

**§951. Purpose**

The Legislature finds that the Saco, Ossipee and Little Ossipee Rivers are largely unspoiled by intensive or poorly planned commercial, industrial or residential development; that existing water quality on the inland portions of these rivers is extremely high; that these rivers and their associated wetlands constitute an important present and future source of drinking water; that they support large and diverse aquatic populations; and that they are heavily used for fishing, swimming, canoeing, camping and other forms of outdoor recreation. [PL 1979, c. 459, §1 (NEW).]

The Legislature finds that the wetlands associated with these rivers constitute important water storage areas; that they moderate the flow of these rivers in time of flood and drought; that they replenish the groundwater; and that they provide nutrients and essential habitat for numerous species of fish, migratory birds and other forms of wildlife. [PL 1979, c. 459, §1 (NEW).]

The Legislature finds that the periodic flooding of these rivers contributes to the fertility of the adjacent lands; that the unrestricted flow of water within the floodway in the upper portions of these rivers is an essential factor in limiting the severity of flooding in the lower portions of these rivers; and that because the floodplains are largely undeveloped, the flooding which now occurs results in relatively little loss of life, personal injury and damage to property. [PL 1979, c. 459, §1 (NEW).]

The Legislature finds that these rivers and their adjacent lands possess outstanding scenic and aesthetic qualities and that certain areas along these rivers are of outstanding scenic, historic, archaeological, scientific and educational importance. [PL 1979, c. 459, §1 (NEW).]

The Legislature finds that the towns along these rivers are experiencing rapid population growth and that the rivers themselves are subject to increasing development pressures which threaten to destroy the quality of these rivers and the character of the adjacent lands. [PL 1979, c. 459, §1 (NEW).]

In view of the dangers of intensive and poorly planned development, it is the purpose of this chapter to preserve existing water quality, prevent the diminution of water supplies, to control erosion, to protect fish and wildlife populations, to prevent undue extremes of flood and drought, to limit the loss of life and damage to property from periodic floods; to preserve the scenic, rural and unspoiled character of the lands adjacent to these rivers; to prevent obstructions to navigation; to prevent overcrowding; to avoid the mixture of incompatible uses; to protect those areas of exceptional scenic, historic, archaeological, scientific and educational importance; and to protect the public health, safety and general welfare by creating the Saco River Corridor, established in section 953, and by regulating the use of land and water within this area. [PL 1989, c. 503, Pt. B, §177 (AMD).]

**SECTION HISTORY**

PL 1979, c. 459, §1 (NEW). PL 1983, c. 812, §293 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 503, §B177 (AMD).

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