

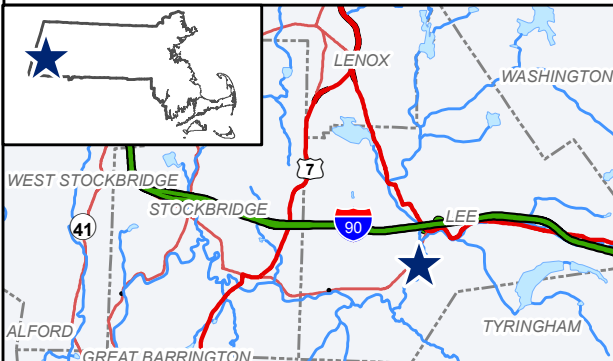


Housatonic River

Catch-and-Release Area (Upper Section)

Lee, MA

Housatonic River Watershed
USGS Quad: Stockbridge/East Lee



Legend

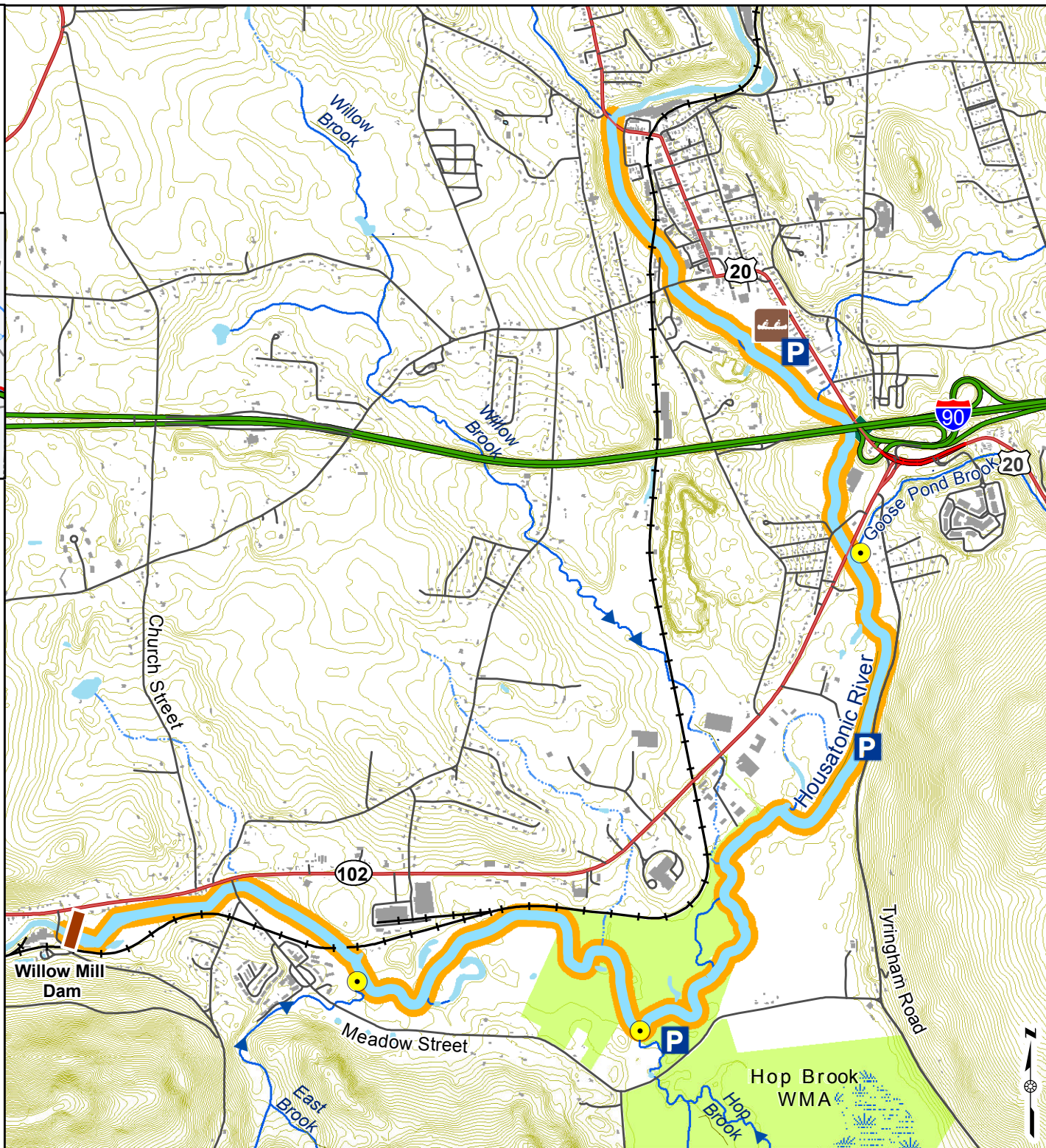
- | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| | Catch and Release Area | | Interstate |
| | Stream-Flow Direction | | Major Road |
| | Dam | | Road |
| | Parking | | Railroad |
| | | | Buildings |
| | | | Cartop Boat Access |
| | | | Posted mouth of tributary |

