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PRESS RELEASE

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 06/2025****

Foodshed Alliance Applauds Warren County for Supporting Wild and Scenic Study for Paulins Kill

Hope, NJ – The Foodshed Alliance proudly celebrates the passage of Warren County Resolution #288-25, adopted on May 28, 2025, which supports efforts to seek a federally funded Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic Study to evaluate the river for designation as a National Wild and Scenic River. This vote marks a major step forward in the Paulins Kill Wild and Scenic River Initiative, a locally driven conservation effort. Sixteen (16) miles of the forty-one (41) mile Paulins Kill are located within Warren County.

Under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, local support is not just valued—it is required. Warren County's action follows resolutions of support from all four (4) townships through which those sixteen miles of the Paulins Kill flow: Knowlton, Blairstown, Hardwick, and Frelinghuysen. With these municipal endorsements in place, the county's support signals strong, united local momentum behind the proposed study.

"Seeing Warren County enthusiastically step up to support this effort is a proud moment for all of us at the Foodshed Alliance and the project team," said Kendry Close, Executive Director. "Protecting the Paulins Kill watershed is part of our mission because healthy farms, fresh food, and a resilient environment all rely on clean, cool, and healthy water. This support shows that our community leaders understand that connection."

If ultimately designated, the Paulins Kill would become Warren County's fourth Wild and Scenic River, joining the Musconetcong, the Middle Delaware, and the Lower Delaware. With less than 0.5% of rivers

nationwide eligible for Wild and Scenic status, the Paulins Kill would join an elite group of rivers with nationally recognized value.

Critically, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protects rivers without altering private property rights, local zoning, or state regulations. It does not add new buffers or create new permitting requirements.

Tara Mezzanotte, Project Coordinator for the initiative and Warren County's representative on the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Management Council, emphasized the voluntary nature of the program:

> "There are some misconceptions about what Wild and Scenic designation means. This initiative, which is using the 'Partnership' Wild and Scenic River model, is about local communities working in partnership with the federal government to preserve and enhance the values that make the Paulins Kill special—not taking control away from landowners or local governments. The Act explicitly protects private property rights and local decision-making and does not require the removal of dams. It enables us to plan voluntarily, at the community level, while unlocking federal resources to help achieve the goals of the Management Plan the community will create."

The Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers model provides technical and financial support for communities working to protect rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values. For over twenty-five years, this framework has successfully helped communities achieve long-term preservation success while maintaining local control.

With both township and county support now secured, the project team is ready to move upstream into Sussex County to evaluate local support and eligibility for congressional authorization of a formal Wild and Scenic River study.

For Questions:

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Learn more about our project:

- Frequently Asked Questions: **https://foodshedalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/Wild-and-Sceneic-FAQs.pdf**
- Website: **https://foodshedalliance.org/projects/paulins-kill-wild-scenic-river/**

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