

# South Scenic River Report City of Waynesboro

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## I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In 2020, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) completed a Scenic River evaluation for the South River. The river section begins at South Oak Lane and ends at Hopeman Parkway in the City of Waynesboro.

Based on the evaluation, the 6.4 miles were deemed eligible for inclusion in the Virginia Scenic River System. The designation as a Virginia Scenic River is recommended, and it is further recommended that DCR be the administering agency.

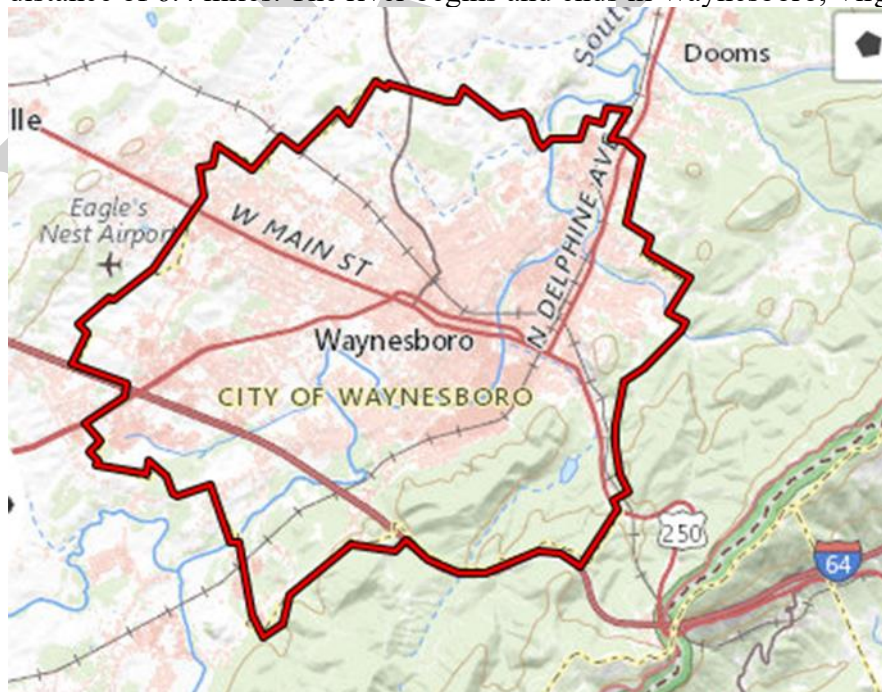
## II. REASON FOR THE STUDY

In April 2019, the Mayor of Waynesboro on behalf of the City Council requested that DCR evaluate the South River for inclusion in the Virginia Scenic River System. A field evaluation of the river was completed August 13, 2020, wherein DCR concluded that the river was eligible for designation. The City is focusing on the South River as a City asset and developing a greenway along much of the corridor. Having the river as a Scenic River will enhance their efforts for recreation, access and clean up.

The [Scenic Rivers Act](#) instructs DCR to conduct, "studies of rivers or sections of rivers to be considered for designation," and to, "recommend to the Governor and to the General Assembly rivers or sections thereof to be considered for designation as Scenic Rivers." This report fulfills this statutory directive.

### A. History of Scenic River Designation for the South River

The South River was evaluated from South Oak Lane and ending at Hopeman Parkway, a distance of 6.4 miles. The river begins and ends in Waynesboro, Virginia (Map 1,

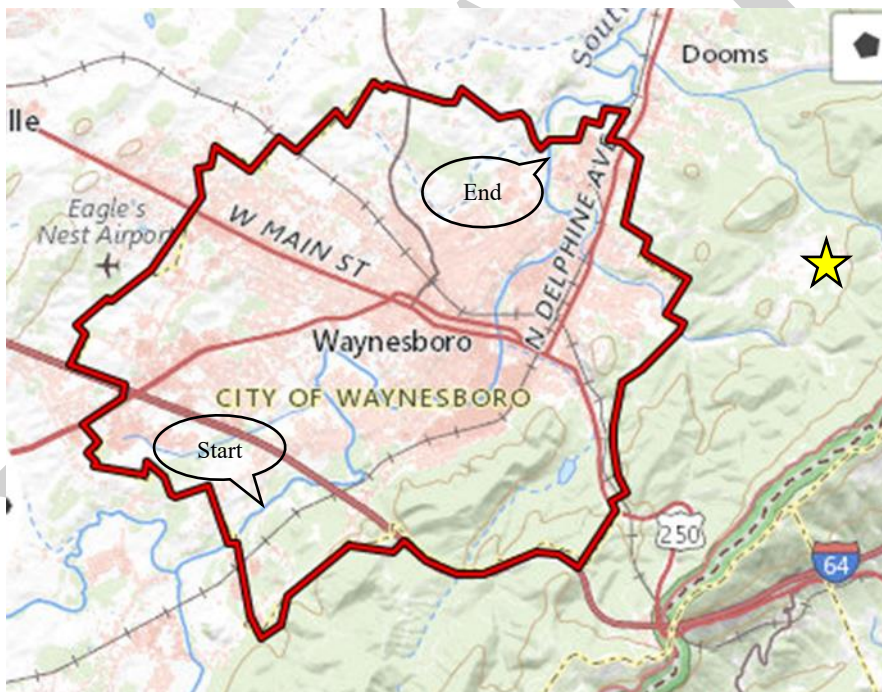




Map 2). No part of the river is currently in the Virginia Scenic Rivers System.



Map 1. The location of South River in Waynesboro. The South River is a tributary of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. It is located about 96 miles northwest of the City of Richmond, and about 163 miles southwest of Washington, DC. Source: DCR Natural Heritage Explorer <https://vanhde.org/content/map>



Map 2. The location of South River study in Waynesboro is shown here with the start and ending points of the evaluation. The City boundary is in red. Source: GAP/LANDFIRE National Terrestrial Ecosystems 2011, <https://maps.usgs.gov/terrestrial-ecosystems-2011>

## B. Benefits of Designation

The Scenic Rivers Act (the Act), found in Title 10.1, Chapter 4, [§ 10.1-400](#) through 10.1-418.1 of the *Code of Virginia*, was enacted in 1970 as a means of recognizing the Commonwealth's

scenic rivers and their immediate environs. In order to be eligible for Scenic River designation, a river must contain “superior natural and scenic beauty, fish and wildlife, and historic, recreational, geologic, cultural, and other assets.”<sup>1</sup> Designated rivers need not include the entire river, and may include tributaries. At the request of the locality(s), DCR evaluates a specified river segment, determines whether or not it qualifies for designation, and writes a report documenting these attributes. This report satisfies this requirement and it will be posted on the DCR website at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/srstudies> .

Since the passage of the Act, 37 river segments, totaling approximately 980 miles, have received Scenic River designation from the General Assembly. A list of those rivers can be found at: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/document/srlist.pdf>

The Virginia Scenic River designation accomplishes the following:

- Allows riparian landowners to continue using their land as they did before designation, except as provided in §10.1-407 (§10.1- 408), <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-408/>
- Gives riparian landowners, local citizens, and local governments a greater voice in the planning and implementation of federal and state projects that might affect the river (§10.1-406.1), <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-406.1/>
- Requires all state agencies to consider visual, natural, and recreational values of a Scenic River in their planning and permitting process (§10.1-402) <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-402/>
- Requires authorization by the General Assembly for the construction, operation and/or maintenance of any structure, such as a dam, that would impede the natural flow of a Scenic River (§10.1-407), <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-407/>
- Requires the Federal Energy Commission (FERC) to consider the impact of proposed hydropower or related projects on a designated Scenic River using the Scenic River report developed in the qualification process

The Virginia Scenic River Program is a state-level program for recognizing the uniqueness and quality of a river. Note that the program is different from the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The national-level system has a different set of criteria, and requires designation by Congress or the Secretary of the Interior. According to [www.rivers.gov](http://www.rivers.gov), Virginia has approximately 49,350 miles of river, but no congressionally designated Wild and Scenic rivers.

