



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Personnel Sub-Committee

Monday, August 5, 2019

5:30 PM

Main Meeting Room, Town Hall, 933 Hopmeadow Street

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order

- 1) Interview and Discuss Candidates for the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Management Committee

Adjournment

Roles and Responsibilities of Town Appointed Members of the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Management Committee

Roles

- Participate in addressing river-related issues affecting stream flow and the five outstanding resource values (ORVs) and evaluating proposals that could affect ORVs
- Cooperate in updating the Management Plan periodically
- Work on projects that provide opportunities to the public and also committee member organizations to learn and participate in resolving issues affecting the river
- Help promote and support river enhancement projects
- Participate in decisions around dispersing funding to entities requesting financial help with projects meeting the goals in #5, p.15 in the Management Plan
- Actively fulfill the function of liaison between one's town, the town land trust and other town-based conservation organizations.
- Help in preparing the annual report of the Committee and in publicizing any pressing needs or issues requiring attention or assistance from the local, state and /or federal government

Responsibilities

- Attend monthly committee meetings and/or coordinate with the alternate member(s) so that each town has at least one representative present at every meeting
- Serve actively on one subcommittee, for example, Stewardship, Small Grants, Education and Outreach, Management Plan update
- Report to one's town on committee activities annually or as the town requests.
- Stay up to date on the activities of one's town land use boards and commissions, for example, planning, zoning, inland wetlands and watercourses and conservation and report to the Wild and Scenic committee as needed on matters where the Committee could provide support or that could affect stream flow and the ORVs
- Alert the National Park Service to relevant projects that require federal funding, permitting or licensing so that the NPS can provide input

This description of roles and responsibilities reflects the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Management Plan and the experience of the upper river's Farmington River Coordinating Committee. For more information, see Chapter 3 of the Management Plan at the link below.

<http://lowerfarmingtonriver.org/docs/MP-Chapter3.pdf>

Partnership Wild & Scenic: A Brief Description

The National Park Service's Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers program provides for exceptional rivers to be designated "Wild & Scenic", based on completion of a study by a committee composed of locally appointed representatives from the river towns and representatives from other stakeholder organizations. The Wild & Scenic Study was initiated locally. The towns that were involved in the Lower Farmington River/Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Study are Avon, Bloomfield, Burlington, Canton, East Granby, Farmington, Granby, Hartland, Simsbury and Windsor. With designation, 1.1 miles of the Farmington river in Canton were added to the upper Farmington's designation, so Canton is no longer a part of the lower river.

To be considered "Wild & Scenic" under the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, a river must have at least one Outstanding Resource Value (ORV), be it natural, cultural or recreational. Several research projects, funded by the National Park Service and conducted by the Study Committee, have helped establish five key areas in which the lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook meet this standard: Geology, Water Quality, Biodiversity, Cultural Landscape and Recreation. Study area towns need to demonstrate support of the designation.

- Achieving the Wild & Scenic designation will help ensure steady funding for local projects to protect and enhance the river. An advisory management plan, developed by the Study Committee, will guide these and other river-related conservation efforts. Under the plan, private landowners continue to be the primary stewards of their property and towns continue to be responsible for regulating land use along the river. There are no federal mandates or new regulatory powers established and towns are not required to implement recommendations in the Management Plan.

Benefits of a Wild & Scenic Designation Include:

- Annual funding through the National Park Service for river conservation and enhancement projects related to the ORVs. (For a list of projects supported by the Farmington River Coordinating Committee [FRCC], the advisory management group on the upper river, see the enclosed page from their annual report.) There is no cost to towns.
- National Park Service technical assistance for projects.
- Enhanced status of the river. (This can be used to encourage tourism and economic development.)
- Establishment of an advisory management committee that considers the river as a whole and has locally appointed representatives from all the towns involved.

