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## II. RIVER PROTECTION FRAMEWORK & PHILOSOPHY

### Overarching Goals

The following goals were adopted by the Taunton Wild & Scenic River Study Committee and serve as the foundation for this Taunton River Stewardship Plan:

- *To understand, preserve and restore the Taunton River corridor as an intact river ecosystem and regional resource.*
- *To develop a strong coalition of municipalities, citizens, non-profits and agencies for planning and implementing public education, land-use, recreation and conservation strategies for the Taunton River.*
- *To secure designation of the Taunton River as a National Wild and Scenic River*

### Resource Based Goals

In addition to the three overarching goals cited above, the Stewardship Plan is driven by the objective of protecting and enhancing the “***Outstanding Resource Values***” identified for the Taunton River during the study process:

- **Agriculture**
- **Ecology and Biological Diversity**
- **Estuary**
- **Fisheries**
- **History and Archaeology**
- **Recreation**

Each of these resource values is represented in a separate chapter of the Stewardship Plan which lays out background, threats, goals/objectives, opportunities, success stories, and proposed action strategies.

### Stewardship Approach

The successful implementation of this Stewardship Plan and the achievement of its goals will be based upon the willing participation of partners at all levels – from the individual landowner to the community to non-profit and agency partners. To facilitate this, the Plan proposes the creation of a ***Taunton River Stewardship Council*** that would serve as the central coordinating/facilitating body for implementation of the Stewardship Plan. This Council will be modeled

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after other Wild & Scenic River Councils including the SuAsCo River Stewardship Council and the Westfield River Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee, both active in Massachusetts.

### **Wild and Scenic River Designation**

The Taunton Wild & Scenic River Study Committee believes that designation of the Taunton River as a component of the national Wild & Scenic Rivers System is a critical step in the fulfillment of the goals and resource objectives that have been defined for the River. The designation would:

1. Officially recognize the Taunton River as a resource of national significance;
2. Establish the federal government, through the National Park Service, as a partner in the implementation of this Plan;
3. Provide opportunity for federal funding to implement the action strategies of the Plan and support the operations of the proposed Taunton River Stewardship Council;
4. Protect the Taunton from potentially harmful federal water resource development projects that could threaten the outstanding resource values of the River.

If designated a Wild & Scenic River by the United States Congress, this plan would serve as the “Comprehensive Management Plan” required for all National Wild & Scenic Rivers. The effects of Wild & Scenic River designation are more fully described in Chapter VII of this Plan.



Marsh at Broad Cove, Dighton *Rachel Calabro*