor classroom. Flows on the Warner are often suitable for boating when other boating opportunities are unavailable due to its large watershed, enhancing the recreational value of this river reach.

The section of the river most enjoyed by whitewater boaters is the reach extending 3.7 miles from Melvin Mills to Warner. With an average gradient of 86 fpm, this section contains technical rapids ranging from Class II to Class IV. The main draw on the river is the Warner Gorge, a wonderful series of tight drops one-immediately-after-the-other packed into a short-but-intense quarter mile.

Thank you for considering the Warner River for inclusion in the Rivers Management and Protection Program, as this designation will promote and enhance recreational boating opportunities in the region.

Very truly yours,



Bob Nasdor
Northeast Stewardship Director
American Whitewater