



Nulhegan River and Paul Stream Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2025

Introduced in the Senate by: Senators Peter Welch (D-Vt.); Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.)

Introduced in the House by: Representative Becca Balint (D-VT-At-Large)

Background:

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System protects free-flowing rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, or recreational value. Since its creation in 1968, the system has grown to encompass more than 13,400 miles of rivers across the country, including segments of the Missisquoi and Trout Rivers in Vermont. Depending on their characteristics, rivers may be classified as wild, scenic, or recreational.

Wild and Scenic rivers are managed to maintain their free-flowing condition, high water quality, and outstanding recreational opportunities. In most cases, prior to being designated as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System, the Department of the Interior must conduct a study better understand their value to regional ecosystems and remarkable values.

Legislation:

The *Nulhegan River and Paul Stream Wild and Scenic River Study Act* would commission a study to determine whether the Nulhegan River and Paul Stream could be included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. This study is the first step to ensuring these waterways remain free-flowing and healthy, protecting ecological, recreational, and economic value to Northern Vermont.

Supporting Organizations:

The *Nulhegan River and Paul Stream Wild and Scenic River Study Act* is supported by a broad coalition of local municipalities, cultural and regional organizations, and environmental conservation groups.

Supporting organizations include American Rivers; the Connecticut River Joint Commission; Connecticut River Conservancy; Essex County Conservation District; Nature Conservancy; Northeastern Vermont Development Association; Northern Forest Canoe Trail; Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk – Abenaki Nation; Trout Unlimited, including the David and Francis Smith Northeast Kingdom Chapter; Vermont Chapter of the Native Fish Coalition; and the Vermont River Conservancy.