



AMERICAN HERITAGE RIVER

Date: 1998

Agency Sponsor: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Local Applicant/Coordinator: Connecticut River Watershed Council, Connecticut River Joint Commissions

Geography:

All towns in the Connecticut River watershed, with primary focus on those along the River's mainstem.

Program/designation description:

The American Heritage Rivers Initiative offers special recognition to outstanding stretches of America's rivers by selecting them to be "American Heritage Rivers." Designated rivers will receive federal assistance in the form of refocused programs, grants, and technical assistance from existing federal resources. The initiative's purpose is to support community-based efforts to restore and protect the environmental, economic, cultural and historic values of our rivers. Fourteen rivers that demonstrated cultural, historic, economic, and environmental significance and strong grassroots support have received the AHR designation.ⁱ

SILVIO O. CONTE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE REFUGE

Date: 1998

Agency Sponsor: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Local Applicant/Coordinator: N/A

Geography:

The entire 7.2 million acre Connecticut River watershed in four states, with land acquisition authorized in 48 special focus areas and small scattered sites important to rare species.

Program/designation description:

"The Conte Refuge will join the 92 million acre national refuge system, a system with a proud heritage of protecting plants, fish, and wildlife. ... The Service's mission is to conserve, protect and enhance the nation's fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of people. The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge is no ordinary Refuge! The Connecticut River watershed, 7.2 million acres in four states, is larger and more heavily populated than areas usually considered when creating a refuge. The purposes of the refuge are also much broader than usual. The Conte Refuge is one of the few fish and wildlife refuges, and protecting natural diversity is a new scientific and social challenge. Recognizing that land acquisition alone cannot meet this challenge, the Conte Refuge's primary action is to involve the people of the watershed, especially landowners and land managers, in environmental education programs and cooperative management projects. The Conte Refuge may become the model for refuges of the future."ⁱⁱ

CONNECTICUT RIVER NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY

Date: 2005

Agency Sponsor: U.S. Department of Transportation, America's Byways® Program

Local Applicant/Coordinator: Connecticut River Scenic Byway Council

Geography:

“Over 500 miles of state roads bordering the Connecticut River in both Vermont and New Hampshire. The Byway links the two states, focusing on the authentic New England experience - historic villages, mountain views, working farms, home grown crops and crafts, and outdoor pastimes like fishing, boating, wildlife observation, and hiking. Byway routes in Vermont are Rte. 102 (Canaan–Lunenburg), Rte. 2 (Lunenburg–St. Johnsbury), I-93 (St. Johnsbury–Littleton), Rte. 18 (Waterford–Littleton), Rte. 5 (St. Johnsbury–Brattleboro), Rte. 142 (Vernon). Byway routes in New Hampshire are Rte. 3 (Pittsburg–Lancaster), Rte. 145 (Clarksville–Colebrook), Rte. 135 (Lancaster–Woodsville), Rte. 302 (Bath), Rte. 10 (Woodsville–Lebanon), Rte. 12A (Lebanon–Charlestown), Rte. 12 (Charlestown–Westmoreland), Rte. 63 (Westmoreland–Hinsdale).”ⁱⁱⁱ

Program/designation description:

“The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. Since 1992, the National Scenic Byways Program has provided funding for over 2100 state and nationally designated byway projects in 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities.”^{iv}

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

Date: Various and ongoing

Agency Sponsor: U.S. National Park Service, Wild and Scenic Rivers Program

Local Applicant/Coordinator: Various

Geography:

Westfield River (78 Massachusetts miles in two designations, 1993 and 2004)^v
Farmington River (14 miles of the West Branch in Connecticut designated 1994; Massachusetts West Branch miles determined eligible but not designated to date; 40 additional miles in Connecticut's Lower Farmington authorized for study in 2006)^{vi}
Eightmile River (25 miles in Connecticut determined eligible for designation in 2006; none yet designated)^{vii}

Program/designation description:

“Designated by Congress, these rivers are free flowing and protected from damaging development and use. They must contain outstandingly remarkable scenic, geologic, fish and wildlife, cultural or similar qualities.”^{viii}

