

## Chapter 5. Environmental Assessment



Photo by Mike Marahan

The purpose of this Chapter is to present the Environment Assessment for designation of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers including the possible Alternatives for designation, and the preferred Alternative B.

### Introduction

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542, as amended), enacted in 1968, established a framework for protection of select rivers, for the benefit of present and future generations. Congress declared that “the established national policy of dam and other construction... needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers, or sections thereof, in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes.” These selected rivers collectively form the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Prior to a river’s addition to the National Wild and Scenic River System, it must be found both eligible and suitable.

To be eligible, the river must be free-flowing and possess at least one “outstandingly remarkable” resource value, such as exceptional recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, or historic features. The resource values must be directly related to, or dependent upon the river. The determination of a resource’s significance is based on the professional judgment of the Study Team.

The suitability determination for a Wild and Scenic River designation is based upon several findings. First, there must be evidence of lasting protection for the river’s free-flowing character and outstanding resources, either through existing mechanisms, or through a combination of existing and new conservation measures resulting from the Wild and Scenic Study. Second, there must be

strong support for designation from existing entities including towns, the state, riverfront landowners, and conservation organizations that will provide long-term protection of the river. Third, a practical management framework must be devised that will allow these interests to work together as effective stewards of the river and its resources. Finally, Wild and Scenic River designation must fit as an appropriate and efficient river conservation tool.

As a result of the studies conducted by the Study Committee in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers have been determined to be both eligible and suitable for designation into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and NPS Directors order #12, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was conducted as part of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Study Report. This EA addresses the proposed action of designation of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The EA is comprised of sections that describe the Purpose and Need for Action, Alternatives, the River Environment, the Impacts of Alternatives, and the Public Involvement Process.

### **Project Description**

The proposed project provides for permanent protection from federally permitted or funded water resource projects through a Wild and Scenic River designation of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers and their important river-related resources. No river construction projects or improvements that may impact the river environment are being considered as part of this project.

### **Purpose and Need for Action**

The purpose of designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is to protect and enhance the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers and their values, including their free-flowing character, water quality, and

Outstandingly Remarkable Values. Local leaders and voters in eight municipalities in the Study area and the State of Vermont have expressed a strong desire to protect the rivers and their resources and are seeking federal designation in order to gain national recognition for their waterways and implement the locally prepared, advisory Management Plan.

The purpose of this EA is to enable the National Park Service and its partners to:

- Determine if the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers should be proposed for addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; and
- Determine the best long-term conservation strategies for protecting and enhancing the Rivers and associated resources.

The upper Missisquoi River and Trout River corridors contain important “outstandingly remarkable” resource values related to the scenic and recreational opportunities; the natural resources including distinctive species and habitats, geology and water quality; and the historic and cultural landscape. Despite the fact that the existing framework of local and state resource protection was deemed adequate through the Wild and Scenic Study, it is important to ensure optimal protection of Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs), water quality, and free-flowing character over time from threats and a changing environment. The proposed Partnership Wild and Scenic River approach to designation and the Management Plan (locally developed during the Study) is tailored to rivers like the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers that are characterized by extensive private land ownership along the river, and well-established traditions of local control of river management in a community based setting. This designation scenario is designed to support the development of river protection strategies that bring communities together in protecting, enhancing, and managing high value river resources. Implementation of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Management Plan is intended to be pursued in a coordinated approach between all levels of government as well as with residents and local and regional partners and organizations. The purpose of the designation, as

determined by the Wild and Scenic Study Committee in partnership with the National Park Service, is to protect the river resources through local implementation of the Management Plan's protection goals as follows:

- To protect, preserve and enhance the abundant scenic and recreational opportunities in the area that relate to the river and its enjoyment by the public. To support the maintenance of adequate access opportunities to the river that allow for appropriate river uses while protecting the water quality, integrity of the riparian areas, and the surrounding environment of the river
- Promote the protection of the significant geologic features in the Missisquoi and Trout watersheds for their importance as educational, historical, and recreational resources as well as significance as habitat including for rare, threatened and endangered species
- Promote the preservation and conservation of prime agricultural soils to support working farms in the Study area
- Support the survey and best management of rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats and promote biological diversity in these watersheds
- Educate communities about the location and importance of significant ecological areas and critical wildlife habitat such as deer yards and vernal pools
- Prioritize the reduction of sediment and phosphorus inputs to the Missisquoi River. Assist towns and landowners in the implementation of programs to preserve and protect water quality in the study area, the lower Missisquoi River, and Lake Champlain
- Identify, understand, maintain, and as needed improve the chemical, physical, biological, and flow conditions in the waters of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers so that they support the needs of native wildlife, aquatic life, and recreational users
- To preserve the historical and cultural heritage of the upper Missisquoi and Trout River valleys by supporting efforts that maintain and restore prehistoric and historic sites and areas of cultural significance in the Study area towns, with a focus on those which are river related (including covered bridges)

Additionally, threats and management issues were identified that could degrade Outstandingly Remarkable Resource quality. The gaps between potential threats and existing protections were noted, and recommended tools or techniques provided for improving protection and enhancement of the resources at the local level.

### Alternatives

During the Wild and Scenic Study the Committee considered a variety of alternatives for the long-term protection of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers and associated resources. In accordance with NEPA, CEQ regulations, the desires of the Study area towns, and established NPS policy for Wild and Scenic Studies of extensive private land ownership along rivers, alternatives for the conservation of river resources are described here. Alternatives were considered and evaluated in accordance with the interests and objectives of the riverfront communities as articulated through the Study Committee. In order for an alternative to meet the needs of the towns in protecting the river the following objectives must be met:

- Federal designation would only be recommended if strong support were expressed through passage of support resolutions by the affected towns
- No reliance on federal ownership of land in order to achieve the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act's goals of protecting and enhancing river values
- Land use management is regulated through existing local and state authorities, the same as before a designation
- Administration and implementation of a locally led Management Plan is accomplished through a broadly participatory management committee, convened for each river specifically for this purpose
- Responsibility for managing and protecting river resources is shared among the local, state, federal, and non-governmental partners on the committee
- A strong emphasis is placed on grassroots involvement and consensus building

- Reliance on volunteerism is a key to success
- No National Park is established, nor are National Park Service (NPS) Superintendent, law enforcement, or similar elements of traditional federally managed units of the National Park System established

In accordance with NPS Director's Order #12 and NEPA Section 102(2) (E), a range of proposed river protection alternatives were considered, including a "no action" alternative. Additionally and in accordance with the DO-12 Handbook, the NPS identifies the environmentally preferable alternative in its NEPA documents for public review and comment [Sect. 4.5 E(9)]. The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment and best protects, preserves, and enhances historical, cultural, and natural resources. The environmentally preferable alternative is identified upon consideration and weighing by the Responsible Official of long-term environmental impacts against short-term impacts in evaluating what is the best protection of these resources. In some situations, such as when different alternatives impact different resources to different degrees, there may be more than one environmentally preferable alternative (43 CFR 46.30).

