

RESTORING THE HOUSATONIC RIVER WATERSHED

2021 Update



Background

The Housatonic River flows through western Massachusetts and Connecticut and empties into Long Island Sound. From 1932 through 1977, the General Electric Company (GE) facility in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, released polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) into the Housatonic River environment. The PCBs contaminated the river's water, sediment, riverbanks, and floodplain, as well as various species of fish and wildlife.

Housatonic NRDAR

Under the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) provisions of the Superfund Act, the General Electric Company settled with Natural Resource Trustees (USFWS, NOAA, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and State of Connecticut) for \$15 million in 2000 to compensate for historical releases of PCBs to the Housatonic River. Funds are being used to restore injured natural resources throughout the watershed in Massachusetts and Connecticut.



USFWS

Restoring the Resources

The restoration funds were divided equally: Connecticut and Massachusetts each received approximately \$7.5 million. Each state established its own Trustee sub-council. Both sub-councils worked with the public and stakeholders for a number of years to develop restoration plans describing how the settlement funds would be used. The Trustees have collaborated with numerous partners to implement more than 50 restoration projects.

For more information, contact:

Michelle Craddock, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
(617) 292-5785

Rick Jacobson, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
(860) 424-3482

Molly Spurduto, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
(603) 333-5428

Ken Finkelstein, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
(617) 918-1499

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ More than 50 restoration projects undertaken with many partners!
- ✓ 800 acres of land conserved



USFWS

- ✓ 917 acres of native habitat enhanced, with additional acres planned
- ✓ More than 5,400 students taught through newly developed river ecology education programs
- ✓ 49 miles of improved stream connectivity



USFWS

- ✓ 4 new car top boat launches constructed in Mass. and 5 in Conn.
- ✓ Nearly 7 miles of new and improved recreational trails constructed

RESTORATION PROJECTS

Housatonic River Watershed