What a Wild & Scenic Designation Does Not Do:

- **Designation does not change land use regulations along the river.** The towns retain control of local land use along the river and brook. The Wild & Scenic Rivers Act does not authorize the federal government to enact land use regulations for private lands along a designated river. The towns in our Study Area all have established certain provisions for land use on private land along the river, under the authority of State of Connecticut law. With designation, that local control will continue.
- **Designation will not deprive landowners of their land.** The Partnership Wild & Scenic program was designed to respect the patterns of private land ownership in the Northeast. When a river receives a Partnership Wild & Scenic River designation, the federal government actually loses its existing right to condemn land in the corridor. Nor can landowners be forced to sell their property. The Upper Farmington River was designated a Partnership Wild & Scenic River in 1994. No landowners on the Upper Farmington have lost their land because of the designation.
- **Designation would not prevent recreational uses of the river such as fishing and paddling.** There is nothing in the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act that requires a change in **fishing regulations**. The State of Connecticut will continue to be the regulatory authority. A benefit of a Wild & Scenic designation is that with the designation, some annual National Park Service funding that could be used to improve fish passage on the river. In regard to **paddling** and canoeing, the situation is similar. Because one of the ORVs for the lower Farmington and Salmon Brook is Recreation, National Park Service funding associated with a Wild & Scenic designation could be used to improve river access points for paddlers. Should recreational

activities on the river begin to degrade the river itself or the river banks, the advisory Management Committee could suggest remedies and potentially provide funding for improvements.

- **Designation has not prevented Canton from using its dam for hydropower.** Although the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act requires that designated rivers be free-flowing, segments of a river can be excluded from a Wild & Scenic designation. The lower Farmington already has an operating hydropower facility at Rainbow Dam in Windsor which is excluded from the designation.
- **Designation will not require funding from the town.** Towns don't pay anything for a Wild & Scenic Study or for the designation. On the other hand, the Wild & Scenic Study Committee has used National Park Service funding for several contracted studies that put money into the Connecticut economy. Now that the lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook are designated, we can expect annual funding from the National Park Service that could be spent on a wide variety of local river-related projects.
- **Designation will not prevent the town from doing necessary projects near the river, such as bridge replacement.** Because the lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook are designated Wild & Scenic, water resource projects that alter the flow of the river, or that are Federally funded, licensed or permitted will need to be reviewed by the National Park Service. In theory, on a designated river, the NPS has the authority to prohibit a project if it interferes with the flow of the river and has a direct and adverse effect on the values for which the river was designated. In practice, the NPS reviews projects and works with the town and the advisory management committee from the start of the project planning process to reach a project design that will be acceptable to the town and will protect the river. If the NPS used its authority to stop projects or to make them much more expensive, towns would have stopped agreeing to have rivers in their borders designated. (See below for Connecticut towns with Wild & Scenic rivers.)
- This protection from potentially adverse "federally assisted water projects" is central to all Wild & Scenic Rivers, and is the only "regulatory" aspect to the Act. The purpose is to maintain a natural river channel and protect sufficient flow and water quality to maintain identified Outstanding Resource Values. This does not mean that federally licensed or assisted projects are prohibited. To the contrary, projects such as waste water treatment permits (EPA permit); streambank stabilization projects (Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) permit); bridge replacement projects (ACOE permit); pipeline crossings (ACOE permit) take place on the Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers in the northeastern US. In most cases, existing standards and best management practices are in place to adequately address river protection. For example, permitting of the New Hartford Waste Water Treatment Plant was governed by existing standards of the Clean Water Act and State of Connecticut Water Quality Standards.
- **Designation does not impose new water quality standards on towns.** The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection in Connecticut (DEEP) currently enforces Federal Clean Water Act standards which include a "no degradation" requirement. The Farmington River is already held to a high standard by the DEEP. The Study Committee has obtained a letter from the DEEP stating that higher water quality standards would not result from a Wild & Scenic designation.