### **C. Designation Process**

Before an evaluation of a potential scenic river, DCR must receive, in hand, a letter from the local governing body, administrator, or manager requesting that a study be conducted.

In order to determine whether a river (or river segment) is eligible for Virginia Scenic River designation, it must be evaluated by the following 13 criteria:

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<sup>1</sup> Code Section § 10.1-400. Definitions. <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title10.1/chapter4/section10.1-400/>

1. River Corridor Vegetation
2. Riverbed and/or River Flow Modifications
3. Human Development of Visual Corridor
4. Historic Features
5. Landscape
6. Quality of Fishery
7. Special Natural Flora and Fauna
8. Water Quality
9. Parallel Roads
10. Crossings
11. Special Features Affecting River Aesthetics
12. Public Recreational Access
13. Land Conservation

An in-depth discussion of the South River's assets is completed in Section IV: ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS (page 7).

Each evaluation involves data collection from multiple sources. These include state agencies, local and regional planning commissions, map surveys, and related literature reviews. Each evaluation also involves fieldwork. The fieldwork requires canoeing, boating, or walking the stretch of a river and rating the characteristics of the resource as it relates to the criteria. The fieldwork, combined with the data collected, is used to validate existing land use information and rank the river according to relative significant resources, uniqueness and quality.

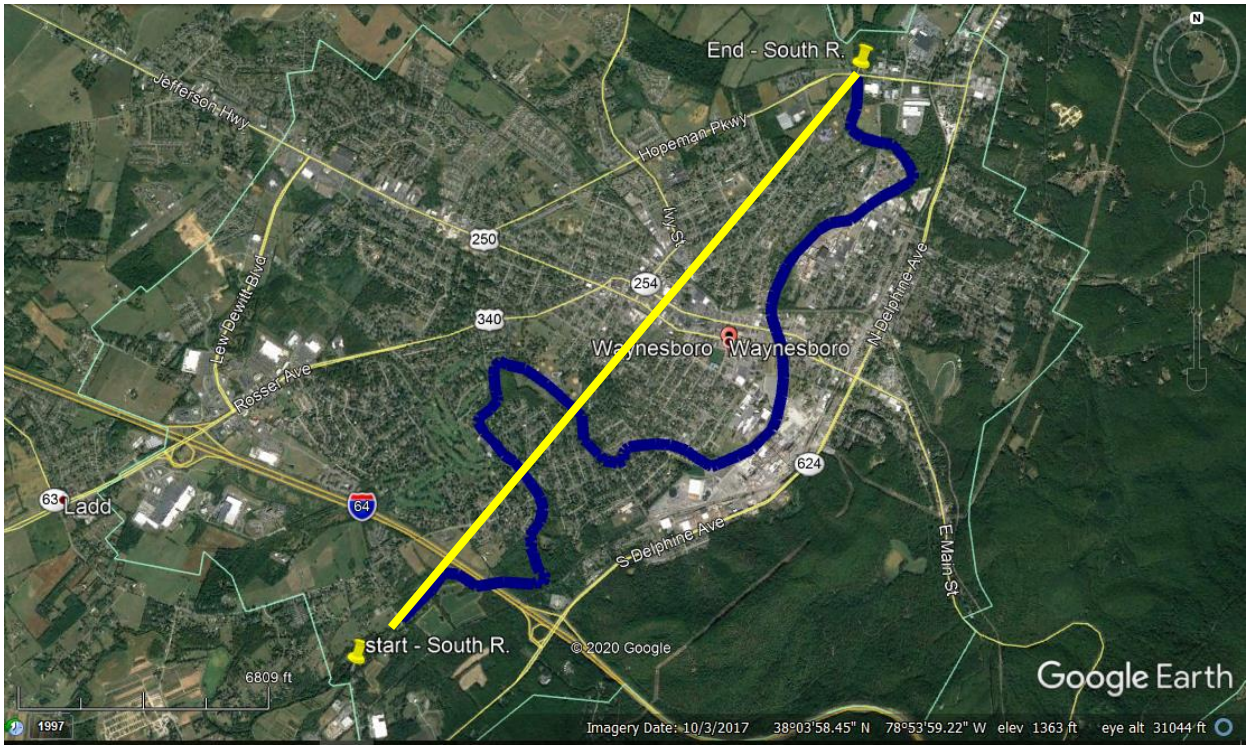
Once the study has been completed, and DCR has finalized a report and designation recommendations, resolutions and letters of support are solicited from as many governmental and civic groups and individuals as possible. These letters and resolutions can become part of the official record if a public hearing on the designation recommendation is held.

It is then the responsibility of the locality to garner support of local legislators of the General Assembly for the designation. The legislators introduce the designation legislation and provide support throughout the legislative process. Sample legislation is provided by DCR staff. For proposed legislation, see **Appendix D**.

### **III. CORRIDOR STUDY MAP**

South River originates and ends within Waynesboro, Virginia (Map 3).





*Map 3. The South River was evaluated from South Oak Lane and ends at Hopeman Parkway. With a straight-line distance of about 3.7 miles (Yellow), the river's corridor length is 6.4 miles, represented in Blue.*

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#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Personnel from Waynesboro and DCR's Division of Planning and Recreation Resources, along with local stakeholders, performed a field evaluation along South River on August 13, 2020. The following is a description of the criteria, qualities, and conditions of the resource that make the South River a candidate for the Virginia Scenic River System.

##### A. River Corridor Vegetation

The evaluation team gave this criterion a moderate score, for having less than 40 percent of its shores with forested buffer of at least 100 feet.

South River winds through a varied landscape of recreational, industrial and residential areas. The 6.4 miles has some tree buffers of over 100 feet (Image 1).



*Image 1. Buffer along South River.*

##### B. Riverbed and/or River Flow Modifications

The evaluation team gave this criterion a high score, for having no impoundments or channel modifications. The evaluated 6 miles of South River were free-flowing and meandering.



### C. Human Development of Visual Corridor

The evaluation team gave this criterion a very low score. This criterion is made up of two factors. The first is the amount of City or Town as a percentage of the entire corridor. Secondly is the rural development, which is the number of residencies, idling groupings or industry buildings in the more rural sections of the corridor and is a ratio calculation.

The development along the corridor is made up of residential, industrial and parks. There are few sections that do not have some visible development in or just beyond the buffers. (Image and 3).



*Image 2. Examples of homes that are visible from the river.*



*Image 3. One of the close industrial sites.*

#### **D. Historic Features**

The evaluation team gave this criterion a high score for having historic sites, districts or structures of national significance within 1,000 feet of the river and that the properties are visible from the river.

The following information was provided to DCR by the Department of Historic Resources. Each of the listed sites is on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) (NRHP) under the National Park Service and are on the [Virginia Landmarks Register](#) (VLR).





