

Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee

Members of the Souhegan River Local Advisory Committee (SoRLAC) serve as stewards over activities in the Souhegan River Watershed. Members represent business, recreation, agriculture, and conservation interests as well as riparian landowners and local government. Communities in the Souhegan River Corridor include Amherst, Bedford, Lyndeborough, Merrimack, Milford, Greenville, New Ipswich, Temple, and Wilton. Information about SoRLAC is available at www.nashuarpc.org/SRLAC.



The Souhegan River Watershed Management Plan was prepared by NRPC on behalf of SoRLAC. The Plan is available for download at www.nashuarpc.org/SRLAC.



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Souhegan River Watershed Management Plan

*Protecting Water
Resources and
Aquatic Habitats*



Community Watershed Outreach
for the Town of Merrimack

Souhegan River Watershed

The River

The 34-mile long Souhegan River is a pathway that connects communities and provides year-round recreation to swim, fish, paddle, walk along, and enjoy scenic views. The river adds to quality of life to residents and visitors alike. Flowing through several town centers, the river provides a sense of history, a connection to nature, and a diverse set of economic opportunities.

The Watershed

The Souhegan River Watershed occupies approximately 220 square miles spanning seventeen communities in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. The Souhegan River Watershed Management Plan (SRWMP) analyzes the River at the watershed scale, which allows for water resource goals to be realized across community boundaries in an ecologically sound manner.

The Plan

Creating the SRWMP was the first step in the process of protecting the Souhegan River Watershed under the NH Rivers Management and Protection Program. The Plan identifies watershed



conditions, priority management issues, and contains recommendations on ways local officials, state government, concerned citizens, and volunteer groups can help protect the river resource.

Moving Forward

Formal adoption of the Plan by watershed communities is the next step toward fully implementing the Plan. Once incorporated into each watershed community's Master Plan, recommended management strategies will become part of a wide range of municipal management decisions that affect or involve the Souhegan River or its watershed.

The Souhegan in the Town of Merrimack

The Merrimack Village Dam was the lowermost dam on the Souhegan River in Merrimack, NH. The Souhegan River empties into the Merrimack River, which eventually empties into the Atlantic Ocean when it reaches Newburyport, Massachusetts. NH Dam Safety determined the dam did not meet current dam safety criteria. In addition, there were operation, maintenance, and repair costs, as well as issues with diadromous fish attempting to move upstream. Since the dam provided no measurable benefits to the owner, in lieu of repairing the dam, the owner sought to remove it. Dam removal can be an effective strategy for restoring a river back to more natural flow and ecological conditions.



Removal of the Merrimack Village Dam in 2008. Photo courtesy Gomez and Sullivan Engineers, P.C.