The Housatonic River Catch-and-Release area consists of two separate reaches. The upper reach extends from the Rte. 20 bridge in Lee downstream to the Willow Mill Dam in Lee. *No fishing allowed from June 15 to August 15 within 100 feet of Beartown Brook, Goose Pond Brook, and Hop Brook.

0 $\frac{1}{2}$ 1
Miles

Map updated July, 2017

Elevation contours: 3 Meters





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Housatonic River Catch and Release Area Lee (upper section) and Stockbridge (lower section)

General Information

The main stem of the Housatonic River flows south from the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Housatonic in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The river cuts through a relatively broad, flat floodplain by the Berkshire Mountains. The upper Housatonic River Catch-and-Release Area section extends from the Route 20 bridge in Lee downstream 1½ miles to the Willow Mill Dam. The lower section extends from the Glendale Dam in Stockbridge 1 mile downstream to the Boston and Maine railroad bridge.

The upper section flows through light commercial and residential developments; whereas the lower section is less developed with steep rocky banks. Because of the long history of environmental degradation from upstream factories, there are advisories against consuming fish caught from the Housatonic River.

Fish Populations

In spring, early summer, and fall, the Housatonic River Catch-and-Release Area can support coldwater fish like trout in both sections. In the summer months, as water temperatures increase, some parts of the river are too warm for trout and warmwater fishes contribute more to the angler's catch. Fish surveys conducted by the MassWildlife have found Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, White Sucker, Brown Trout, Yellow Perch, Largemouth Bass, and Bluegill in the upper section of the Housatonic Catch-and-Release Area. The lower section supports all the species found in the upper with the addition of Rainbow Trout, Creek Chub, Fallfish, Common Shiner, Longnose Dace, and Northern Pike.

Recreational Access

There is very good access to the upper section of the Housatonic Catch-and-Release Area along the eastern shore. At the upstream end, there is car-top boat and wading access behind Lee Athletic Field off of Housatonic Street. The next downstream access is near the Old Pleasant Street Bridge in Lee. Continuing south on Tyringham Road there is access from an unmarked turn-off next to power lines. On Meadow Street, the river is accessible from Hop Brook Wildlife Management Area after a short walk downstream along Hop Brook. The upper section ends just above the Willow Mill Dam in South Lee. Access near the dam and adjacent paper company is not allowed.

There is good access to the lower portion of the Housatonic Catch-and-Release Area along the western shore. Route 183 parallels this section and there is a large parking area at the intersection of Dugway Road and Route 183.

Fishing

Fishing is allowed with artificial lures only and all fish must be released. The use of natural or artificial baits such as worms, shiners or other live bait, cheese, corn, or salmon or other fish eggs is strictly prohibited. No fishing is allowed from June 15 to August 31 within 100 feet of posted fish refuge tributaries—Goose Pond Brook, Willow Brook, and Hop Brook in the upper section; Mohawk Brook in the lower section. If you fish in the Housatonic River outside of the catch and release areas, be aware that the limit on trout is 1 fish which must be at least 20 inches. MassWildlife stocks the river with catchable-size Brown Trout every spring. A number of Brown Trout survive from year-to-year in the high-quality habitat present in this section and thus there is very good potential for trophy fish. Stocked and holdover fish, with the addition of a fair amount of natural reproduction of Brown Trout in the tributaries, makes the Housatonic Catch-and-Release Area altogether an excellent fishery. The Housatonic can get fairly warm during the summer so it is largely a spring, early summer, and fall resource unless you are willing to fish very early in the morning or at night. The Housatonic also has a good population of Smallmouth Bass that can provide some great summer fishing.