CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: March 23, 2016

This is a report generated by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection/ Inland Fisheries Division- Diadromous Program. For more information, contact Steve Gephard, 860/447-4316. For more information about fish runs on the Connecticut River visit the USFWS website at www.fws.gov/r5crc. For more information about Atlantic salmon, visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association at www.ctriversalmon.org.

CONNECTICUT RIVER LOCATIONS

FISHWAY (RIVER)	ATLANTIC SALMON	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	-	0	-	-	0***	0	0
StanChem* (Mattabesset)	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Mary Steube+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	
Vernon* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Bellows Falls* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Wilder* (Connecticut- VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0								
TOTALS=	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(last year's totals)	**22**	416,355	237	11,822	93	21	24,573	9	20,305

Fishways listed in gray font above are not yet opened for the season. In some cases, the fishways will be opened soon. In the case of the fishways on the Connecticut River, some fishways are not opened until significant numbers of fish pass through the fishway immediately downstream of them. If that never happens, the fishway may not be opened during the season.

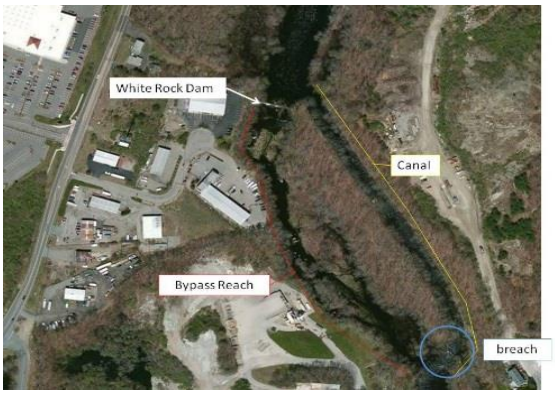
*There is a video camera that records passage. There is a considerable lag between the date a tape is recorded and when staff is able to count fish from the tape, so these numbers will not represent up-to-date counts until after the end of spring season.*** Population estimates based on end-of-the-season nest surveys.– +There is an electronic fish counter at this fishway.

NOTE: All fish that pass through the Turners Falls, Vernon, Bellows Falls, and Wilder fishways had to first go through the Holyoke Fishlift where they were counted. Therefore those fish are not included in the totals at the bottom.

COMMENTS:

Not much has changed for the Connecticut River. The river is still cold and no fish showing up. We expect to open the first of the tributary fishways tomorrow: Moulson Pond on the Eightmile River in Lyme. The camera will be set up. Other tributary fishways will follow. Bruce has begun stocking Atlantic salmon fry. The fish from the Tripps Streamside Incubation Facility (TSIF) have all been stocked out—most in the Salmon River but some in the Farmington River. More fry from the Kensington Hatchery to be stocked soon. In regards to the TSIF—a sad note from over the winter. Jim and Sandra Tripp have been extremely helpful to us over the years, working through their Tributary Mill Conservancy. They assisted us with incubating salmon eggs at their unique home, converted from an old mill, alongside the Lower Mill Pond Dam with Mary Steube Fishway. They also assisted with monitoring and passing alewife and American eel. They were dedicated to education about natural resources. This winter, Jim Tripp died. Our sincere condolences go out to Sandra, their sons, and Jim's mother and brother.
There is not much else to report.

In the summer of 2015, we worked with partners on many new fish passage projects, mostly dam removals. These were done after these reports were ended for the year. So I'll take the space available now while not much is happening, to tell you about some of these projects. This week's featured project is the **White Rock Dam Removal Project**. The White Rock Dam was the first dam on the Pawcatuck River, which is the state boundary between Connecticut and Rhode Island. You never heard much about it because it was breached in the 1930s and it was assumed that all fish could pass through it on their way upstream to the first full barrier dam: Potter Hill in Westerly, RI. This is the dam you always hear about on the Pawcatuck—where they used to trap salmon, count shad and river herring. The perceived gateway to the river. The White Rock Dam—half in Stonington, CT and half in Westerly, RI—was only 6 ft tall and diverted water down a large and long millrace (canal) to the old Griswold Textile Mill. It was the bank of the millrace that breached in the '30s so since then most riverflow entered the millrace and then re-entered the river channel hundreds of feet downstream, never reaching the old mill. Most of the time, water never went over the intact concrete dam and the river between the dam and the breach was dry. To reach Potter Hill, the fish had to swim up the river, through the breach, up the millrace and past the dam back into the river. Several years ago, I was asked to look at the millrace and suspected that at times the flow was so fast in the millrace that it represented a velocity barrier for many species. That was later confirmed. So the Rhode Island Chapter of The Nature Conservancy received "Hurricane Sandy" funds, put together a partnership, and developed the dam removal project. Since the dam was in two states (the only such dam in CT), it had to be permitted by both state agencies. Therefore, I got involved for the DEEP and Sally Harold of the Connecticut Chapter of The Nature Conservancy also assisted TNC-RI. TNC hired Fuss & O'Neill as the engineering firm to design the removal and last spring hired Sumco as the construction company to do the work. All the work was done very well. While it may not technically open up "new" river miles to migratory fishes, it makes those miles between White Rock and Potter Hill much easier for all species to access and will result in more fish upstream. The RI partnership will continue to work on improvement to the Potter Hill Dam and the future removal of the next dam up, the Bradford Dam.



