



Wild & Scenic Strategic Plan Summary (2011-2016)

Mission: The Westfield River Wild and Scenic Advisory Committee (WRWSAC) works to preserve, protect, and enhance the special qualities and outstanding natural resources of the Westfield River Watershed in concert with local communities.

Guiding Principles: The Westfield River Wild & Scenic Advisory Committee strives to:

- Advocate strategically, skillfully and boldly
- Provide leadership and empower conservation partners, communities and volunteers
- Promote efficiency and strategic partnerships
- Select projects based on level of resource protection impact
- Work in partnership
- Be sensitive to community needs and concerns
- Use interactive and dynamic planning tools
- Connect events, education and outreach as part of our actions
- Advocate for the smart-use of the river and sensitive recreation-based activities
- Speak with one Voice
- Clarify, market and deliver our message back to the communities
- Stick to what we do best

Strategic Goal #1: Staff & Project Funding

WRWSAC will develop and implement a 5-Year Funding Plan that secures up to \$75,000/year to fund an equivalent of 1.5 FTEs and a minimum of \$100,000/year for projects with additional capital funds of \$1 million+ raised to support regionally significant projects.

Objectives:

- Sustain funding through the Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers Program and Wild & Scenic Coordinator position within the Division of Ecological Restoration, Commonwealth of MA
- Expand staff capacity over next five years
- Maintain and enhance local, state and legislative support
- Secure additional source of money and/or supplemental funding to support specific and/or regionally significant projects
- Support staff by providing a productive office space, positive working environment, and professional development opportunities
- Employ back-up plans for sometimes unpredictable funding
- Foster relationship with other Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers and share resources, lessons learned, and case studies to further protection of National Wild & Scenic Rivers
- Maintain visible presence in watershed



Strategic Goal #2: Committee Development

Over the next 5 years, WRWSAC will maintain an active presence within the Westfield River watershed and will advocate strategically, skillfully and boldly for the river and the Wild & Scenic resources.

Objectives:

- *Maintain an active and enduring presence in the watershed*
- *Provide training and professional development opportunities for Committee Members*
- *Encourage skills and enthusiasm of staff, volunteers and Committee Members*
- *Sustain active Committee participation by Member communities and organizations*
- *Maintain good rapport and communication amongst Committee Members and Town Officials*
- *Encourage opportunities for Committee Members to celebrate accomplishments and strengthen connection to resources*
- *Run efficient meetings*
- *Organize for success*



Strategic Goal #3: Monitoring and Assessment

Over the next 5 years, WRWSAC will continue to monitor and assess riparian conditions and outstandingly remarkable resources for all of the Wild & Scenic river segments and will implement recommendations to protect and enhance Wild & Scenic Resources.

Objectives:

- *Conduct monitoring that documents and characterizes riparian conditions and leads to recommendations to better protect and enhance Wild & Scenic resources*
- *Use monitoring and study recommendations to identify follow-up action steps and target stewardship activities*
- *Employ various monitoring topics & techniques, e.g. flow, temperature, fish & habitat, recreation user surveys.*
- *Establish clearinghouse for monitoring information in conjunction with conservation partners*
- *Encourage citizen science*



Strategic Plan #4: Build and Sustain Stream Teams

Recruit and train 100 volunteers per year to assist in monitoring and implementation of 2-3 Stream Team sponsored projects.

Objectives:

- Monitor the same sections with Stream Teams to document conditions over time
- Encourage grassroots participation through Stream Team volunteers in seeking solutions
- Use Stream Team projects and activities as way to get word out about Wild & Scenic, Committee and important resource issues
- Retain seasoned volunteers by providing adequate training and positive feedback
- Be responsive to volunteer needs and questions



Strategic Goal #5: Outreach and Engagement

In the next 5 years, WRWSAC will engage layers of community members by targeting outreach efforts, messages and activities to 3-5 demographics per year through a combination of mailings, outreach materials, workshops, hikes, Stream Teams, etc.



Objectives:

- Maintain active presence within watershed
- Provide Wild & Scenic information at community events, fairs and whitewater races
- Communicate and build partnerships with residents, towns, policy makers, decision makers, etc.
- Provide effective tools and resources that encourage the long-term protection, restoration and conservation of Wild & Scenic resources

Strategic Goal #6: Resource Stewardship

In the next 5 years, WRWSAC will successfully conserve, protect and/or restore 2-3 regionally significant critical resources, support 15 riparian conservation projects, and enhance 75 miles of rivers and streams.

Objectives:

- Promote strategic stewardship of scenic, ecological (fish & wildlife), historic, and recreational resources
- Use the Westfield River Wild & Scenic Stewardship Plan as a tool to identify resources in need of protection, evaluates and prioritizes resource needs, and develops an Action Plan related to the resources



- *Target 2-3 ‘critical’ resources in need of conservation, restoration and/or protection*
- *Provide tools and build awareness of decision makers and citizens to promote good resource-based decision making*
- *Work with variety of conservation partners to support on-going conservation and restoration projects in watershed*
- *Provide technical assistance in conservation, construction mitigation, and good resource planning*
- *Restore the Keystone Arch Bridges*

Strategic Goal #7: East Branch Trail

By 2015, establish additional segments of the East Branch Trail in coordination with local community trail groups and landowners; support stewardship of existing and future trail segments; and identify and address recreational concerns and needs.

Objectives:

- *Maintain and enlarge pool of Trail Stewards*
- *Develop overarching plan for the East Branch Trail in coordination with local communities, trail users, and landowners*
- *Continue to make good strides along existing portion and then work with surrounding communities as their interest in trails increases*
- *Find a long-term stewardship group to maintain and expand the East Branch Trail*



Strategic Goal # 8: Wild & Scenic Designation

In the next 3 years, the Committee will determine community interest in extending the Wild & Scenic designation to additional tributaries; and within the next 5 years, will submit a request to extend the designation as appropriate.

Objectives:

- *Determine clear goals and intentions on reasons to consider expanding the Westfield River Wild & Scenic Designation*
- *Reaffirm the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Protection of the Westfield River with possibility of including additional communities and organizations*
- *Explore Congressional Designation as potential option*
- *Include important tributaries and surrounding communities interested in seeking Wild & Scenic designation for their stream segments*