

TOUCHING ALL THE BASINS: RIVER NEWS IN THE SRPEDD REGION

Taunton River Wild & Scenic Designation

On October 19, 2000, President Bill Clinton signed the Taunton River Study Bill into public law (Public Law 106-318) culminating more than five years of cooperative regional planning efforts. This law establishes a budget with the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, which enables a study to be undertaken to see if a 22 mile stretch of the Upper Taunton River, from Halifax to Taunton, is eligible for inclusion in the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The first step in the upper Taunton River Study will be to form a Citizens Advisory committee. The Committee will work with the National Park Service to develop and oversee a final plan of work and public outreach strategy. SRPEDD, the Taunton River Watershed Team Leader, National Park Service and others will provide technical assistance to the Committee.

Besides SRPEDD, long time, local TRSP partners in this project include: Ruth Geoffroy and Rosemarie Correia, Middleborough; Judy Christine and Richard McCarthy, Raynham; Christine Stickney and Kitty Doherty, Bridgewater; Jac MacDonald, West Bridgewater; Joan Pierce, MA Dept. of Fisheries Wildlife & Environmental Law Enforcement; Charlie Tracy, National Park Service; The Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts, and; several former officials from Halifax and Taunton.

The study will commence with a kick-off event at the Middleborough Town hall on March 16, 2001, to honor members of our Massachusetts

Congressional delegation who worked so diligently to get the Taunton River Study Bill passed. Thanks go out to Representatives McGovern, Frank and Moakley and Senators Kennedy and Kerry for their efforts on our behalf.

Ten Mile River Open Space Plan

On January 18, 2001, the Commonwealth's first Regional Open Space and Recreation Plan was certified by the Division of Conservation Services for the Ten Mile River and Narragansett/Mt. Hope Bay Watersheds.

The Regional Open Space and Recreation Plan covers all or portions of: Attleboro, Fall River, North Attleborough, Plainville, Rehoboth, Seekonk, Swansea and Wrentham. The plan was funded by the Massachusetts Watershed Initiative and overseen by the Ten Mile River and Narragansett/Mt. Hope Bay Watershed Team Leader, Andrea Langhauser. Bill Napolitano, SRPEDD's Environmental Planner, worked with representatives of the eight municipalities for fifteen months to build the plan from "the ground up." Highlights of the plan include potential regional trail areas, environmental focus areas and water quality initiatives. Thanks go out to the following Regional Open Space Plan Committee members for their time and hard work: Ed Tanner and Scott McPartlin, Attleboro; Rae Mercer and Nancy Chisholm, Plainville; Don Johnson and Pat Redding, No. Attleborough; Radford Rigby, Rehoboth; Gale Nigrelli, Seekonk; Ray Stewart and Patricia Freeman, Swansea; Jennifer Firth, Wrentham; Priscilla Chapman, Fall River; Emily Brunkhurst, MA

Audubon Society, and Don Doucette, Ten Mile River Watershed Alliance. Two years ago, through a grant from the Massachusetts Watershed Initiative, SRPEDD assisted the Westport River Watershed Alliance (WRWA), the Towns of Dartmouth and Westport, and the City of Fall River in establishing the Westport River Watershed Council. Representatives from the WRWA and the municipalities met twice a month for ten months with Bill Napolitano of SRPEDD to develop a Priority Action Plan for the watershed.

Westport River Watershed Council

In September of 2000, the WRWA received a two-year \$40,000 Stewardship Grant from the MA Executive Office of Environmental affairs to: address stormwater management issues at the Head of Westport; for Fall River to study land acquisition issues related to water supply protection and to develop public education materials for the Copicut Reservoir area, and; for Dartmouth to conduct extensive water quality sampling in the Shingle Island River and Lake Noquachoke areas.

Congratulations to Gay Gillespie (WRWA), Wendy Henderson (Dartmouth), Jim Hartnett (Fall River) and other Council members on their success!