### ***Alternative A. No Action***

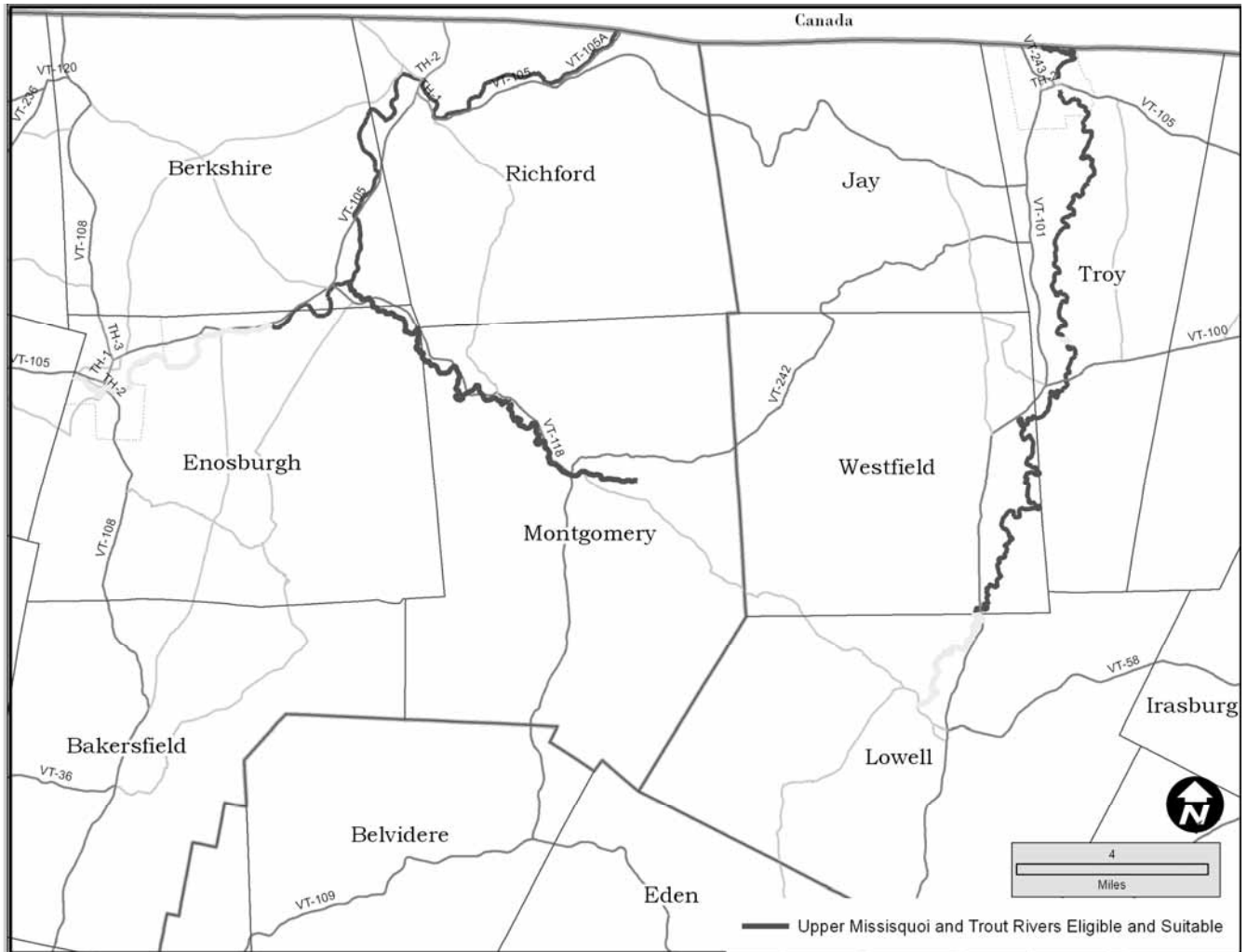
The No Action alternative is evaluated and used as a baseline for comparison with the effects of the action alternatives. This alternative does not involve designation of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. This alternative would maintain existing state and local controls for resource protection on the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers without additional federal protection from federal water resource projects or federal support for local river protection efforts. Under the No Action alternative, there would be no involvement or support in river management from the National Park Service through administration of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

### ***Alternative B. Full Designation-NPS Preferred***

This alternative would designate all segments of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers having been found to meet the criteria of eligibility and suitability into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. This alternative designates the 35.1 miles of the upper Missisquoi and 11.0 miles of the Trout River currently both eligible and suitable for designation as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Alternative B best protects the resources of the rivers by designating the segments as described. Designation would include the upper Missisquoi River, from the Westfield/Lowell Town Line to the Canadian Border in North Troy, with the exception of two river segments in Troy and North Troy that include dams. It would include designation of the upper Missisquoi from the Canadian Border in Richford to the project boundary of the Enosburg Falls dam in Enosburgh. Designation would also include the entire Trout River from the confluence of Jay and Wade Brook in Montgomery to where it meets the Missisquoi River in East Berkshire. The future Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee (Committee) would assume lead responsibility for coordination of the Management Plan implementation that was created during the Study. To undertake this responsibility, the Committee would coordinate and direct implementation of activities described in the Management Plan. The Management Plan as implemented by the Committee would provide an appropriate and effective management framework for the long-term management and protection of the watercourses.

The NPS would have a role on the Committee and could potentially provide financial and technical assistance to support Management Plan implementation. The NPS would provide Wild and Scenic Rivers Act Section 7 reviews of federally permitted or funded projects which might potentially impact the waterways and associated resources. Additionally, the functions of the NPS could include, but not be limited to the following activities:

- Provide limited financial assistance to support the coordination of river conservation projects amongst towns and partners
- Respond to public inquiries
- Develop appropriate plans to protect resources and develop visitor and interpretive resources
- Fund additional research initiatives for resource protection and public use
- Provide technical and financial assistance, as appropriate, through use of cooperative agreements
- Assist in public education
- Develop interpretive media



**Figure 22.** Map showing Alternative B - NPS and Environmentally Preferred Alternative designating all currently eligible and suitable segments of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers.