*Image 4 –Rose Cliff within the Tree Streets Historic District, Photo By Lvklock - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9670584>*

- Rose Cliff and Fruit Farm with in the Tree Streets Historic District
- Waynesboro Downtown Historic District.
- Tree Streets Historic District
- Port Republic Road Historic District
- Crompton-Shenandoah Plant, South River Textile Mill, The Mill at South River

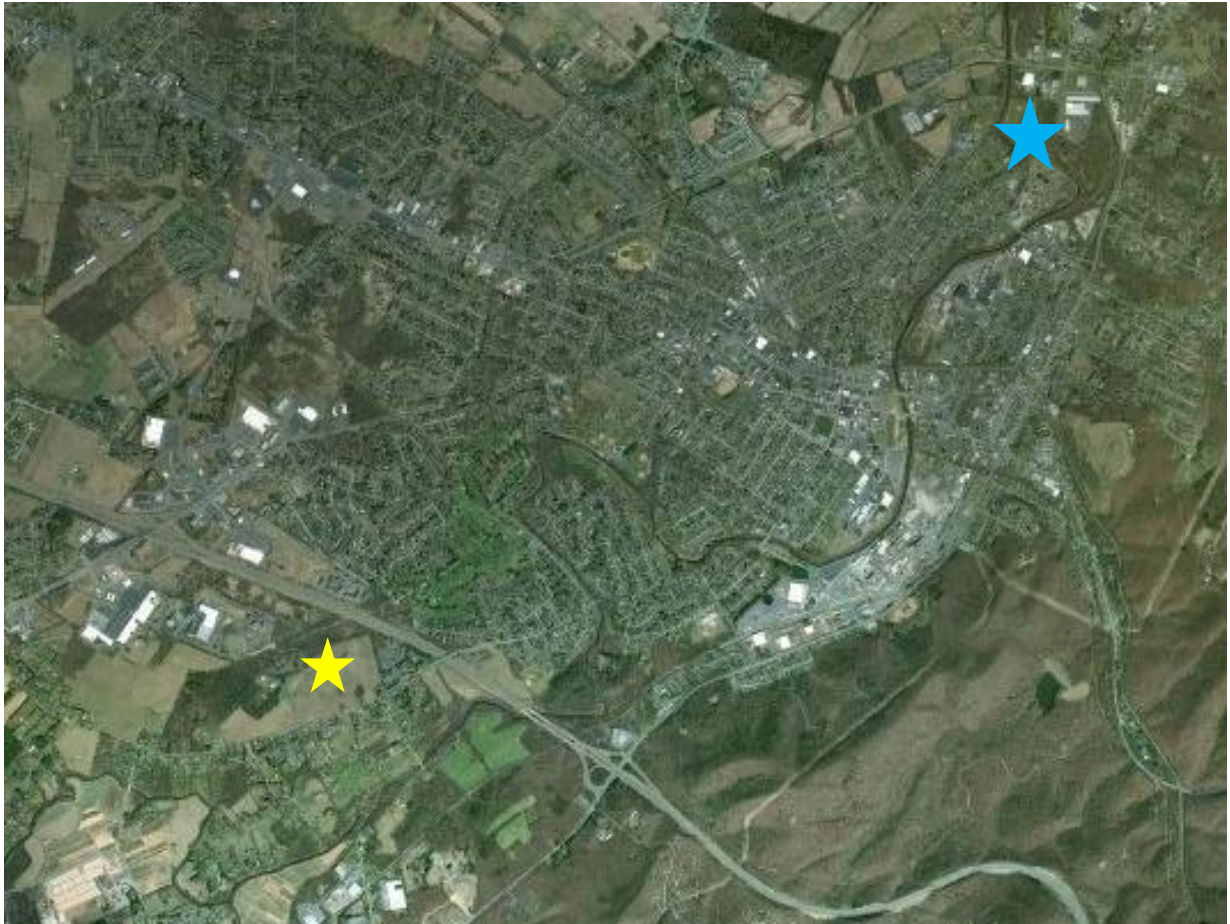
#### **E. Landscape**

The evaluation team gave this criterion a moderate score, for having some diversity of corridor features, and for having low range of views of foreground and an occasional middle ground.

South River is in Virginia’s Piedmont province flowing through rolling hills forest landscapes. The South River flows in a northerly direction meeting the North River and forming the South Fork Shenandoah River, ultimately flowing north to the Potomac River.

The 6.4 winding miles of South River has a combination of forest buffers mixed between development and City parks.

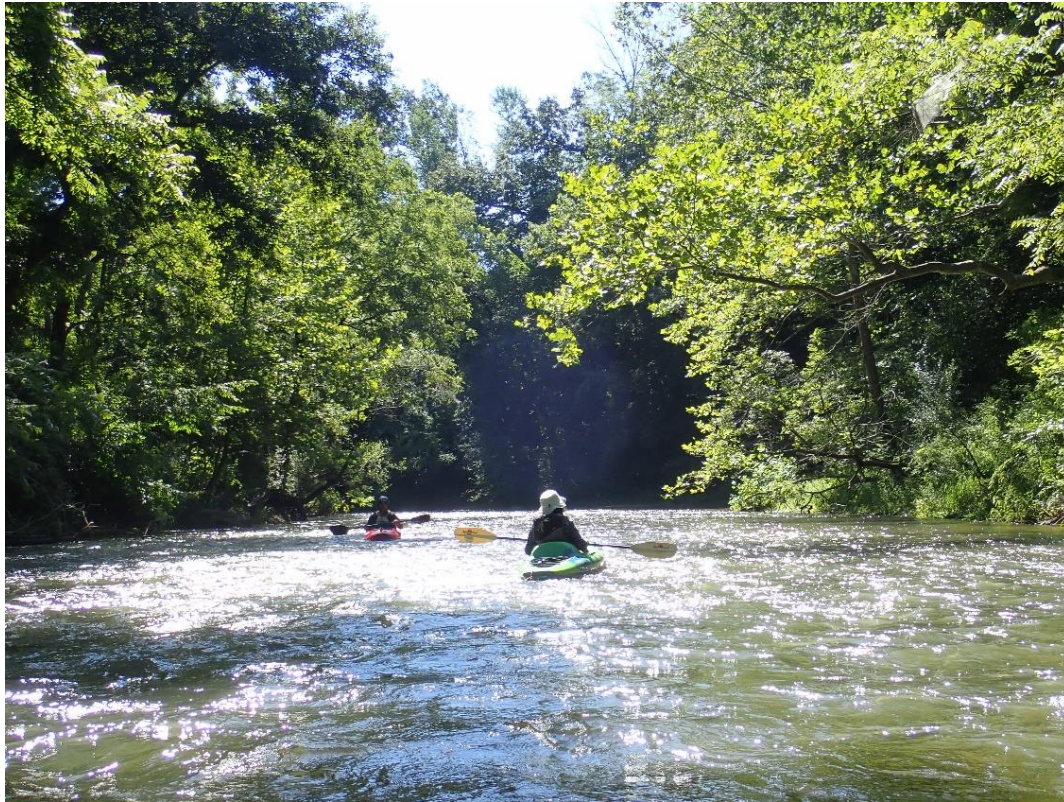




*Map 4. South River, South Oak Lane and ends at Hopeman Parkway. The starting point is represented by a **yellow star**, while the ending point is a **blue star**. Source: EnviroAtlas, <https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/enviroatlas/interactivemap/>*

Though most of the views are foregrounds with over hanging trees, there are a few longer views that capture the nearby mountains beyond the river corridor.





*Image 5. Short-range view on South River.*



*Image 6. Mid-range view on South River.*



## F. Quality of Fishery

The evaluation team gave this criterion a moderate score for having good fishing opportunities.

South River's fishery attracts fishermen from all the Mid-Atlantic region coming to fish for Trout due to the various trout management programs. According to the Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR), this section of "the river harbors good numbers of smallmouth bass, redbreast sunfish, rock bass, fallfish and even a few largemouth bass. Anglers might also catch bluegill, green sunfish, channel catfish, carp, white sucker, or black crappie while exploring the river."<sup>2</sup>



*Image 7. Person fishing while wading in the South River.*

## G. Special Natural Flora and Fauna



The evaluation team gave this criterion a moderate score.