Other Connecticut Towns Have Streams Designated Wild & Scenic:

- In 1994, the Upper Farmington River in Connecticut was designated as a Partnership Wild & Scenic River. All or part of the river in **Colebrook, Hartland, Barkhamsted, New Hartford and Canton** have been designated Wild & Scenic. There are many examples of projects which have been supported in the upper river towns through the Farmington River Coordinating Committee, the advisory management committee on the upper river. These include funding a Natural Resource Inventory for the Town of Hartland and repainting a bridge in Barkhamsted from which paint was chipping off and falling into the river. There have not been problems arising from partnership with the Federal government.
- In May, 2008, the Eightmile River Watershed was designated Wild & Scenic, also under the Partnership model. The towns of **East Haddam, Lyme and Salem** are included in the designation area.

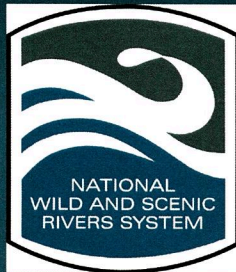
Lower Farmington River/Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Study Town Endorsements

- All ten towns in the Study Area endorsed a Wild & Scenic designation for the lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook. With designation, 1.1 miles of river in Canton were added to the upper Farmington River's Wild and Scenic Area.



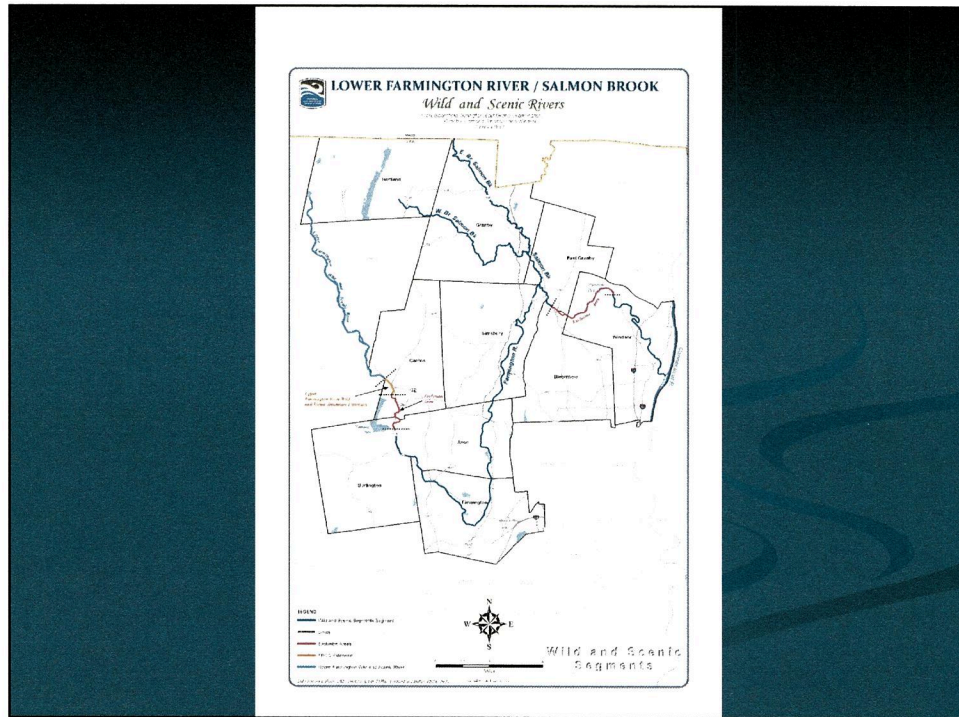
Photo: Tom Cameron

W&S River Stewardship on the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook



“Certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess **outstandingly remarkable** scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar **values**, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be **protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations**. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dam and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes.

(National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act,
1968)



Classifications:

(1) Wild River Areas: Free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted.

(2) Scenic River Areas: Free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.

(3) Recreational River Areas: Readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

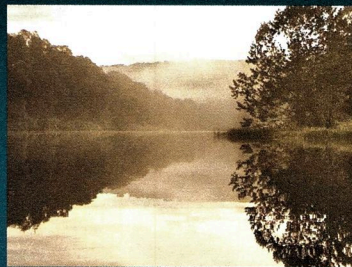


Photo: Tom Cameron

Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs)

Regionally Significant
Unique, Rare or
Exemplary...

