

CONGRESSWOMAN
CHELLIE PINGREE
Representing Maine's First District



Pingree, Watershed Communities Celebrate York River's 'Wild & Scenic' Designation

High resolution photos from today's celebration are available for download [here](#)

For Immediate Release
June 2, 2023

Contact: Victoria Bonney, 202-577-8541

YORK, MAINE—Congresswoman Chellie Pingree (D-Maine), National Park Service Deputy Director Mike Reynolds, the York River Study Committee, and members of the watershed communities of Eliot, Kittery, South Berwick, and York celebrated the York River's long-sought "Wild and Scenic" designation. [Championed by Pingree in Congress and signed by President Biden](#) in the Fiscal Year 2023 government funding bill, the designation establishes federal protections for approximately 30.8 miles of the river in southeast Maine and surrounding acreage, directs more federal funding and technical assistance from the National Park Service, lifts the region's profile as a national destination, and provides a local forum for the four watershed communities to collaboratively address long-term river stewardship needs.

"The York River is many things; scenic and beautiful, of course, but also rich in well-preserved history, diverse in natural ecology, is a source for clean drinking water, and is home to a thriving working waterfront. Part of the reason there was such overwhelming support behind this community effort was not simply recognition of the York River's importance, but for the benefits that a 'Wild and Scenic' designation can provide. With the 'Wild and Scenic' designation, the ongoing work of local communities and partners, and incoming federal support, the York River will be a regional gem far into the future," **said Pingree**. "After working with the surrounding communities to complete this designation since my earliest days in Congress, I am overjoyed to celebrate this tremendous victory with the York River community. But now, the real work begins."

[Click here](#) to download photos from Thursday's event.

Pingree [first introduced legislation](#) to add the York River to the National Park Service's [Wild and Scenic](#) program in the 116th Congress. Her bill followed a [three-year study](#) (funded by legislation that Pingree [introduced in 2011](#) and Congress passed in 2014) that recommended the designation. In 2018, the voters of York and Eliot overwhelmingly passed referendums to move forward with the designation, as did the town councils of Kittery and South Berwick.

###