Members of the guiding team mentioned the abundance of birds, like the eagles, and other wildlife, like otters and beavers, they had seen on past river trips. Additionally the team observed piedmont plants like: red cardinal flower, blooming autumn clematis, and early fall color of dogwoods, maples and black gum trees. The team also saw kingfishers and other birds.

*Image 8. Red Cardinal Flower in full bloom*

<sup>2</sup> DWR Website - <https://dwr.virginia.gov/waterbody/south-river/>



## Species with Conservation Status

The 6+ miles of South River had two species with state-level or national-level conservation status as provided by the DCR Natural Heritage Program. For species ranking definitions (G1, S1, etc.), please see **Appendix B**.



### Brook floater (*Alasmidonta varicosa*) (G3S1)

An endangered species in Virginia, and one of the rarest freshwater mussel species within the state, it rarely exceeds three inches in length. This species appears to be on the brink of extirpation in Virginia. It lives in high relief streams, under boulders and in sand. Research has shown that it is highly sensitive to increased thermal temperature<sup>3</sup>. (Image 9).

Image 9. Brook Floater By Daderot - Own work, CC0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=25143448>

### Cottus cognatus, (Slimy Sculpin) (G5,S2)

A rare endangered freshwater fish that inhabit cold rocky streams. These nocturnally active fish are hard to see and are rare in that they have no scales. There is little restoration action for this species; however this species is considered imperiled by NatureServe. Photo source: Encyclopedia of Life (Image 10).



Image10. Slimy Sculpin – *Cottus cognatus*. © <https://www.fishbase.se/summary/4068>

## H. Water Quality

The evaluation team gave this criterion a high score, for having virtually no visible pollution, and waters that are not turbid or muddy during less than one-third of the six warm season

<sup>3</sup> From webpage - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brook\\_floater](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brook_floater)

months (May through October). Additionally, this section of the South River is recognized for its special condition of having a viable trout fishery.

## **I. Parallel Roads**

The evaluation team gave this criterion a moderately high score, for having some parallel roads that had little impact for river travelers.

While roads may negatively impact the sights and sounds of a river, the impacts are minor. Some roads may even offer benefits to the river's scenic quality, by allowing fishing access and providing views to the river.

All the parallel roads along this stretch of the river are residential streets with few cars and slow traffic. There are also sections where the greenway parallels the river and provides visual and pedestrian access to the river.



*Figure 11. Meadowbrook Road*

## **J. Crossings**

The evaluation team gave this criterion no score, due to the large number and impact of the crossing along this stretch of the river.



Crossings are considered roads, pipelines and power/communication lines that pass over, under or through a river. The total impact is quantified as a ratio per river mile.



*Figure 12. Interstate 64 bridge*

This section of the South River has numerous bridges, including Interstate 64. Additionally, there is a pipeline and a number of transmission lines that cross the river.

## **K. Special Features Affecting River Aesthetics**

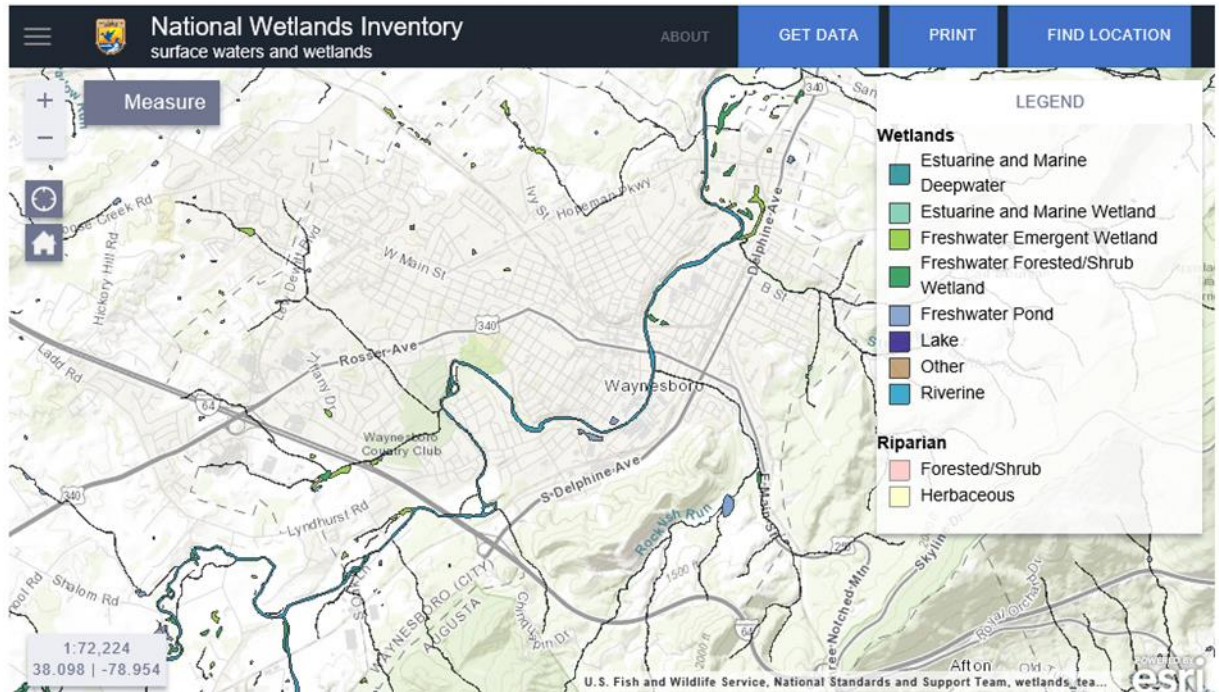
The evaluation team gave this criterion a high score for overall aesthetic appeal.

One of the strongest determinates was the proximity to the center of the City of Waynesboro. It was amazing to all how close one is to intense development and yet there was a feeling of remoteness and tranquility prevails. The exposure to the industrial and all the changes being afforded on those sites, was an interesting story of reinventing the city.

The views along South River were short-range and mid-range. Along the way, islands, riffles and wetlands provided interest along the river course. The lush tree buffer along the river's shores made the watercourse feel remote, an unusual experience in the heart of a city. There were a few bluffs, and interesting rock features on different sections of the river. The exceptional fall color made up of hardwoods and second growth forests along the way added



additional interest. As did the urban/industrial interface that is converting to many park lands and access along the river.



Map 5. Wetlands around South River. There are few wetlands along this section of the South River, with most of the nearby wetlands on its tributaries. However, the wetlands that are there are “Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland” (dark green) and a few sections of “Freshwater Emergent Wetland” (light green) Source: National Wetlands Inventory, <https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/mapper.html>

## L. Public Recreational Access

The evaluation team gave this criterion a high score for having a public boat/canoe/kayak launch site or a public use trail along the corridor.

South River is a popular recreational site for boating, fishing, swimming, and tubing. The public can access the river at several locations. Most of these locations is associated with one of the newer City parks as seen in the water trail map – Map 6.



