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**York River Study Committee
Draft York River Watershed Stewardship Plan Released**

ELIOT, KITTERY, SOUTH BERWICK & YORK – The York River Study Committee invites feedback on its recently released Draft York River Watershed Stewardship Plan. The Stewardship Plan is a voluntary guidance document that provides recommendations and strategies to support the work of communities, conservation organizations, community groups and individuals interested in the long-term protection of the York River and its watershed resources. The York River watershed is the area of land in parts of York, Eliot, Kittery and South Berwick from which water flows to the York River, either directly or first to a tributary stream that eventually flows to the York River.

The Stewardship Plan characterizes the many resources and values that make this watershed special, such as the historic buildings and structures, archaeological heritage, working waterfront, scenic views, wildlife habitat, rare plants and animals, and clean water. The Stewardship Plan identifies wide-ranging stewardship actions that are intended to protect or enhance important resources for current and future generations. To develop the plan, the York River Study Committee reviewed existing watershed reports and data, the four towns' comprehensive plans, other state and regional plans and programs related to watershed resources, and new data from recent studies. In addition, the Study Committee sought extensive input from resource experts, town boards and committees, conservation and preservation groups, state agency representatives, and towns' citizens through many meetings, presentations, and discussions.

The draft Stewardship Plan can be viewed and downloaded from the York River Study website: <http://www.YorkRiverMaine.org>. The York River Study Committee requests comments, questions, corrections, or other feedback on the draft plan by July 6, 2018. Email or call Study Coordinator Jennifer Hunter (jh.yorkriver@gmail.com or 207-641-9122) or come to the June 26 York River Study Committee meeting, 5:30-7:30 pm at the Grant House (200 US Route 1, York) to learn more or provide your input in person to the Study Committee.

Development of the York River Watershed Stewardship Plan is a culmination of the three-year York River Wild and Scenic Study to evaluate a possible designation for the York River and its major tributaries into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Later this year, the York River Study Committee will be seeking endorsement from the four watershed towns to pursue a Partnership Wild and Scenic River designation for the York River and its major tributaries. Designation would provide the financial resources, technical assistance, and local administrative structure to help implement recommendations in the York River Watershed Stewardship Plan. Information on the York River Wild and Scenic Study is available on the website: <http://www.YorkRiverMaine.org>.