### *Features Common to the No Action and Full Designation Alternatives*

- 1. Continued implementation of existing local, state, and federal programs documented in the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Management Plan:** Wild and Scenic River designation would not replace or appreciably alter the existing implementation of the “baseline” local, state or federal programs as discussed in the Management Plan, and which comprise the basis of the “No Action” Alternative. Thus, continued implementation of these programs is assumed under all alternatives.
- 2. Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Management Plan:** The Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Management Plan has been developed during the Study to serve as the blueprint for management and protection of the rivers regardless of whether Wild and Scenic Rivers designation occurs. If designation occurs there is a greater likelihood that the Management Plan will be implemented to its full potential; without a designation there is no guarantee that a group of stakeholders will convene to oversee implementation of the Management Plan and the NPS will not be involved. The principal effect or impact of Wild and Scenic Rivers designation will be to add the specific protections of designation on top of existing programs, and to establish an authorization for direct federal funding and technical assistance to aid in implementation of the Management Plan.
- 3. Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Study:** Since the watercourses are currently under a 5 (a) study, they are protected under Section 7(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act for three (3) full fiscal years after the study report is submitted to Congress.

### *Alternatives Considered and Rejected Prior to the Wild and Scenic Study*

- 1. National Park Service Management:** Under this type of management scheme, the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers would be added to the National Wild and Scenic River System as a unit of the National Park

Service (NPS) and would be managed directly by NPS staff. The Wild and Scenic Committee, as described above, would be created, but the NPS would take a more active role, using the Committee and Management Plan for guidance. With this type of management direction, the NPS would be responsible for assuring protection in a traditionally managed unit of the National Park System such as through potential NPS law enforcement or land management or acquisition. This method of management was eliminated from consideration prior to the authorization of the Wild and Scenic Study Bill. Several New England rivers hold a partnership Wild and Scenic River designation which serve as a successful model of the coordinated approach to river management which does not involve federal land acquisition or the direct federal management presence of more traditional park units. The “Partnership” approach was deemed best suited to the upper Missisquoi River and Trout River area by the pre-study team. Local support for designation was based on the expectation that river management would be accomplished through the Partnership method, not solely by the NPS.

- 2. State Management:** Federal Wild and Scenic designation by the Secretary of the Interior under Section 2(a) (ii) of the Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would mean that the State of Vermont would serve as the manager for the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers. This management approach was eliminated from consideration during the pre-study authorization phase. Based on the high level of early local support and involvement in the process by riverfront towns and conservation organizations, the need for state management was determined to be not appropriate for this river designation. The pre-study team also determined that the “Partnership” model for the Wild and Scenic Study and designation, which serves as a successful model of the coordinated approach to river management, was best suited to the upper Missisquoi River and Trout River area.

### Identification of Environmentally Preferable Alternative

In accordance with the DO-12 Handbook, the NPS identifies the environmentally preferable alternative in its NEPA documents for public review and comment [Sect. 4.5 E(9)]. The environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment and best protects, preserves, and enhances historical, cultural, and natural resources. The environmentally preferable alternative is identified upon consideration and weighing by the Responsible Official of long-term environmental impacts against short-term impacts in evaluating what is the best protection of these resources. In some situations, such as when different alternatives impact different resources to different degrees, there may be more than one environmentally preferable alternative (43 CFR 46.30).

Alternative B most fully protects the free-flowing river character, water quality and Outstandingly Remarkable Values. Based on the analysis of environmental consequences of each alternative in Section 5.F., Alternative B is the environmentally preferable alternative. Under this alternative the Federal Power Commission (FERC) shall not license the construction of any dam or other project works. This full designation alternative would provide special recognition and protection for the watercourses, and for the identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) for which the rivers would be designated. The Preferred Alternative B is National Wild and Scenic River designation of all segments found eligible and suitable with a river management plan implemented through the local Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee (comprised of local, state and federal partners).

Environmentally Preferable Alternative B:

- Most fully protects the free-flowing river character, water quality and Outstandingly Remarkable Values
- Allows designation of all currently eligible and suitable river segments

- Protects the river from the harmful effects of federally licensed or funded development projects

### Affected Environment

The Wild and Scenic Study included the approximately 25-mile segment of the upper Missisquoi from its headwaters in Lowell to the Canadian border in North Troy, the approximately 25-mile segment of the upper Missisquoi from the Canadian border in East Richford to Enosburg Falls, the approximately 20-mile segment of the Trout River from its headwaters to its confluence with the Missisquoi River, and the tributaries of these Rivers. The area is described in detail in Chapter 2 of this Report.

In addition, NEPA asks federal agencies to analyze the likely environmental impacts of a proposed action, in this case designation as a National Wild and Scenic River. Wild and Scenic River designation (and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act) is specifically targeted toward the preservation of free-flowing river character, and protection, and enhancement of identified “outstandingly remarkable” values. Therefore, the “affected environment” for the NEPA analysis is free-flowing river character, water quality, and “outstandingly remarkable” natural, cultural and recreational river values. These values have been extensively described in the Outstandingly Remarkable Values Chapter 3 of this Report. A fuller understanding of the resources in question, their existing management and the likely impacts of Wild and Scenic designation can also be gained from reading the companion document to this Study Report, the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Management Plan.

### Impact of Alternatives

This section of the Environmental Assessment allows for comparisons of the alternatives and their impacts on the resources of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers. It is not anticipated that any part of the natural environment of the waterways will be adversely or negatively impacted by the designation of the river into the National Wild and Scenic River System or via

the adoption of the Management Plan. No river construction projects or improvements that may impact the river environment are being considered as part of this planning process.

The impacts of the alternatives are estimated based on professional experience related to similar designations in the northeast region utilizing the “Partnership Wild and Scenic River” designation model. Such a designation has been in effect on twelve similar rivers in the larger Northeast Region of the National Park Service which collectively provide a sound basis for understanding the impacts of designation.



**Impact of Alternatives - Tables**

**Table 6.** Description of each alternative.

**Alternative A: No Action  
Description of Alternative**

This alternative would maintain existing state and local controls for resource protection on the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers without additional federal protection from federal water resource projects or federal support for local river protection efforts.