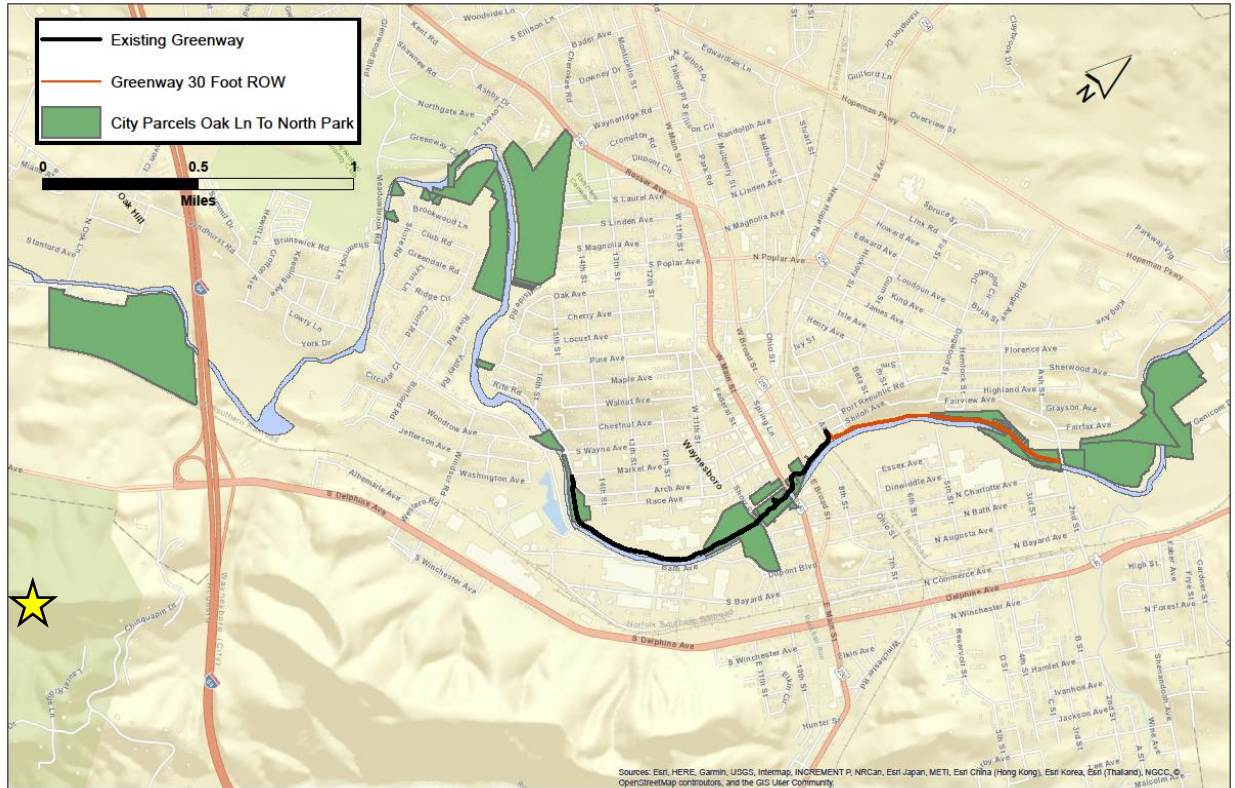
Map 6. Waynesboro Water Trail - <https://www.waynesboro.va.us/889/Waynesboro-Water-Trail>

## M. Land Conservation

The evaluation team gave this criterion the full score, for having more than 25 percent of the corridor protected through easement or other permanent measures. The City ownership along the corridor for park and greenway development is about 41% of the shoreline.

DCR's Natural Heritage Program provides information about managed lands and conservation easements. However, most of the City lands are not shown in the Natal Heritage Explorer. (Map 7 shows all city owned lands along the South River).





*Map 7. Land conservation along South River. The green areas are owned by the City of Waynesboro and are, or will be public parks. The Black line shows the greenway trail along the river, and the red line is proposed trail. Map provided by the City of Waynesboro. Source: City of Waynesboro GIS*

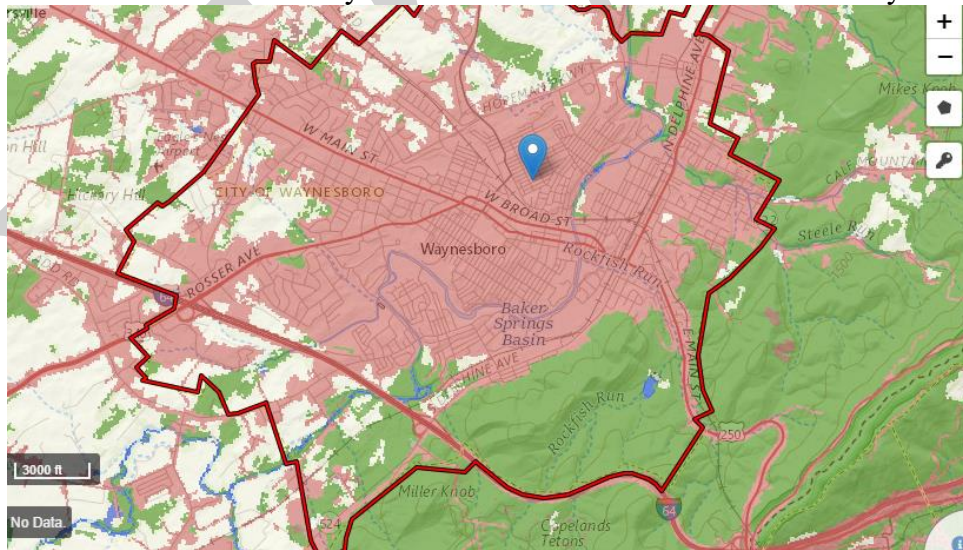
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## V. LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP

The City of Waynesboro has developed an extensive plans for the support and increased quality of the South River. The most recent Comprehensive Pan of 2018 <sup>4</sup>and the 2008 Land Use Plan<sup>5</sup> both put a lot of attention on the value and future benefits of the South River. Comprehensive Principles and priorities put a connection to the natural environment in and around the City, especially as it relates to the River, as some of the highest needs for the future of the City's Quality of Life. Future land use goals for the river corridor, discuss the significance of open space, particularly along the river; the need for access to the river; the value of enhancing the river's trout fishery; and the overall need for a clean river with a greenway along it for the use of all citizens.

All of this points to a realization that the river is perhaps one of the best amenities the City has to offer. The citizens and the local government place a large value on their river and its recognition will support their goals for the future and insure the protection of the scenic assets of the South River. The City of Waynesboro acknowledges that the river is on the rebound and its economic value to the city is only partially as valuable as it could be. Additionally, Waynesboro is a designated MS4 community with a commitment to reduce pollution reaching the South River and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. This commitment consists of a plan with designated projects which are to be completed by 2028 and supported by dedicated funding from the stormwater utility fees and grants from other funding partners.

Lands along the study corridor are mostly in public ownership, as discussed in the Land Conservation Section, at about 62% of the entire corridor. Privately owned lands along the river contain homes and industry. The land cover around the river is mostly developed (Map 8).



Map 8. Land use along the evaluated section of the South River in Waynesboro. Most of the section is surrounded by Developed and Other Human Use (**pink**). Other land uses are Forest & Woodland (**green**), and Agricultural & Developed Vegetation (**white**). Source: <https://maps.usgs.gov/terrestrial-ecosystems->

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.waynesboro.va.us/DocumentCenter/View/7101/Waynesboro-2018-Comprehensive-Plan>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.waynesboro.va.us/DocumentCenter/View/208/Comprehensive-Plan-Land-Use-Guide?bidId=>



## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) concludes that South River in the City of Waynesboro from South Oak Lane to Hopeman Parkway, a distance of approximately 6.4 miles, is hereby eligible to be a component of the Virginia Scenic River System. Scenic River designation is warranted because of the aesthetic and recreational qualities of the river section, its environs, the unique flora and fauna, and the protected lands.

Flowing through the City, this river segment has a remote feel and numerous interesting sections for access and river use, as well as a number of interesting aesthetic features including islands, and freshwater trout fishery.

South River is home to bald eagles and other river birds. The river also has one fish species and one mussel species with state-level or national-level conservation status.

South River is rich with history, especially as it relates to burgeoning industry and redevelopment with numerous Virginia and National Landmark Register districts and sites along the river corridor.

The river is also a popular site for recreational activities such as boating, fishing, swimming, and tubing. Public access to the river is nearly continuous via the existing and proposed greenway with new launch sites being proposed and developed. Additionally, the City has developed a South River Water Trail that highlights points of interest along the river. The designation will support and help with the promotion of this endeavor.

