

York River Wild and Scenic Stewardship Committee

Description and Responsibilities

The York River Partnership Wild and Scenic River designation legislation names the York River Stewardship Committee as the lead local entity with which the National Park Service Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Program will coordinate. The York River Stewardship Committee will be responsible for implementing the [York River Watershed Stewardship Plan](#) to protect and enhance river resources, including historic, cultural, and natural resources, as well as water quality and watershed ecosystem health. Its focus will be on identifying and undertaking priority actions from the Stewardship Plan; encouraging collaboration and coordination among the watershed communities and partner groups; and raising awareness of the watershed's importance, threats to resources, and challenges faced in balancing protection and use.

The Committee will include members appointed by the four watershed towns, as well as representatives from state and federal agencies and local organizations involved in river resource protection and community engagement. The Town of York will appoint four representatives, the Town of Eliot and the Town of Kittery each appoint two representatives, and the Town of South Berwick appoints one representative. Each town shall be able to appoint an alternate member. For initial appointments only, half will be 3-year terms and half will be 4-year terms to establish staggered durations of members' terms. Town-appointed members are voting members, and agency and other organizations' appointees are non-voting members on the Committee. The Stewardship Plan outlines an initial structure and procedures for the Stewardship Committee. Once established, the Committee will develop and adopt its own bylaws to guide the procedures, structure, and conduct of the Committee. It is anticipated that the Committee will meet monthly and will have staff to support and coordinate its work.

Some core responsibilities of the Stewardship Committee in its mission to implement the York River Watershed Stewardship Plan and achieve Partnership Wild and Scenic River Program goals will be to:

- Prioritize actions from the Stewardship Plan and undertake activities or facilitate projects and agreements to implement priorities
- Manage and account for funds from the National Park Service awarded annually
- Oversee the hiring and management of any staff or contractors to assist the Committee with implementation of the Stewardship Plan
- Regularly coordinate and communicate with watershed towns, organizations, and stakeholders
- Conduct outreach and public engagement activities to encourage stewardship of the watershed

Qualities, skills, and/or expertise that would be beneficial for committee members to possess:

- Detailed knowledge in one or more areas of focus including water quality, historic resources and archaeology, commercial and/or recreational river use, coastal habitats and species, land conservation, and habitat stewardship activities
- Familiarity with the York River Watershed Stewardship Plan and interest in its implementation
- Previous experience working as part of a team, board, or committee on conservation or community oriented initiatives
- Connections to and knowledge of various community (or regional) groups and/or experience with community engagement activities
- An interest in York River and cultivating others' interest in river stewardship

For more information on York River Partnership Wild and Scenic River designation or the [York River Watershed Stewardship Plan](#), visit www.YorkRiverMaine.org. Contact town offices for information on the towns' processes to appoint York River Stewardship Committee members.