Under this alternative, no portion of the upper Missisquoi River or Trout River would be designated as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The existing local, state, and federal river management and protection context would be unchanged. The Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Management Plan, prepared as part of the Study, could be utilized by existing river stakeholders to guide and improve future river management and protection efforts; however, the absence of the federal designation and anticipated federal support for the Plan and its implementation would likely mean that the Plan and its implementation would be utilized to a much lesser extent than if designation were to occur. Long-term federal support and assistance to protection of free-flowing river conditions, water quality, and ORVs would not be in place. Similarly, it is possible that some other entity (the National Park Service would not be involved if the river is not designated) might organize, convene and support a committee charged with overseeing implementation of the Management Plan. The likelihood is, however, that the committee will not be a significant long-term factor in the absence of federal designation and support. In the absence of designation, federally assisted water resource development projects, such as hydroelectric projects, could be developed at existing dam sites or at new sites.

**Alternative B: Full Designation - NPS and Environmentally Preferable Alternative  
Description of Alternative**

This alternative would designate, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, all segments of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers found to meet the criteria of eligibility and suitability, totaling 46.1 miles. The upper Missisquoi River, from the Westfield/Lowell Town Line to the Canadian Border in North Troy, with the exception of two river segments in Troy and North Troy that include dams; the upper Missisquoi from the Canadian Border in Richford to the project boundary of the Enosburg Falls dam in Enosburgh; and the entire Trout River from the confluence of Jay and Wade Brook in Montgomery to where it meets the Missisquoi River in East Berkshire would be subject to the additional protections of the federal designation. If designated, the National Park Service would convene an Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee, ensuring that this oversight and coordination body exists and functions to stimulate implementation of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Management Plan. Federal funding and technical assistance (subject to Congressional appropriations) would be available to assist in Plan implementation and would motivate increased long-term efforts to protect and enhance free-flowing river conditions, water quality and identified ORVs. Section 7 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would be in effect for all eligible and suitable segments, providing maximum protection to the free-flowing river character from potentially adverse federally assisted water resource development project. This alternative best matches the desires of the communities, local governments and river stakeholders.

**Table 7.** Impacts on Free-Flowing Character

### **Alternative A: No Action**

#### **Impacts on Free-Flowing Character**

This alternative would provide no additional protection (beyond existing State and federal project review and permitting programs) to the free-flowing character of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers. Federally permitted or funded water resource projects that could alter the free-flow of the river and its undisturbed shoreline areas would only continue to be subject to Section 7(b) review for three full fiscal years after this Study Report is submitted to Congress. Since most, and perhaps all, projects posing a threat to free-flowing condition require federal assistance/permitting, this lack of future protection could be significant over time. New or former and historical dam sites on the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers could attract potential hydroelectric proposals, though no such proposals have surfaced as part of the Study investigations. The feasibility of any such proposals is highly speculative and influenced by such factors as energy prices, government renewable energy incentives, the larger state and federal regulatory climate, and other factors. Beyond hydroelectric development, this alternative would provide no additional review or scrutiny of Army Corps permits or other federal assistance projects related to the Rivers. Over time the absence of this additional scrutiny and regulatory protection could allow for degradation of free-flowing character through rip-rap, channel alterations, or similar projects. Any such degradation would be expected to be long-term and incremental in nature.

### **Alternative B: Full Designation**

#### **Impacts on Free-Flowing Character**

This alternative would permanently protect 46.1 miles of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers from federally assisted or permitted projects that could alter the free-flow of the river, and would specifically prohibit the FERC from licensing any new hydroelectric project on or directly affecting the designated segments. The exclusion of the upper Missisquoi River areas surrounding the Enosburg Falls, North Troy and Troy dams would allow continued hydropower at the existing dams.

This alternative would provide the maximum protection to free-flowing character from other forms of federally/assisted water resource development projects such as rip-rap, channel modifications, diversions. Over time, this additional protection and project scrutiny could have the effect of better preserving and/or enhancing free-flowing river character and natural stream channel conditions.

**Table 8.** Impacts on Protection of Identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs).

**Alternative A: No Action**

**Impacts on Protection of Identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs)**

Under the No Action Alternative A there would be no increased protection of the identified natural, cultural and recreational Outstandingly Remarkable Values, or water quality. The current level of protection through local, state and federal channels would remain unchanged and without the Wild and Scenic designation’s protections, could lead to incremental decline in the ORVs over time. The increased scrutiny afforded by the direct application of Section 7(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act would not be in effect for the oversight of federally funded or assisted projects beyond the three-year post-study report submission deadline. In addition, the increased examination of other federal projects (non-water resource development projects) that could be expected through required NEPA processes would not include recognition and protection of federal Wild and Scenic River status. Similarly, the probable lack of oversight and project assessment applied to nonfederal projects, through Wild and Scenic Committee support, would erode local and state efforts to protect identified natural, cultural, and recreational values. Without Wild and Scenic Rivers designation, resource protection strategies set forth within the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Management Plan to promote protection and enhancement of ORVs would not be implemented to the same extent since there would be no Wild and Scenic Committee to lead the effort. Furthermore the National Park Service would not be available to provide technical assistance, further leading to a potential long-term deterioration of identified resources.

**Alternative B: Full Designation**

**Impacts on Protection of Identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs)**

Alternative B would provide the highest degree of protection to the identified ORVs and would permanently protect the ORVs of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers from federally permitted/funded water resource development projects that would have a potential direct or adverse effect. FERC licensed projects on or directly impacting designated river segments would be prohibited, and as a result the ORVs of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers would be permanently protected from the potential impacts of new projects. In addition, the NEPA review processes for federally funded/assisted, non-water resource projects would necessitate weighing impacts on the identified ORVs. The National Park Service would comment through existing federal agency review processes to ensure this consideration. The Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee could take the lead and responsibility for following guidance provided in the Management Plan and could undertake desirable steps and actions needed to protect the identified ORVs and provide opportunities for resource protection and enhancement. This “Partnership” management framework has proven effective on other Wild and Scenic Rivers and in the Northeast Region.