Considering the aspects of South River as described in this report, DCR recommends that:

1. The section that starts at South Oak Lane and ends at Hopeman Parkway, a distance of approximately 6.4 miles, receive Virginia Scenic River designation, and
2. The Department of Conservation and Recreation be appointed the Administering Agency.

Proposed legislation for Scenic River designation is provided in **Appendix D**.

## VII. CONSERVATION PLAN

The following recommended conservation plan involves local and state governments, individual and riparian landowners, and local stewardship initiatives.

### A. Virginia Scenic River Designation

Designation of South River would give riparian landowners, local citizens, and local governments a greater voice in the planning and implementation of federal and state projects that might affect the river. For other benefits of Scenic River designation, see **Section B: Benefits of Designation**.

The local government may create a local scenic river advisory committee to advise the local government on the protection or management of the scenic river segment within its jurisdiction.

For more information about this process, see [Code of Virginia § 10.1-401](#) and [§ 10.1-406.1](#).

**B. Land Use Plans**

Waynesboro will continue to enact its land use plan, to support recognition, appreciation, and concern for the river, which recognizes the role it plays in the county's quality of life. Such plans can help protect the river and its environs from insensitive development and insure that the development that does occur uses low impact strategies whenever possible.

**C. Local and Riparian Landowners**

Stewardship by local and riparian landowners has been increasing over the recent years. Without this stewardship, the attributes necessary for inclusion in the Virginia Scenic River System might have been lost. Through continuation of these efforts, the natural and scenic character of the river can be protected. Increasing buffers and runoff minimization techniques will go far towards insuring the assets of the South River are maintained and enhanced.

**D. Local Stewardship Initiatives**

Several local groups support the conservation and recognition of South River. The two currently active groups are: a long-standing citizen action group, and the other is a "Science Team" funded by DuPont as a requirement of its clean-up obligation. Maintaining these groups is an excellent way to encourage appropriate use of the riverine lands.

**VIII. ANTICIPATED COST OF DESIGNATION**

The only anticipated direct costs as a result of the designation would be those incurred by DCR as a result of its duties as administrator of the river. These costs are estimated to be approximately \$1,000 per year.

**IX. AGENCY COMMENTS/ RESOLUTIONS**

A draft report was circulated in 2020 among DCR Divisions, other state agencies, and Waynesboro. See comments and resolutions of support in **Appendix C**.



**X. APPENDIX**

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## **Appendix A. Acronyms and Abbreviations**

<b>The Act</b>	Scenic Rivers Act, Title 10.1, Chapter 4 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i>
<b>BOS</b>	Board of Supervisors
<b>DCR</b>	Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
<b>DGIF</b>	Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
<b>NRHP</b>	National Register of Historic Places under the National Park Service
<b>SR</b>	State Route
<b>USGS</b>	U.S. Geological Survey
<b>VA</b>	Commonwealth of Virginia
<b>VDOT</b>	Virginia Department of Transportation
<b>VLR</b>	Virginia Landmarks Register
<b>VOF</b>	Virginia Outdoors Foundation



## Appendix B. Species Ranking Definitions of DCR Natural Heritage

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	GLOBAL RANK	STATE RANK	FEDERAL STATUS	STATE STATUS
Villosa perpurpurea	Purple Bean	G1	S1	LE	LE

### Definitions of Abbreviations used on Natural Heritage Resource Lists

The following ranks are used by DCR to set protection priorities for natural heritage resources. Natural Heritage Resources, or "NHR's," are rare plant and animal species, rare and exemplary natural communities, and significant geologic features. The criterion for ranking NHR's is the number of populations or occurrences, i.e. the number of known distinct localities; the number of individuals in existence at each locality or, if a highly mobile organism (e.g., sea turtles, many birds, and butterflies), the total number of individuals; the quality of the occurrences, the number of protected occurrences; and threats.

- S1** Critically imperiled in the state because of extreme rarity or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically 5 or fewer populations or occurrences; or very few remaining individuals (<1000).
- S2** Imperiled in the state because of rarity or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state. Typically 6 to 20 populations or occurrences or few remaining individuals (1,000 to 3,000).
- S3** Vulnerable in the state either because rare and uncommon, or found only in a restricted range (even if abundant at some locations), or because of other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation. Typically 21 to 100 populations or occurrences (1,000 to 3,000).
- S4** Apparently secure; Uncommon but not rare, and usually widespread in the state. Possible cause of long-term concern. Usually >100 populations or occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
- S5** Secure; Common, widespread and abundant in the state. Essentially ineradicable under present conditions. Typically with considerably more than 100 populations or occurrences and more than 10,000 individuals.
- S#B** Breeding status of an animal within the state
- S#N** Non-breeding status of animal within the state. Usually applied to winter resident species.
- S#?** Inexact or uncertain numeric rank.
- SH** Possibly extirpated (Historical). Historically known from the state, but not verified for an extended period, usually > 15 years; this rank is used primarily when inventory has been attempted recently.
- S#S#** Range rank; A numeric range rank, (e.g. S2S3) is used to indicate the range of uncertainty about the exact status of the element. Ranges cannot skip more than one rank.
- SU** Unrankable; Currently unrankable due to lack of information or due to substantially conflicting information about status or trends.
- SNR** Unranked; state rank not yet assessed.
- SX** Presumed extirpated from the state. Not located despite intensive searches of historical sites and other appropriate habitat, and virtually no likelihood that it will be rediscovered.
- SNA** A conservation status rank is not applicable because the element is not a suitable target for conservation activities

**Global Ranks** are similar, but refer to a species' rarity throughout its total range. Global ranks are denoted with a "G" followed by a character. Note GX means the element is presumed extinct throughout its range, not relocated despite intensive searches of historical sites/appropriate habitat, and virtually no likelihood that it will be rediscovered. A "Q" in a rank indicates that a taxonomic question concerning that species exists. Ranks for subspecies are denoted with a "T". The global and state ranks combined (e.g. G2/S1) give an instant grasp of a species' known rarity.

These ranks should not be interpreted as legal designations.

- G1** Extremely rare and critically imperiled with 5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals; or because of some factor(s) making it especially vulnerable to extinction.
- G2** Very rare and imperiled with 6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals; or because of some factor(s) making it vulnerable to extinction.
- G3** Either very rare and local throughout its range or found locally (even abundantly at some of its locations) in a restricted range; or vulnerable to extinction because of other factors. Usually fewer than 100 occurrences are documented.
- G4** Common and apparently secure globally, although it may be rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.
- G5** Very common and demonstrably secure globally, although it may be rare in parts of its range, especially at the periphery.
- GH** Formerly part of the world's fauna with some expectation that it may be rediscovered; generally applies to species that have not been verified for an extended period (usually >15 years) and for which some inventory has been attempted recently.
- GX** Believed to be extinct throughout its range with virtually no likelihood of rediscovery.
- GU** Possibly rare, but status uncertain and more data needed.
- G?** Unranked, or, if following a numerical ranking, rank uncertain (e.g., G3?).
- G\_G** The rank is uncertain, but considered to be within the indicated range (e.g., G2G4) of ranks (also, T\_T).
- G\_Q** Taxon has a questionable taxonomic assignment (e.g., G3Q) and may prove to be invalid upon further study.
- G\_T** Signifies the rank of a subspecies (e.g., G5T1 would apply to a subspecies if the species is demonstrably secure globally (G5) but the subspecies warrants a rank of T1, critically imperiled.)

## **FEDERAL STATUS**

The Division of Natural Heritage uses the standard abbreviations for Federal endangerment developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Endangered Species and Habitat Conservation.