Water Quality*
Scenic
Recreational*
Geological*
Ecological*
Historical*
Cultural*
Archeological*



Photo: Tomi Cameron

Lower Farmington and Salmon Brook Classification and ORVs

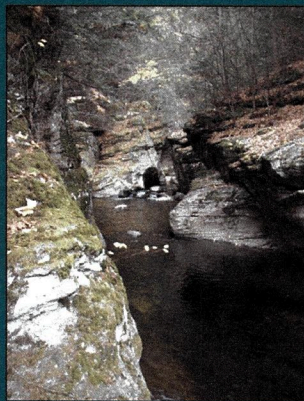


Photo: Joyce Kennedy

- Classified as “recreational” due to the level of human activity and development in the river corridor and accessibility from roads and bridges.
- **Free-flowing** condition
- High **water quality**
- A regionally unique combination of **recreational** opportunities – whitewater paddling, fishing, hiking trails, and birding
- Regionally exemplary **biological diversity** for fresh water mussels, uncommon fish communities and plant species
- Regionally unique **cultural landscapes** – Tobacco Valley, Underground Railway, historic settlement patterns and archeology
- Regionally exemplary **geologic** features – Tariffville Gorge, Traprock Ridge, Sandplains

Benefits of the Designation

- Honor and Pride
- Local Control Through Zoning and Stewardship
- Federal Review of Federally-Funded and Permitted Projects
- Boost to Local Economies
- Leveraging Resources with Partners



Photo: Tomi Cameron

Wild & Scenic Coordinating Committee

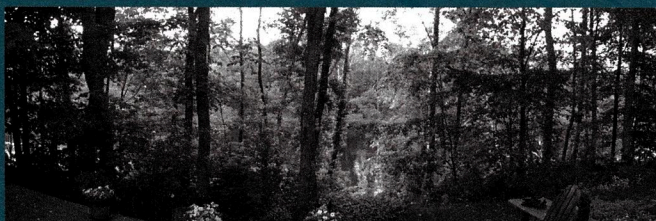
- A Coordinating Committee is created following the W&S designation in Congress (PL# 116-9 John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act of 2019).
- The Committee comprises representatives of the riverfront towns (Avon, Bloomfield, Burlington, East Granby, Farmington, Granby, Hartland, Simsbury, and Windsor), CT DEEP, FRWA, Salmon Brook Watershed Association, Pequabuck Watershed Association, Stanley Black & Decker, and National Park Service (NPS)



The CC is charged with coordinating with stakeholders on river activities to ensure long-term stewardship of the river.

The CC's Major Roles

- **Partnership** with local, state, and federal governments as well as local organizations and property owners
- Provide a **forum** for discussion of river issues
- Offer on-going **education** efforts to inform and inspire people of all ages about the river
- Maintain records and continually seek more **information** on the health of the river and its inhabitants



Examples of Work
on the
Upper Farmington
W&S River
(Designated 1994)

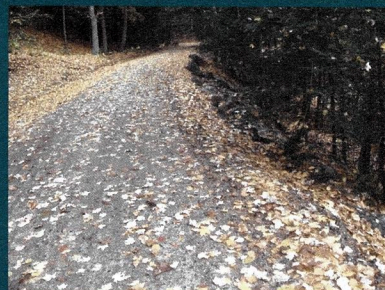
West River Road Bank Stabilization Completed 2003

- Project Total = \$100,000
- State of CT = \$50,000
- FRCC Funds = \$10,000
- Town of Barkhamsted = Labor and Equipment (Local match \$40,000)
- FRWA = In-kind Support



Nepaug Forest Bank Stabilization Completed 2007

- Project Total = \$11,500
- In-Kind Contributions:
 - CT DEP – Labor and Equipment
 - MDC – Materials and Expertise
 - FRCC – Project Coordination
- Labor and Equipment = \$4,000
- Materials = \$7,500