RAMSAR CONVENTION WETLAND OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE

Date: 1994

Agency Sponsor: Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance

Local Applicant/Coordinator: Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and The Nature Conservancy (Connecticut Chapter)

Geography:

“The area is located entirely within the state of Connecticut ... and consists of portions of the lower, tidal reaches of the Connecticut River and adjacent lands. ... “Within the overall project area boundary are approximately 20 discrete major wetland complexes.... Only those parcels within each core site that specifically meet both the ownership requirements and inclusion criteria are included in this nomination, with the owners' permission. These sites ... include all tidal waters of the Connecticut River from the mouth to the vicinity of Cromwell/Portland below mean high water (i.e., public trust waters and submerged lands), as well as adjacent wetlands owned by the state, municipalities, land trusts, and other private conservation organizations where these lands are held specifically for conservation purposes.”^{ix}

Program/designation description:

“The Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.” “The inclusion of a site in the Ramsar List confers upon it the prestige of international recognition and obliges the government to take all steps necessary to ensure the maintenance of the ecological character of the site.”^x

METACOMET MONADNOCK MATTABESSETT (MMM) TRAIL STUDY

Date: 2006 (this is the study release only; no Congressional action has been taken)

Agency Sponsor: U.S. National Park Service, National Scenic Trails System

Local Applicant/Coordinator:

Connecticut Forest and Park Association, Pioneer Valley Planning Association, Franklin Regional Council of Governments, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Geography:

“The MMM Trail System consists of three largely contiguous trails: the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail, the Metacomet Trail, and the Mattabesett Trail. The trails collectively travel 190 miles in a north-south direction, from the Massachusetts-New Hampshire border south towards Long Island Sound.” The study’s preferred management alternative is “implementation of the Trail Management Blueprint through National Scenic Trail Designation from Long Island Sound to the NH Border, including a significant re-route in the Belchertown-Leverett area in MA.”^{xi}

Program/designation description:

“The National Trails System Act (Public Law 90-543, as amended through Public Law 107-325) institutes a national system of historic, scenic, and recreation trails. National Scenic Trails are trails of at least 100 miles in length that provide for maximum outdoor recreation potential, and for the conservation and enjoyment of nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities of areas through which such trails pass. Currently, there are a total of eight designated National Scenic Trails: Appalachian, Pacific Crest, Continental Divide, Ice Age, North Country, Florida, Natchez Trace, and Potomac Heritage.”^{xii}

ⁱ Excerpted from <http://www.epa.gov/rivers/faq.html> with limited paraphrasing of the original.

ⁱⁱ Excerpted from <http://www.fws.gov/r5soc/why.htm>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Excerpted from <http://www.crjc.org/pdffiles/Nat'l%20scenic%20byway.pdf>.

^{iv} Excerpted from <http://www.byways.org/learn/>. More information on the Byway at <http://www.byways.org/browse/byways/2487/> and <http://www.ctrivertravel.net/>.

^v Source: <http://www.nps.gov/rivers/wsr-westfield.html>.

^{vi} Sources: <http://www.frwa.org/scenic.html> and <http://www.farmingtonriver.org/historical.html>. See also <http://www.nps.gov/rivers/wsr-farmington.html>.

^{vii} Source: http://www.eightmileriver.org/study_report.htm.

^{viii} Source: <http://www.nps.gov/nrcr/portals/rivers/projpg/nana1.htm>.

^{ix} Excerpted from <http://dep.state.ct.us/olisp/ramsar/sitedesc.htm>.

^x Excerpted from <http://www.ramsar.org/index.html> and http://www.ramsar.org/about/about_infopack_4e.htm, respectively. Criteria for Ramsar acceptance at http://www.ramsar.org/key_criteria.htm.

^{xi} Source: Full study and executive summary, available at

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkId=213&projectId=15353&documentID=14470>. NB: While the trail continues to Mount Monadnock in far southern New Hampshire and links from there to a greenway extending north to Lake Sunapee, New Hampshire opted out of the study during its Congressional authorization.

^{xii} *Ibid.*