- LE** Listed Endangered
- LT** Listed Threatened
- PE** Proposed Endangered
- PT** Proposed Threatened
- C** Candidate (formerly C1 - Candidate category 1)
- E(S/A)** Treat as endangered because of similarity of appearance
- T(S/A)** Treat as threatened because of similarity of appearance
- SOC** Species of Concern species that merit special concern (not a regulatory category)

## **STATE LEGAL STATUS**

The Division of Natural Heritage uses similar abbreviations for State endangerment:

<b>LE</b>	Listed Endangered
<b>PE</b>	Proposed Endangered
<b>SC</b>	Special Concern - animals that merit special concern according to VDGIF (not a regulatory category)
<b>LT</b>	Listed Threatened
<b>PT</b>	Proposed Threatened
<b>C</b>	Candidate

For information on the laws pertaining to threatened or endangered species, please contact:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for all **FEDERALLY** listed species;
- Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Plant Protection Bureau for **STATE** listed plants and insects; and
- Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for all other **STATE** listed animals

## **CONSERVATION SITES RANKING**

Rank is a rating of the significance of the conservation site based on presence and number of natural heritage resources; on a scale of 1-5, 1 being most significant. Sites are also coded to reflect the presence/absence of federally/state listed species:

### Conservation Site Ranks

<b>B1</b>	Outstanding significance
<b>B2</b>	Very High significance
<b>B3</b>	High significance
<b>B4</b>	Moderate significance
<b>B5</b>	Of general Biodiversity significance

### Legal Status of Sites

<b>FL</b>	Federally listed species present
<b>SL</b>	State listed species present
<b>NL</b>	No listed species present



Appendix C. Letters, Comments, and Other Support

1. Letter and Resolution Requesting Designation



MAY 13 2019

TERRY R. SHORT, JR., MAYOR

shorttr@ci.waynesboro.va.us
303 W. Main Street
Waynesboro, VA 22980
CELL (540) 254-0777
CITY HALL (540) 942-6669



April 22, 2019

Mayor
Terry R. Short, Jr.
(At Large)
545 Governor Avenue
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-254-0777

Vice Mayor
Robert "Bobby" Henderson
(Ward 2)
337 Carolyn Lane
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-464-9771

Council
Bruce E. Allen
(Ward 8)
333 Stone Road
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-451-0217
Suzanne Anderson
(Ward 4)
1108 3rd Street
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-365-1899
Samuel Harbottle
(Ward 01)
141 Huntington Place
Waynesboro, VA 22980
540-294-3201

Ms. Lynn Crump, Environmental Programs Planner
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
203 Governor Street, Suite 326
Richmond, VA 23219-2094

RE: Virginia Scenic River Designation – South River

Dear Ms. Crump:

In our April 22, 2019 regular session meeting, by unanimous vote, the City Council members directed me to officially request the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to study a segment of the South River, beginning at South Oak Lane and ending at Hopeman Parkway, to determine if it qualifies for designation as a Virginia Scenic River pursuant to The Virginia Scenic Rivers Act of 1970.

Should we meet the criteria for designation, we are hopeful the report may be prepared and presented to the respective local governing bodies in sufficient time to obtain citizen input and request the introduction of legislation during the 2020 legislative session of the Virginia General Assembly.

Thank you in advance for consideration of our City's request and I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

[Handwritten signature of Terry R. Short, Jr.]
Terry R. Short, Jr.
Mayor, City of Waynesboro

Where Good Nature Comes Naturally

www.waynesborova.net

CITY COUNCIL OF WAYNESBORO, VIRGINIA

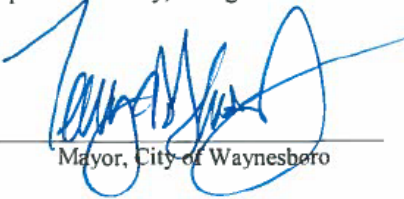


RESOLUTION (R19-06)

**A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR  
REQUESTING A PORTION OF THE SOUTH RIVER IN WAYNESBORO, VA  
BE DESIGNATED  
A VIRGINIA SCENIC RIVER DESIGNATION**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of Waynesboro, Virginia hereby authorizes the staff to initiate the process of requesting the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation name a portion of the South River, from South Oak Lane to Hopeman Parkway, a Virginia Scenic Rivers Designation

Adopted this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of April, 2019.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, City of Waynesboro

ATTEST:   
Clerk of the Council

DRAFT

## **2. DCR Designation Support**

At the December 2020 Board of Conservation and Recreation meeting, the Board voted unanimously to support the designation of the South River in Waynesboro as a Virginia Scenic River.

DRAFT



### 3. Agency Comments



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Marine Resources Commission  
180 Pavick Road  
Bldg 90  
Fort Monroe, VA 23651-1064

Matthew J. Bricker  
Secretary of Natural Resources

Kevin G. Bowman  
Commissioner

December 23, 2020

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Attn: Lynn Crump  
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Re: Proposed Scenic River Designation of Segments of the  
South, North Fork of the Shenandoah, Middle James  
extension and extension of the Rappahannock River

Dear Ms. Crump,

In accordance with your memorandum dated December 8, 2020, we have reviewed the documentation concerning the proposed Scenic River designation of segments of the South River in Waynesboro, North Fork of the Shenandoah in Shenandoah County, Middle James extension from Allens Creek to Warren and New Canton to Columbia, and extension of the Rappahannock River in the City of Fredericksburg, the counties of Spotsylvania, Essex, Westmoreland, King George, Stafford, Richmond, and Caroline, and the towns of Port Royal and Tappahannock.

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) is responsible for managing the commercial and recreational tidal fisheries and for issuing permits for encroachments in, on, or over State-owned submerged lands throughout the Commonwealth. The VMRC has no position on the proposed Scenic River designations provided such designations do not adversely affect our management of the commercial and recreational fisheries and the submerged lands on which those resources depend.

If you have any questions please contact me at 757-247-2251 or by email at [randy.owen@mrc.virginia.gov](mailto:randy.owen@mrc.virginia.gov). Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Randy Owen".

Randy Owen  
Deputy Chief, Habitat Management Division

RDO/tlb  
HM

*An Agency of the Natural Resources Secretariat*  
[www.mrc.virginia.gov](http://www.mrc.virginia.gov)

Telephone (757) 247-2200 (757) 247-2292 V/TDD Information and Emergency Hotline 1-800-541-4646 V/TDD

The South River in Waynesboro from South Oak Lane to Hopeman Parkway has been designated a stockable trout water. This indicates that water temperatures are cool enough to support trout stocking for recreation, but that the river is not known to support a naturally reproducing population of trout.

**Department of Wildlife Management, January 15, 2021**

Based on information provided here by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the General Assembly designation of the South River as a Scenic River will not impact existing State Water Control Board programs. Therefore, DEQ, acting on behalf of the Board, has no comment on the proposed designations. **Department of Environmental Quality 1/18/2021**

DRAFT

#### 4. Resolution of Support

CITY COUNCIL OF WAYNESBORO, VIRGINIA



RESOLUTION <sup>(828-20)</sup>

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT  
FOR THE VIRGINIA SCENIC RIVER DESIGNATION OF THE SOUTH RIVER FROM S. OAK  
LANE TO HOPEMAN PARKWAY**

Whereas, the Virginia Scenic Rivers Program was enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1970 for the purpose of identification and preservation of certain rivers, or sections of rivers, which possess high quality natural beauty; and,

Whereas, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation has been charged with administering the Scenic Rivers Program and developing an objective evaluation process to judge the suitability of river segments; and,

Whereas, staff from the Virginia department of Conservation and Recreation visited the South River and evaluated its eligibility for Scenic River designation; and,

Whereas, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation completed its evaluation of the portion of the South River from S. Oak Lane to Hopeman Parkway and determines it qualifies as a Virginia Scenic River; and

Whereas, the Virginia Board of Conservation and Recreation supports the endorsement for designation of this section of the South River as a Scenic River.

