

## SB445 WARNER RIVER DESIGNATION CHEAT SHEET

SB445: A bill to add the Warner River to the list of “Designated Rivers” under RSA 483, the NH Rivers Management and Protection Program (RMPP), was introduced in the 2018 Legislative Session in November 2017. It was unanimously passed by the Senate Energy and Resources Committee on January 16th, 2018. The full Senate is scheduled to take up the bill on February 1<sup>st</sup>. If passed, and signed into law, SB445 will Amend RSA 483 to add the Warner River as the 19th Designated River in the state.

### 15 BENEFITS ACCOSIATED WITH DESIGNATION

1. Recognizes and Promotes the Warner River as a Significant State Resource;
2. Establishes a 20.1 mile long, 1/4 mile wide, protective corridor along both sides of the West Branch, and Warner River beginning in Bradford, and passing through Sutton, Warner, Webster, and Hopkinton where it joins the already Designated Contoocook River;
3. Assigns *Rural*, *Rural Community* and *Community* classifications along segments of the protected corridor that correspond to the River's existing character and community use or preference. Classification criteria seek to protect existing river character and river water quality along these segments. For example a *Rural* or *Rural Community* classification along a segment allows for dam redevelopment within six years of bill passage, whereas a segment with a *Community* classification allows unrestricted dam redevelopment in perpetuity.
4. Establishes a Local River Advisory Committee (LAC) that:
  - Creates a diverse, local forum for balancing uses and preserving this valuable resource;
  - Generates awareness of watershed water quality issues within local communities;
  - Develops a River Corridor Management Plan;
  - Promotes a watershed approach for Land Use Planning;
  - Promotes preservation of the River's Historic, Cultural & Recreational Resources;
  - Makes recommendations for Land Use and Conservation within the river corridor;
  - Provides landowners along the river direct involvement;
  - Provides a stronger local voice at the state and federal levels;
  - Reviews/comments on how proposed development projects may impact the river;
  - May coordinate river-wide events and studies;
  - May assist watershed towns with grant funding for projects affecting the river;
  - May assist landowners protecting, maintaining, enhancing or promoting their land;
  - May assist local landowners and businesses with NHDES /Federal permit applications.
5. Promotes the value of river corridor land;
6. Promotes increased Water Quality Monitoring; Ensures priority NHDES assistance with preservation of High Water Quality;
7. Ensures priority NHDES assistance with preservation and balance of In-Stream Flows that support ecological and human needs thereby helping to ensure the preservation of Wild Brook Trout and Other At-Risk Species;
8. Enhances Aquifer and Private/Municipal Well Water protection;
9. Enhances protection of Existing & Possible Future Green Energy Resources;
10. Promotes balanced, Low-Impact Future Development along the River;
11. Determines Aquatic and Terrestrial Invasive Plant Species Presence;
12. Provides priority access to NH DES Resources;
13. Provides Preferred Grant Funding Opportunities for Community and Landowner needs;
14. Demonstrates cooperative effort of all five town municipal boards, local organizations and over 125 residents. In addition, the nomination/designation has received over ten letters of support from organizations including The Nature Conservancy, the NH Rivers Council, the NH Rivers Management Advisory Committee, NH Fish & Game, American Whitewater, the Contoocook North Branch LAC, the Upper Merrimack River LAC, NHDES, Basil Woods TU and the NH TU Council.
15. By protecting such a significant natural resource, drinking water, habitat and recreational use, this Designation strongly promotes a healthy NH economy. For more information, please visit [the Warner River Nomination website](#).