**Table 9.** Impacts on Socio-Economic Values.

### **Alternative A: No Action**

#### **Impacts on Socio-Economic Values**

Under Alternative A, long-term impacts to socio-economic values could be anticipated relative to non-designation scenarios. For instance, there would be no designation-related special recognition of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers and their associated resources. In addition, resource related protection that a designation offers would not be available through consistent long-term implementation of the Management Plan, or through reviews conducted under Section 7 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act likely resulting in some level of degradation of the free-flowing conditions, ORVs and water quality of the Rivers. Over the long-term, small, incremental, detrimental changes could affect local quality of life. Indicators of quality of life related to the river can include home prices, sense of place, and availability of high quality waters for human needs and recreational uses, as well as other related natural values. The proactive protection and enhancement strategies of the Management Plan aimed at maximizing the natural, cultural and recreational values to the abutting communities would see less implementation, thus reducing, over time, the value of these resources to the community. With widespread local support for designating the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers as Wild and Scenic Rivers, it is anticipated that the river communities would be dissatisfied with a non-designation result. River communities and stakeholders would not have access to the opportunities and associated prestige the designation affords, and that communities along designated rivers gain access to after designation.

Alternative A could result in hydroelectric proposals on new or former and historical dam sites on the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers, though no such proposals have surfaced as part of the Study investigations. The feasibility of any such proposals is highly speculative and influenced by such factors as energy prices, government renewable energy incentives, the larger state and federal regulatory climate, and other factors.

### **Alternative B: Full Designation**

#### **Impacts on Socio-Economic Values**

Alternative B would maximize the protection of natural, cultural, and recreational resource values of a Wild and Scenic designation in the form of river-focused, community-based values, consistent with wide support expressed by local municipalities. Over time it would be reasonable to expect that quality of life values, home prices, tourism, and similar socio-economic standards might be preserved or increased through such efforts. High quality, protected river resources have been shown in numerous studies to have such positive economic community benefits. Landowners along the watercourses may be more likely to adopt voluntary protection strategies due to the pride associated with a designation. There would be increased incentive for river communities to work cooperatively on river resource issues to benefit all. An increase in volunteer service could also result from the designation. Under this alternative, FERC licensed water resource projects are not permitted in the designated segments, and other federally funded/assisted water resource projects could be restricted. Alternative B allows for exploration for continued use or redevelopment of hydroelectric power facilities in Enosburg Falls, North Troy and Troy. At this time strong community support exists for designation and protection of river related resources.

**Table 10.** Anticipated cost of each alternative.

**Alternative A: No Action  
Anticipated Costs**

There are no direct costs associated with this alternative. Over the long term, however, there could be substantial indirect costs if important river values, including water quality and identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values, are allowed to deteriorate.

**Alternative B: Full Designation  
Anticipated Costs**

Direct costs of this alternative to the federal government may be anticipated to be comparable to the direct costs of similar designations in the NPS Northeast Region that provides seed funding for implementation of the Management Plan. In recent years, annual congressional appropriations through the National Park Service operating budget approximated \$175,000 for each of the twelve designated “Partnership National Wild and Scenic Rivers.” Some direct and indirect costs may also accrue to State agencies and non-governmental organizations partnering with the NPS through the Wild and Scenic Committee if they choose to devote increased resources as compared to the No Action alternative. Municipal involvement is expected to be all-volunteer, while indirect costs may be accrued through projects willingly undertaken in partnership with the NPS and Wild and Scenic Committee. Indirect costs through increased attention to preservation of river values may also occur. There would also be shared resources and funding across municipal borders for the benefit of the rivers’ protection. Multiple opportunities for collaboration and pooling of resources with the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee would provide economy in scale. There would also be opportunities for the Committee, municipalities and local organizations to leverage additional funding as a result of the seed funding provided by the National Park Service.

Under this alternative, FERC licensed water resource projects are not permitted within the designated area, and other federally funded/assisted water resource projects could be restricted. Full designation results in a loss of the potential future development of hydroelectric projects in the designated segments of the Rivers (there are no proposals known at this time). It is feasible that in the future the local energy needs or economic conditions could shift and that appropriate technology for hydropower could be desirable. Alternative B allows for exploration for continued use or redevelopment of hydroelectric power facilities in Enosburg Falls, North Troy and Troy. At this time strong community support exists for designation and protection of river related resources.

### Impact of Alternatives - Discussion

#### **Alternative A: No Action**

Alternative A fails to support protection and enhancement of the natural, cultural, and recreational Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers. This alternative would allow for the possibility of a slow loss of these values, contrary to the strongly expressed desires of adjacent communities and other river stakeholders demonstrated during the Wild and Scenic Study. Twenty years of accumulated experience on other Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers has demonstrated that each such river annually accomplishes many projects through the Wild and Scenic River Committees and with the assistance of NPS staff and Congressional appropriations aimed at protecting and enhancing identified river ORVs. Absent these Wild and Scenic Committee led efforts to implement action programs, it is reasonable to assume a corresponding deterioration (or lack of enhancement) would be observed over the long-term. Quality of life values may decline under this alternative and there would be less incentive and cooperative management structure for recognizing and protecting the special river values.

This alternative does not provide protection of free-flowing river conditions, as provided by Section 7 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act that would prohibit FERC licensed water resource development projects, and provide the ability for the NPS to review federally funded/assisted water resource projects. Other than those three which would be excluded from designation due to their lack of suitability and eligibility, there are no other known dam sites on the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers that have the capability of generating a large enough amount of power to make development feasible at this time, though conditions could change in the future that provide increased incentive to dam the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers and damage free-flowing conditions.

No corresponding advantages to the No Action

alternative are known, other than a slight savings in financial expenditures and human capital devoted to the rivers and their protection. These savings would likely be more than offset by resource value losses and the leveraging of volunteer support and funds through alternate sources that bring additional value to the designation. Without the designation there would be no increase in visibility and prestige that a Wild and Scenic designation affords.

There are no direct costs associated with this alternative. Over the long-term, however, there could be substantial indirect costs if important river values, including water quality and identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values, are allowed to deteriorate.

#### **Alternative B: Full Designation**

Alternative B is both the environmentally preferable alternative and the NPS preferred alternative. It is the most protective of the rivers' free-flowing character, water quality, and Outstandingly Remarkable Values of the designation alternatives considered. This option best reflects the desires of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Study Committee, local communities and majority of river stakeholders. In particular it is the alternative supported by the eight municipalities in the Study area which voted at their March 2013 Town Meetings to support designation under the Management Plan. The designation would also acknowledge the widespread support expressed by the State of Vermont, river towns and stakeholders. Strong support for long-term protection of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers resources through a Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers' designation was clearly indicated through town votes and letters of support.