Upper left: *former White Rock Dam;* ***Lower left:*** *a diagram of the site, showing the location of the dam, the long canal, and the break where the water returned to the river;* ***Above:*** *Sally Harold of TNC-CT stands upstream of where the dam used to be. The dam was about 20 feet this side of the pointed rock in the middle of the stream.*

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Greeneville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	100s	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	
Trading Cove Brook** (Trading Cove Brook, Montville)	-	0	0	0	-	-	0	-
Jordan Brook** (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	110	0	-	-	-	0	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		10,550						
Clarks Pond (Indian River, Milford)	-	0		-		-	-	
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)	0		-	-	-	-		
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		0	-			- 0	0	
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	0	0	0	0			
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		0	0			Fish counter not operational		
Mianus River Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		285	0	0	0	0	0	-

**Fish passage is video-recorded and counts are made off of tapes several days later so these data are always lagged a little behind. This report covers passage up to the following dates for these fishways:*

Greeneville= n.a. Taftville= n.a. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= n.a. Kinneytown= n.a. Haakonsen= n.a. Hallville= n.a.

**These locations have an electronic fish counter and are used as index sites for river herring runs. The counter is checked daily Monday-Friday. Monday counts typically include all weekend passage. These counts are usually up-to-date but some may lag behind a day or two, occasionally.

+This location has a fish trap and fish are enumerated prior to release.

Counts in parentheses indicate numbers seen in a run that is now over and no further fish were counted during the past week. Typically used for alewife runs later in June.

COMMENTS:

The alewife run continues but at a slow pace. The cold weekend (snow) cooled down the water and dampened the enthusiasm of the fish. You can see that we are still getting fish at Brides but the fish are only trickling in at other sites. We have had other reports of alewives but most have been false alarms—last year's crop of menhaden still hanging around and heading upstream!

Jeff at Norwich Public Utilities reports lifting hundreds of alewives in the first few lifts of the season at the Greeneville Fishlift on the Shetucket River in Norwich. We have not visited to download images yet so we don't have exact counts but we hope to start that soon. We were able to hire our first group of seasonal workers, so we hope to get caught up with early season tasks soon. We are now working on installing fish counters and cameras and opening fishways. We hope that most of the fishways on the list on the previous page (except the upriver hydroelectric dams) will be opened by next week. There are other fishways not on the list (because we don't count fish there) that are already opened.

Yesterday, the entire crew went downstate to Fairfield County. On the Saugatuck River, we opened Wood, Lees Pond, Dorr's Mill (two fishways there), and Low's fishways. On the tributary Aspetuck, we opened Grossman's and Newman's fishways. We were not able to install the electronic fish counter operated by The Nature Conservancy at Wood Dam due to some wiring issues with the counter but we hope to fix that and install that in the coming weeks. Meanwhile the fishway is operational and can pass fish. We also installed the eel pass. The water temperature was 7 C (45 F). No sign of fish. On the way back, we checked on Clarks Pond (see photo below) and three fishways in Old Saybrook- Crystal Lake (not operational due to beaver), Fishing Brook (looks good) and Chalker Millpond (see photo below). Previously, we checked the two fishways on East River in Guilford: Capello Pond and Lower Guilford Lake (LGL). LGL will be ready by April 1 when the lake association raises the pond back to spring levels. We need to go back to Capello with more tools. There is a large stump jammed in the middle of the Denil fishway and we were unable to extract it.

The Clark's Pond Fishway on Indian River in Milford has two sections. The lower section, shown above, consists of off-set baffles in a sloped box culvert. Our crew replaced rotting timber baffles last summer with concrete. Upstream is a pool-and-weir fishway spanning a drop structure.

Tim Wildman tries to dislodge a stump from the Capello Pond Fishway

Chalker Millpond Fishway in Old Saybrook didn't operate much last year due to beaver dam problems. The beavers are now gone and we opened the fishway yesterday. Bruce Williams and Tim Wildman look on.