

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

Resolve, To Preserve the Saco River

Preamble. Whereas, the Saco River flows through several municipalities and recreational use of the river has increased dramatically in the past decade; and

Whereas, developing a plan for appropriately managing recreational use of the river and providing law enforcement, sanitation and emergency services is essential; and

Whereas, a consistent approach to managing recreational use of the river is essential to maintaining the quality of the experience for users, as well as resolving conflicts between recreational users and owners of property adjacent to the river; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1 Development of recreation management plan for Saco River. Resolved: That the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Lands within the Department of Conservation, referred to in this resolve as "the director," shall gather information to facilitate the management of that portion of the Saco River between the New Hampshire border at Balch Pond and the Hiram Dam in the Town of Hiram. For the purposes of this resolve, this portion of the river is referred to as "the Upper Saco River Recreation Corridor."

Specifically to be reviewed are various approaches to address issues including, but not limited to, boating safety, law enforcement, environmental impact of recreational uses, conflicts among recreational users and the degradation of public and private property within the corridor. The director shall seek an approach that provides for consistent management throughout the Upper Saco River Recreation Corridor. The director shall work with stakeholders to consider potential effects of various management approaches on local and regional economies.

The director shall contact the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, Watershed Management Bureau, Rivers Management and Protection Program. The director shall invite one or more representatives from New Hampshire to join in examining the management of the Upper Delaware River as a federally designated Partnership Scenic and Recreational River and assess the benefits and drawbacks to such a designation; and be it further

Sec. 2 Working group. Resolved: That the director shall convene a working group, including, but not limited to, one representative of:

1. The Saco River Corridor Commission;
2. The Saco River Recreational Council;
3. The Nature Conservancy;
4. Municipal officials or citizens designated by municipal officials from the towns of Hiram, Brownfield, Denmark and Fryeburg;
5. Law enforcement;
6. Owners of campgrounds within the Upper Saco River Recreation Corridor;

7. Citizens who own land and reside within the Upper Saco River Recreation Corridor;
8. Owners of working woodlots within the Upper Saco River Recreation Corridor; and
9. Owners of farms within the Upper Saco River Recreation Corridor.

The director shall seek the advice of the working group and develop options for managing the Upper Saco River Recreation Corridor in consultation with the working group; and be it further

Sec. 3 Recommendations and report; funding. Resolved: That the director shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over public lands no later than December 15, 2007. The report must include various options for managing the Upper Saco River Recreation Corridor as a recreational waterway of statewide significance. The report must also include a recommendation for the creation of a Saco River preservation fund to fund future management of the river.