Under this alternative all currently eligible and suitable segments of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers would be designated. The exclusion of the segments of the river surrounding and including the Enosburg Falls, North Troy and Troy Dams would permit hydropower continuation or redevelopment of the existing dams. This Alternative is designed to protect the existing hydroelectric operations by excluding the

dams, their associated properties, facilities, and project areas from the designated area. Section 7 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not preclude FERC licensing of a water resource project so long as the project does not invade the designated area or unreasonably diminish the fish, wildlife, scenic or recreational values within this area that were present as of its designation.

This full designation alternative would provide special recognition and protection for the watercourses, and for the identified Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) for which the rivers would be designated. The ORVs were identified and documented by a team of experts as part of the Study process and were determined to be unique, rare or exemplary features on a regional and/or national scale (the Eligibility Chapter of this report provides an overview of the ORVs and the Management Plan which serves as a companion document to this Study Report details the ORVs in depth).

Direct costs of this alternative to the federal government may be anticipated to be comparable to the direct costs of similar designations in the National Park Service (NPS) Northeast Region. In recent years, annual congressional appropriations through the National Park Service operating budget approximated \$175,000 for each of twelve designated "Partnership National Wild and Scenic Rivers." Some direct and indirect costs may also accrue to State agencies and non-governmental organizations partnering with the NPS through the Wild and Scenic Committee, if they decide to devote more resources toward the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers than they would with the No Action Alternative A. Municipal involvement is expected to be all-volunteer, while indirect costs may be accrued through projects undertaken in partnership with the NPS and Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee. Indirect costs through increased attention to preservation of river values may also occur when partners decide to participate; however, significant, long-term savings would be gained with this alternative by preventing costs associated with loss or deterioration of important river values, including water quality and identified

Outstandingly Remarkable Values. There would also be shared resources and funding across town borders for the benefit of greater river protection. Wild and Scenic designation would provide opportunities to coordinate projects and funding through the Wild and Scenic Committee, towns, and local organizations, and to leverage additional funding as a result of the small amount of seed funding provided by the NPS. The river towns would realize an increase in prestige and visibility due to the designation. This increase may have a positive local economic impact. The communities have acknowledged the benefit of a funding source for river-related conservation work that is critical to protecting and enhancing local resources and quality of life.

During the Wild and Scenic Study, the Study Committee identified resources that are highly valued by residents, businesses and recreational users who strongly support a Wild and Scenic River designation as a way to further river protection. Residents strongly support the diverse recreational opportunities that the watercourses offer.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

The main purpose of designation can, in many ways, be seen as a way to preserve the existing condition of river-related resources (i.e. to prevent degradation of resources), as well as to protect the waterways from the cumulative impacts of activities in and adjacent to the rivers. For the most part, local and State regulatory measures are currently in place that protect the resources. The principal effect and impact of Wild and Scenic River designation is to add specific Wild and Scenic River protections and federal funding/ assistance opportunities onto the existing framework of local, state and federal river management and protection. These protections are tightly aimed at protecting and enhancing a river's free-flowing character, water quality, and identified "outstandingly remarkable" natural, cultural and recreational resource values. In addition, Section 7 of the Act indeed has the stated purpose of preventing federal assistance to water resource development projects that would have a "direct and adverse impact" to free-

flow, water quality and identified ORVs. Under Alternative B (full designation), Section 7 protections would be in place for all eligible and suitable segments, providing permanent and maximum protection to the free-flowing character from potentially adverse federally assisted water resource development projects.

Under Alternative A, the absence of a Wild and Scenic designation entirely, federally funded or permitted projects could have a significant adverse impact on river resources over time. Hydroelectric projects could be expanded or developed under this scenario that could result in degradation of free-flowing character or loss of resources that are described in detail within this report. A new dam site could present a barrier to fish passage/migration, and to recreational uses and could impact water quality. This No Action Alternative A would provide no additional review or scrutiny of Army Corps permits or other federal assistance projects related to the river. Over time the absence of this additional scrutiny and regulatory protection could allow for degradation of free-flowing character through rip-rap, channel alterations, or similar projects. Any such degradation would be expected to be long-term and incremental in nature. The full designation Alternative B provides the maximum protection to free-flowing character from other forms of federally/assisted water resource development projects. Over time, this additional protection and project scrutiny could have the effect of better preserving and/or enhancing free-flowing river character and natural channel conditions.

Documentation of baseline conditions as a part of the Wild and Scenic Study provides the starting point from which future change can be measured. While opportunities to enhance resources are certainly identified as a part of the designation's and Management Plan's objectives, such opportunities are incremental in nature, with no dramatic change anticipated immediately as a result of designation. Over the long-term, small incremental positive changes could have the effect of added protection and enhancement of the rivers' free-flowing character, water quality and resources.

Whether the impact being considered is that of increased scrutiny to federal permits such as those of the Army Corps of Engineers or the impacts of federal financial and technical assistance, virtually all impacts are of a long-term and incremental nature, with the predominant effect of designation being preservation of existing conditions. The only exception to this general rule is the case of major federally assisted water resource development projects, particularly FERC licensed hydroelectric facilities that would be precluded by designation. In this case, there can be a dramatic impact of designation. For this reason, much of the attention in the comparison of alternatives is devoted to this potential impact, and the manner in which the different alternatives would potentially affect future hydroelectric development on the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers.

### **Public Involvement, Consultations and Coordination**

#### ***Introduction***

This section documents the consultation and coordination procedures with federal, state and local agencies, governing bodies and the public outreach and education process employed during the Wild and Scenic Study. Refer to Appendix 4 for examples of outreach and education materials utilized during the Study.

A high level of consultation and coordination occurred during the Wild and Scenic Study and resulted in the successful involvement of the public, local communities, the State of Vermont, federal agencies and resource experts in the Study Process and in the endorsement of designation by voters in municipalities in the Study area. Given that the "Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers" approach was employed in conducting this Study, there was an emphasis on a local, collaborative process. The locally appointed Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Study Committee made up of local, Select-board appointed representatives and river stakeholders, with support from the NPS, led the effort to engage the public in every aspect of the Study. Of central importance was the local development of the Management Plan that



offers recommendations for protection and enhancement of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values. This planning process included widespread opportunity for input, comment, and review.

The upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Study Bill H.R. 146, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, was signed into law on March 30, 2009 by President Obama as Public Law 111-11. In December 2009 a locally appointed Study Committee began participating in earnest in the Wild and Scenic Study process with support from and in consultation with National Park Service Staff (a list of Study Committee members may be found at the beginning of this Report).