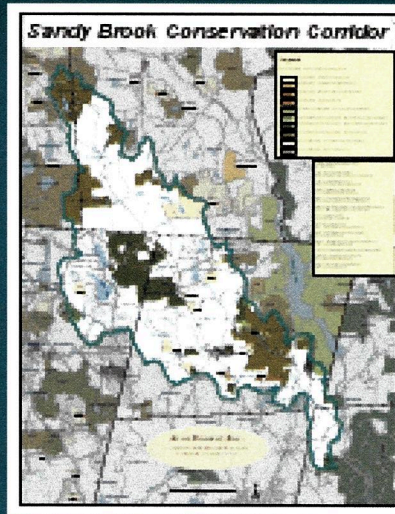
Invasive Plant Management



Still River Watershed Stormwater Management



Sandy Brook Conservation Corridor Project



Cooperative Recreational Management



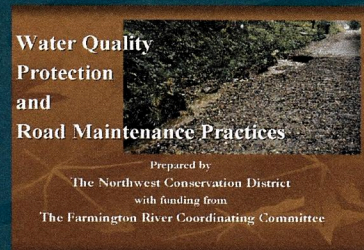
Studies and On-Going Efforts

- Mussels, Snails, Crayfish
- Flow Management
- Habitat Enhancement
- Water Quality
Monitoring



Outreach and Education

- Open houses and exhibits
- Informational workshops
- Informational kiosks
- Newsletters
- Website –
www.FarmingtonRiver.org
- Like Us on Facebook!



FRCC Grants Program



- Fish in Schools Programs
- Archeological Studies – Richard Smith site in Colebrook - and Squire's Tavern property in Barkhamsted
- Natural Resource Inventories
- Land Trust Start Up Funds
- River Celebrations
- Stormwater Best Management Practices
- Others....

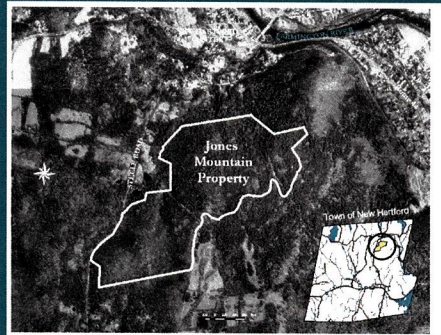
Pat Keener and Nancy L. Johnson Scholarships

- Scholarships to graduating **H.S. seniors and college students** from five-town W&S area going into environmental studies.
- Created to honor Pat Keener from New Hartford – one of the first representatives, long-time chair of FRCC, and a great friend of the Farmington River - and Rep. Nancy Johnson who championed the river on many occasions – including getting the upper section W&S designation and Lower Farmington/Salmon Brook Study.



Land Protection and Land Trusts

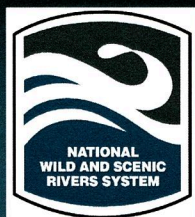
- Land Protection program to assist local Land Trusts in planning and land acquisition.



Partnering with Partnership Rivers



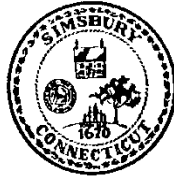
- The Farmington W&S River is one of 15 “Partnership Rivers” in the East that is managed under a similar partnership model.



Contacts:

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860-670-5881

Bill Dornbos or Aimee Petras
Farmington River Watershed Association
860-658-4442



Town of Simsbury
Interviews for Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook
Wild and Scenic Management Committee
Main Meeting Room, Town Hall
August 5, 2019

Panelists:

Eric Wellman, First Selectman & Personnel Sub-Committee Chair
Sean Askham, Board of Selectmen & Personnel Sub-Committee
Chris Kelly, Board of Selectmen & Personnel Sub-Committee

Staff:

Maria Capriola, Town Manager
Tom Roy, DPW Director

Time	Candidate
5:30 pm	Justin Crane by Phone [REDACTED]
5:50 pm	Wanda Coleman
6:10 pm	Stephen McDonnell by Phone [REDACTED]
6:30 pm	BREAK
6:40 pm	Brendan Mahoney
7:00 pm	Mike Ryan
Sally Rieger unavailable for this date	