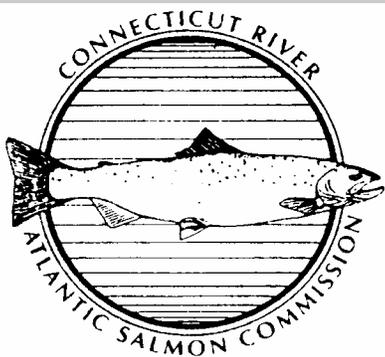


CONNECTICUT RIVER ATLANTIC SALMON COMMISSION

Restoring Fish and River Habitat in the Connecticut River Since 1967

Interstate multi-agency compact re-authorized by Congress in 2002 authorizes CRASC to restore migratory fish and aquatic habitat in the Connecticut River basin from Long Island Sound to Canada



The Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Commission restores native, resident and migratory fish to the Connecticut River - a process requiring state and federal natural resource management agencies to work together with private industry and individuals to restore the entire river as a single critical environmental resource.

Restoration involves hatchery production and release of Atlantic salmon; restoration of aquatic habitat through riparian restoration dam removal and fishway construction; research, evaluation and monitoring; harvest management; and, restoration of other species including American shad, blueback herring, and American eels.

These efforts provide important recreational, educational and economic benefits for the public. They also ensure a rich natural resource legacy in the Connecticut River for generations to come.

**CONNECTICUT RIVER
ATLANTIC SALMON
COMMISSION**

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Public Benefits of Migratory Fish Restoration on the Connecticut River

- Cleaner, healthier rivers as indicated by documented Atlantic salmon spawning in CT, MA & VT rivers;
- Annual returns of the once extirpated Atlantic salmon;
- Increased fishing opportunities: anglers make almost 10,000 trips per year to fish for surplus salmon brood stock in the Naugatuck and Shetucket Rivers in CT, almost 4,400 anglers per year fish for shad in MA, and striped bass offer anglers nearly 50,000 hours of fishing pleasure each spring in CT;
- Shad support one of the oldest commercial fisheries in the U.S.A. with annual landings of 30-70,000 fish in CT;
- Nearly 18,000 visitors observe the spring fish migration at the Holyoke & Turners Falls Fish Windows in MA;
- Almost 72,000 people visit state and federal salmon hatcheries in each of the four basin states every year;
- Local community members volunteer over 5,000 hours annually to help state and federal agencies get the job done;
- Thousands of students in over 100 schools in CT, MA & VT participate in cooperative educational programs designed to promote stewardship of natural resources and conducted by non-government program partners

2002-2003 Accomplishment Highlights

- Released over 7 million hatchery--produced juvenile Atlantic salmon in CT, MA, NH & VT with help from over 500 volunteers;
- Removed the Silk Mill dam on Yokum Brook in the Westfield River basin MA opening access to salmon and resident trout habitat;
- Funded two eelways: one on the Millers River and another on the Chicopee River in MA;
- Transferred adult blueback herring from the mainstem to historic habitat in NH and MA tributaries to re-establish populations;
- Assessed striped bass population in the mainstem Connecticut River in CT;
- Supported fish passage research to resolve shad passage bottleneck at Turners Falls dam in MA;
- Supported genetic research by USGS for marking juvenile salmon and evaluating habitat production potential;
- Provided educational programs focusing on natural resource management & stewardship of aquatic resources in nearly 100 schools in CT, MA, NH and VT;

Program Concerns

- This Program has never been directly funded by Congress but indirectly, through Federal Aid & existing appropriations;
- State & federal funding levels have not kept pace with Program needs—flat program budgets have decreased because of increased operating costs & inflation;
- Decreased funding has resulted in reductions in staffing, program cutbacks, & deterioration of hatchery & fishway infrastructure;
- Without additional funding, further staff reductions are expected, along with stocking reductions, reductions in habitat projects, limited field evaluations, and decreased educational programming; Salmon production in hatcheries may be jeopardized and fishways may be closed because facilities may not meet EPA & safety standards;
- Additional funds will permit uninterrupted programming & infrastructure repairs, & facilitate development of capabilities for success in use of new technologies and information

2004 Additional Funding Recommendations

\$360,000	Enable USFWS to meet conservation commitments
<u>\$410,000</u>	Retain genetic variability & improve evaluations and accountability to maximize returns
\$770,000	Total