A great deal of time and care was taken over the course of the intensive four-year Wild and Scenic Rivers Study to ensure that adequate communication occurred and that there was ample time for comments and input from all interested agencies, governmental entities, non-governmental and local organizations, and the public. Consultations with resource experts and ensuing research results contributed to the body of knowledge required to determine the river's eligibility for designation. Numerous types of communication techniques were utilized to extend and share information about the possible designation, results of research, and Study findings. Successful development of the Management Plan included providing opportunities for frequent input and extensive stakeholder review of the Management Plan.

Though there are no other designated rivers in Vermont, the Lower Farmington and Salmon Brook Study and other Partnership River designations in the Northeast Region provided many resources and examples for local education regarding the value of a successfully implemented designation in New England.

### **Consultations**

#### *Federal*

As outlined in Section 4(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, copies of this Study Report and

Environmental Assessment will be furnished to the head of any affected Federal department or agency for recommendations or comments for a ninety-day review period. Comments will also be received on-line through the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>

In addition to the review of the draft Study Report and Environmental Assessment during the Wild and Scenic Study, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was called upon to provide expertise regarding review of the Troy Hydroelectric Project which was undergoing licensing review during the period of the Study. Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires all federal agencies to consult with the USFWS to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by a federal agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitat (data on state and federal endangered species is collected through the Vermont Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Diversity Program—formerly Nongame & Natural Heritage Program). U.S.D.A. Natural Resource Conservation Service representatives attended several Study Committee meetings, and provided expertise on the NRCS farm related programs along the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers. Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge representatives were kept apprised of Study progress, and coordinated with as a part of the Study.

#### *Tribal*

The Wild and Scenic Study did not identify the existence of any federally recognized tribes or tribal lands impacted by this Study and no tribal representatives were required to participate in the Study process. Abenaki representatives were invited to participate; however, none did.

Copies of the Study Report will be made available to tribal representatives within Vermont who request a copy.

#### *State*

Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (Vermont Agency of Natural resources) wholeheartedly supports the Upper Missisquoi and

Trout Rivers Study Committee's efforts to proceed with seeking Congressional authorization for designating defined segments of the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers as Wild and Scenic Rivers. Department support for Wild and Scenic designation is for segments endorsed by town voter approval during town meeting day in early March 2013.

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources' (ANR) Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) was an active participant and cooperater throughout and was extensively consulted on all aspects of the Wild and Scenic Study via three staff persons that served as Study Committee representatives. The VT DEC participated in the preparation and review of the Management Plan and provided data and input on the Outstandingly Remarkable Resources including water quality and biodiversity. Other consultations with the VT DEC related to the collection of detailed information regarding dam inventories of the Study area rivers, river dynamics, and fish diversity and passage issues.

Consultations with the State Division of Historic Preservation and research in its archives revealed detailed documentation of the existence of cultural resources (archaeological resources and National Register listed resources).

Due to the importance of the working landscape and prevalence of agricultural lands along the upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets was also represented on the Study Committee and consulted during the Study process and Management Plan drafts.

### *Public Involvement*

**Outreach and Education:** The Study Committee held monthly public meetings for four years in part to support the process of facilitating local involvement in the Study process and in the development of the Management Plan that forms the basis of the potential designation and may guide subsequent management. The Committee's role was also to assess local support for the designation. A comprehensive outreach and education campaign was developed and carried out to

access many different audiences. The NPS cooperative agreement with the Missisquoi River Basin Association provided the local mechanism for using appropriated NPS funding to support the Study Committee's public outreach and education efforts and to conduct cooperative research. An important element of the study approach was to involve the interested public to the greatest extent possible through an intensive education campaign. The wide-reaching plan for education carried through in a series of meetings, presentations, open houses, workshops, booths at events, newsletters, posters, news articles, and mailings. Public input was sought throughout the Study and in particular at key junctures in the process.

Major outreach and education efforts included:

- Three Newsletters covering the Outstandingly Remarkable Values, topics of interest, Committee member stories, and updates on the Wild and Scenic Study process were mailed, emailed, and distributed by locally during the study period. Newsletters and informational postcards were distributed to town libraries, local stores, riverfront landowners, and other locations
- An Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers website was developed early on in the Study process. Along with many important documents displayed, the Management Plan was posted to encourage formal public comment and review
- Numerous meetings were held in all ten towns throughout the Study process. The purpose was to educate residents, landowners, and local government representatives about the process, to gather public comments, and to inform Selectboards, municipal commissions (such as planning and zoning or conservation commissions), and the public on important study milestones. Depending on the individual municipality's needs, meetings were held at a variety of points during the Study including at the start of the Study, mid-point and towards the end. The meetings covered Wild and Scenic Rivers Act background and ongoing progress of the Study Committee. The meetings served to educate, gain input, and seek recommendations for the development of the Management Plan as well as to keep the public engaged in the Study and aware of its progress.

Education and Outreach materials may be found in Appendix 4 of this Report.

- Community Open Houses in both Franklin and Orleans County were widely publicized. Educational materials on display included maps, research studies, Management Plan findings, and a video. Representatives from the Study Committee were present to educate the public regarding proposed ORVs, designation boundaries, and management priorities for protecting the key resource values. Soliciting feedback for the Management Plan from the public and educating voters prior to Town Meeting votes were primary objectives of the open houses.
- Mailings, press releases, signage, news articles, and a video were used to inform the public of the Wild and Scenic Study. Letters announcing the commencement of the Study and explaining the goals and opportunities for participation were sent to Town Selectboards.
- Postcards soliciting ORV identification, and describing the Town Meeting article for vote were sent to riverfront landowners. There were numerous articles in regional, local, and town newspapers as well as in local organizations' and partners' newsletters.
- A Wild and Scenic Study Booth was displayed at local events staffed by the Study Committee representatives.
- Additional meetings, presentations, phone calls, and email messages with town staff members and leaders, kept them up-to-date and facilitated communications and collaboration between boards and commissions and the Study Committee. In addition, a subcommittee on outreach and education developed a comprehensive plan for engaging a broad spectrum of the public.
- Additional methods of communication that were utilized included:
  - A Library display was circulated to all ten Study area municipalities
  - The Wild and Scenic Town Meeting vote was highlighted and the Study Coordinator interviewed on VPR's Radio Program Vermont Edition
  - Video presentation was developed and shown on local TV stations, posted on website, shown at Community Open Houses
  - The local TV news WPTZ interviewed Committee members. This program was distributed and also aired on WPTZ prior to the Town Meeting vote
  - A PowerPoint slide show was developed. The presentation was given at local meetings
  - Posters and postcards with eye-catching designs and information were widely distributed
  - Printed materials included contact and website information as well as requests for questions, input, and comments
  - River paddles, work days and clean ups were also hosted to educate local community members about Wild and Scenic designation and collect information on locally valued resources while providing enjoyable activities on the rivers

These education and outreach activities were vital to developing the Management Plan through a broadly participatory process with guidance from locally-based representatives in consultation with the Study area municipalities. Examples of education and outreach materials are provided in Appendix 4 of this Report.