Therefore, be it resolved that the City of Waynesboro City Council does hereby support the designation of the South River from S. Oak Lane to Hopeman Parkway as Virginia Scenic River; and,

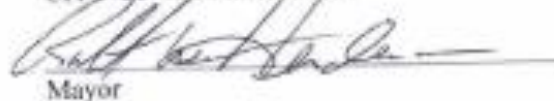
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Waynesboro City Council will contact our General Assembly representatives to request that they serve as patrons for the legislation that will codify the Scenic River designation.

ADOPTED this 9<sup>th</sup> day of November, A.D., 2020

ATTEST:

  
Clerk of Council

CITY OF WAYNESBORO

  
Mayor



**Appendix D. Legislation for the *Code of Virginia***

§ 10.1-417.1 South State Scenic River.

The South River in the city of Waynesboro from South Oak Lane to Hopeman Parkway, a distance of approximately 6.5 miles, is hereby designated as the South State Scenic River, a component of the Virginia Scenic Rivers System.

DRAFT

## Appendix E. Evaluation Criteria

The Code of Virginia defines ‘Scenic Rivers’ [10.1-400] as those rivers that have “... superior natural and scenic beauty, fish and wildlife, and historic, recreational, geologic, cultural and other aesthetics.” If a stream meets the minimum criteria necessary for a field study, it is fully evaluated and ranked according to relative uniqueness or quality. Minimum river segment criteria is defined as being a minimum of five (5) miles in length, having definable termini, and being accessible for evaluation.

Each river, or river segment, is evaluated and rated on fourteen different factors from which a cumulative score is derived. This score must meet a minimum rating score to be designated. Each factor was selected because of its ability to enhance the scenic experience and its contribution the overall quality of the resource.

### Factors and description:

#### 1. Stream Corridor Vegetation

Research has shown that the wider the undisturbed riverbank buffers the more dramatically the reduction in pollution run-off, which protects water quality. Tree canopies that shade the water and reduce water temperatures creating healthy habitats for fish and wildlife, these environments enhance the score for river sections. Agricultural lands and clear-cut forests are one of the greatest contributors of siltation, erosion and river pollution. Consequently, the farther back from the river’s edge the less impact these will have on any given river. These two significant attributes, wide buffers and tree canopies, naturally forested river banks are significantly weighted criteria.

#### 2. Streambed and/or stream flow modifications

It is the intention of the Scenic River Program to keep designated rivers in a native/ natural state. To this end, *significant channelization, or* impoundments of any kind negatively impact the scenic quality of the river. In some cases designated sections end at a significant impoundment, in order to preserve the quality of the designated river section.

#### 3. Human development of visual corridor

- A. City or Town Related
- B. Rural Development

Much of human development is in random and poorly thought out patterns, which have a negative effect on the scenic viewshed from rivers. Each survey is conducted when foliage is in full leaf, when the total visual impact of unsightly development is diminished and recreationalists are using the river. Development impacts on the river are scored in two parts. The first focuses on development related to the concentration of buildings in the more urban areas, as they are observed from the river. The second is for those more rural areas, where single residences or groupings are seen as separate individual units or clusters. [NOTE- a cluster is defined as up to five dwelling or other structures located immediately adjacent to one another.] Higher scores are a result of having no urban development and no visible buildings.

#### 4. Historic Features

Rivers throughout Virginia were the primary transportation corridors from early on in the history of this country. Accordingly, consideration of the historical aspects of the river is critical. Historic

features *and sites* are recognized in the original legislation. **Bonus points** are given for *visible* historic sites that are on state or national historic lists *within 1000 feet of the river*. Note these are not eligible sites, but ones already designated.

5. Landscape
  - A. Diversity
  - B. Views

When the term ‘scenic’ is used, it is most frequently applied to the natural environment or landscape. Here two specific scenic attributes, diversity and views, are identified and considered for scoring along the proposed river section. As supported by research, the first attribute, diversity, shows that the more diverse the visual landscape, the more appealing it is to the observer. Longer and grander views are also considered a scenic quality as seen from the river corridor, making the corridor itself more appealing.

6. Quality of Fishery

Fish and wildlife assets along a scenic river are important because of their intrinsic and recreational value. The quality of fish in a river corridor is based on the abundance of recreational varieties, the number of varieties, the uniqueness of the varieties of the fish population, and the opportunities along the river for legal fishing.

7. Additional Natural Features

This section refers to the wildlife and plants along the corridor. Data from the Natural Heritage Data is used to identify species of statewide or greater significance that are present along the corridor. Additional points can be received for the presence of plant and animal species natural features within 1000 feet of the river.

8. Water Quality

Water Quality is generally considered to be related to the chemical or other pollution levels. Since most of the rivers in the state are already under observation for chemical and biological impacts, for the purposes of this evaluation, the appearance of the water and its banks is more significant. The evaluation is based on the visible turbidity or siltation and the amount of litter in and adjacent to the river corridor.

NOTE: there is an extra bonus of a maximum of 10 points if the section is a healthy or high quality waters section.

9. Parallel Roads

Part of the designation of scenic rivers is to look at the perceived remoteness of the river corridor, as studied when trees are in full leaf. Since many of Virginia’s rivers were major transportation routes, roads often followed the river routes. Consequently, many miles of riverbanks hold parallel roads and railroads. The more industrial a corridor, the less likely it is to become a Scenic River. How *visible* the roads are is key to a high rating for the Parallel Roads criteria.

10. Crossings

Many developed river corridors have bridges throughout the river extent to accommodate easier road or railroad construction. Historic bridges or bridges at the beginning or end of the proposed river segment are not counted in the scoring. Crossings refer to roads, railroads, telephone lines, powerlines, and any



other man-made structure that crossed over the river. Pipelines and other crossings that go under the riverbed, and are not seen from the river, are not counted in the scoring. NOTE: Residential wire crossings do not count.

11. Special Features Affecting the Aesthetics

- Unique or interesting in-stream rock formations
- Culturally significant sites (mills, covered bridges, navigation structures, etc.)
- Islands
- Rapids
- Waterfalls or cascades
- Primitive areas (e.g. swamps, mature forests, etc.)
- Bluffs, cliff, rock outcrops
- Special geological features
- Remoteness or isolation

The purpose of this category is to list all the stream and corridor features, which singly or in combination make the river resource visually attractive. The reviewer(s) can check as many of the special features as appropriate. A brief explanation of the identified features is required.

12. Overall Aesthetic Appeal

An overall Aesthetic Appeal rating considers all of the special features and then a score is applied based on a low to exceptional ranking. Exceptional ranking is one where there are many features, a lot of diversity and extreme or dramatic contrasts and features.

13. Public Recreational Access

- Public Boat/Canoe/ Kayak Launch or public use trail along corridor
- Informal Public Launch Site; e.g., bridge crossing, adjacent road
- Private access site available to public
- No public access

Having public access for field investigations, especially, is beneficial to the consideration of an asset that will benefit the Commonwealth. The access opportunities listed above are rated depending on the amount of public access associated with each one. During the evaluation, the reviewers will also record specific types of water-based recreation that occur on segment under evaluation, such as boating, fishing, swimming, tubing, and body surfing.

14. Significant Permanent Protection

With the increase in attention to land conservation and the fact that many of the conservation easements look to see if properties are adjacent to designated scenic rivers, the Scenic River Advisory Board added special recognition for significant permanent protection of 25% or more land adjacent to evaluated segment; i.e., conservation easement, protected public land, or other permanent protection.

DRAFT