

## **AR 156**

### **Merrimack River Benefits**

**1997 Assessment of Outdoor Recreation in New Hampshire: A Summary Report. R.A. Robertson. (Appendix A in New Hampshire's 2008 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan).**

Mail questionnaire administered to random sample of 3,000 households drawn from a listing of persons licensed to drive in NH. Completion rate of 30.1%.

When asked to rank 22 different programs or projects on how they would decide to spend future monies within New Hampshire as high, moderate, or low priority, 58.6% of respondents ranked preservation/restoration of native wildlife as a high priority and 36.3% ranked enforcement of environmental laws as a high priority.

Respondents were asked to rank the top three priorities for New Hampshire state government from the list of 22 programs/projects. Respondents indicated that the top three priorities were protection/improvement of water quality in rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds (69.9%), preservation/restoration of native wildlife (31.9%), and enforcement of environmental laws (23.7%).

[http://www.nh.gov/oep/programs/recreation/SCORP\\_2008-2013/documents/AppendixAAdobe.pdf](http://www.nh.gov/oep/programs/recreation/SCORP_2008-2013/documents/AppendixAAdobe.pdf)

### **New Hampshire River Management Protection Program**

A designated river managed and protected for its outstanding natural and cultural resources in accordance with RSA 483 – The Rivers Management & Protection Act.

Upper and Lower Merrimack designated in June 1990; designation protects nearly 45 miles of the Merrimack River.

Upper Merrimack River: Upstream of Garvin Falls Dam

The Upper Merrimack River provides nesting sites for bank swallow and kingfisher, bald eagle wintering habitat, habitat for osprey, anadromous fish habitat, and is a designated cold water fishery with 19 resident species (8 of which are of sport or recreational importance). As a major north-south river in New England, the Merrimack is a migratory route for waterfowl and songbirds. The river is included in the Anadromous Salmon Restoration Program – a cooperative effort between state and federal agencies to recreate and maintain upstream access for anadromous fish. Finally, the New England River Protection and Energy Development Project ranked the Upper Merrimack River "of highest significance" as an anadromous fishery and "highly significant" as an inland fishery.

Lower Merrimack River: Merrimack/Bedford town line to Massachusetts border

The Lower Merrimack River provides critical habitat for a variety of plant and animal species, including bald eagle (wintering habitat). As a major north-south river in New England, the Merrimack is a migratory route for waterfowl and songbirds. New and improved fish passage facilities and on-going research efforts are directed toward the return of the native Atlantic salmon to waters as far north as the Pemigewasset River. The completion of a fish passage facility at the Pawtucket Dam in 1986 has allowed American shad to move upstream to Manchester after more than a century's absence. Important game species sought by anglers on the Lower Merrimack River include small and large mouth bass as well as rainbow and brook trout which are stocked by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.

<http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/rivers/desigriv.htm>

### **USFWS 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation: New Hampshire (April 2008)**

New Hampshire state 2006 statistics:

230,000 anglers (resident and non-resident); \$172,413,000 total fishing-related expenditures (average of \$618 per angler) (86% freshwater).

710,000 participated in wildlife watching; \$273,769,000 total related expenditures (average of \$349 per participant)

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/fhw06-nh.pdf>

### **USFWS National Fishing License Report 2009**

282,496 Total (resident + non-resident) fishing, license, tag, permit, stamps for gross revenue of \$4,835,641

<http://faims.fws.gov/reports/rwservlet?>