**Selectboard Meetings:** In addition to the regular monthly Study Committee meetings that were publicized locally and open to the public, there were updates conducted in all ten municipalities throughout the Study at Selectboard meetings, Conservation Commission, and other meetings. The purpose was to educate residents about the process, to gather public comments, and to inform Selectboards, commissions, and the public on important study milestones. The meetings covered Wild and Scenic Rivers Act background and ongoing progress of the Study Committee and served to educate, gain input, and seek recommendations for the development of the Management Plan as well as to keep the public engaged in the Study and aware of its progress. Small group meetings were also held with town staff and officials to share preliminary Study results and receive

feedback.

Generally there was an initial educational presentation to town leaders, boards, and committees followed by updates given by Study Committee representatives at regular intervals and important milestones. All Selectboards were visited prior to Town Meeting vote as well.

Presentations to local organizations, such as historical societies, the Northern Forest Canoe Trail or Missisquoi River Basin Association volunteers, and meetings with interested members of the public afforded additional opportunities for the public to participate in the review of the Management Plan. The locally appointed town representatives to the Study Committee were responsible for remaining in close communication with town staff, leaders, and boards, and available to answer questions from community members throughout the Study. The Study Coordinator was also available for technical guidance and support.

### **Local Support for the Management Plan and Wild and Scenic Designation**

Though the Management Plan is advisory, it is critical that so many partners have had an active role in developing its recommendations, and in that light endorsed the strategies that can be used to protect the Outstandingly Remarkable Values. This commitment of the various partners in river protection, a commitment developed and reaffirmed throughout the study process, will foster effective implementation. Community and Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation endorsement of the Management Plan substantiates suitability for designation by demonstrating commitment to river conservation. The support indicates that there is a demonstrated commitment to protect the river and be a partner in the implementation of recommendations in the Management Plan.

### **Preparers and Contributors**

Shana Stewart Deeds, Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Study Coordinator

#### ***National Park Service Northeast Region Study Team***

Chuck Barscz, Division Chief

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Jim MacCartney, River Manager

#### ***National Park Service Advisors***

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Cassie Thomas, WASO Office of Park Planning and Special Studies

#### ***Local Study Committee***

Study Committee Representatives from ten municipalities in the Study area, VT DEC/Agency of Natural Resources/Water Quality Division, Missisquoi River Basin Association, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission.

#### ***Expert Advisors - Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs)***

Scenic and Recreational ORVs

John Little, expert paddler and Chair, Missisquoi River Basin Association

Walter Opuszynski, Director of Partnerships and Marketing, Northern Forest Canoe Trail

Keith Sampietro, Owner, Montgomery Adventures

Cynthia Scott, Coordinator, Missisquoi River Basin Association and Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail

#### ***Natural Resource ORVs***

Barry Doolan and Stephen Wright, Geologists at the University of Vermont

Marjorie Gale, Geologist, Vermont Geological Survey, VT DEC

Charlie Hancock, Vermont Certified Consulting Forester

Parma Jewett, Licensed realtor and expert fisherwoman

Rich Langdon, Aquatic Biologist, VT Department of Environmental Conservation

Mike Manahan, Board Member, Missisquoi River Basin Association and expert fisherman

Corrie Miller and Bob Hawk, Linkage Coordinators, Staying Connected Initiative

Jeff Parsons and Dori Barton, Consulting Ecologists, Arrowwood Environmental

Nancy Patch, Vermont County Forester

Bernie Pientka, Wildlife Biologist, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Fisheries Division

Kristen Sharpless, Conservation Biologist and Education Coordinator, Vermont Audubon Society

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### *Water Quality Resources and Hydropower*

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Rick Hopkins, Environmental Analyst

Neil Kamman, Program Manager

Cathy Kashanski, Environmental Analyst

Leslie Matthews, Environmental Scientist

Staci Pomeroy, River Scientist

### *Historic and Cultural ORVs*

Bobby Farlice-Rubio, Executive Educator, Fairbanks Museum

Janice Geraw, Enosburgh Historical Society

Giovanna Peebles, State Archeologist, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

Scott Perry, Montgomery Historical Society

Sam Thurston, Lowell Historical Society

### **List of Recipients**

The Study Report and Environmental Assessment Draft will be made available for public comment through the NPS Planning, Environment & Public Comment website and notice of availability will be published in the local paper.

### **Federal Agency Heads**

- Secretary of the Interior
- Secretary of Agriculture
- Chief of Army Corps of Engineers
- Administrator Environmental Protection Agency
- Chairman of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
- Administrator of Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Administrator of Department of Transportation Federal Highways Department
- Head of any other affected federal department/ agency

### **Regional and State Federal Agency Heads**

- Regional Forester of Eastern Region 9 of USDA Forest Service
- State Conservationist of USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Commander and District Engineer of New England District of Army Corp of Engineers
- Northeast Regional Director of US Fish & Wildlife Service
- New England Ecological Services Field Office, Northeast Region (5), Concord, NH (Section 7 Endangered Species review)
- Regional Administrator Region 1 of Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Regional Administrator Region 1 of Environmental Protection Agency
- Vermont Division Administrator of US Department of Transportation Federal Highways Department
- Head of any other affected federal department or agency

*Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Study documents will be posted on the following websites for public view and formal comment:*

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>

<http://www.vtwsr.org/>

## Chapter 5. Environmental Assessment

### ***State of Vermont***

- Patrick Berry, Commissioner, Fish and Wildlife Department, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
- Pete LaFlamme, Director, Watershed Management Division, Department of Environmental Conservation, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
- Deb Markowitz, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
- David Mears, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
- Chuck Ross, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
- Brian Searles, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Transportation
- Peter Shumlin, Governor, State of Vermont
- Mike Snyder, Commissioner, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Vermont Agency of Natural Resources