
INTRODUCTION

The Taunton Wild & Scenic River Stewardship Plan presents a vision and action strategy for the cooperative management and protection of the approximately 40 miles of the Taunton River in southeastern Massachusetts. It also presents a vision and associated management actions for the major tributary watersheds of the river and the upper reaches of Mount Hope Bay. The Plan was prepared as part of the Taunton Wild & Scenic River Study, authorized by Congress in 2000.

The study has been conducted by the Taunton Wild & Scenic River Study Committee in cooperation with the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) and the National Park Service. The Study Committee included members from the ten communities within the study area, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Riverways Programs, the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts, Natural Resources Trust of Bridgewater, The Nature Conservancy, Save the Bay, and the Taunton River Watershed Alliance. Funding and staff assistance were provided by the Northeast Regional Office of the National Park Service.



Segreganset River, Dighton *Rachel Calabro*

The plan is made up of eight sections plus an appendix section:

I. Background

This section provides background information on the watershed, the Wild and Scenic River Study, and the content of this Plan.

II. River Protection Framework & Philosophy

This section describes the goals of the study committee, the guiding principles that helped to form the plan and how the Wild & Scenic designation would affect the river, the tributary watersheds and those entities interested in protecting the Taunton River.

III. Organizational Structure

This section describes the organizational structure that is being proposed to oversee implementation of the plan.

IV. Geographic Area Covered By This Plan

This section describes the primary focus area, the tributary focus areas and their relationship to the potential Wild & Scenic river designation.

V. Management and Protection of Outstanding Resources

This section outlines the major management and protection strategies for the Taunton River. It includes examples of current management and protection, potential threats to the resources and an action strategy for each of the six outstanding resource values.

VI. Management of Water Quality, Water Quantity and Instream Flow

This section describes background on water quality and instream flow, potential threats and an action strategy for management.

VII. Wild & Scenic River Designation

This section describes in more detail the relationship of the proposed Wild & Scenic River designation to this plan and to the protection of the free-flowing character and identified Outstanding Resource Values of the Taunton River.

VIII. Tributary Surveys

This section outlines the results of eight tributary shoreline surveys, conducted by Stream Teams made up of volunteers, municipal officials and Wild & Scenic committee members with support from the Wild & Scenic study and the Massachusetts Riverways Program. These shoreline surveys provided baseline data and helped to identify in the tributaries the same outstanding values that were identified on the mainstem Taunton River. Management recommendations were developed from survey data and Stream Team action plans.

IX. References

Appendix A: Existing Protections: Local Zoning and State and Federal Programs

This section gives an overview of some of the important river and land protections that are in place in each of the municipalities in the study area, as well as state and federal regulations that pertain to river management.

Appendix B: Model Bylaws

This section provides examples of bylaws that are being used in the Taunton River corridor to protect natural resources.

Appendix C: Public Access

This section provides suggested public access sites and projects, as identified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Public Access Board.

Appendix D: Letters from Towns