

ATLANTIC SALMON EGG REARING PROGRAM

Educating Tomorrow's Natural Resource Stewards Today



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The Atlantic Salmon Egg Rearing Program is a cooperative environmental education program designed to promote an understanding of fisheries restoration & management and hands-on watershed stewardship through experiential learning in the classroom.

The Program, initiated in Massachusetts in 1997 by Trout Unlimited, parallels similar initiatives in NH, CT & VT. Students hatch and raise young Atlantic salmon in the classroom and later release the fish in streams within their community. This interdisciplinary project empowers student responsibility for their own natural environment.

Public Benefits of the Atlantic Salmon Egg Rearing Program

- Thousands of students in over 100 schools in CT, MA, NH & VT participate in cooperative educational program conducted by non-government program partners and designed to promote stewardship of natural resources;
- Involves parents & community;
- Increases support for education in the schools by encouraging parents and community members to assist in the classroom, chaperone field trips, and purchase equipment;
- Increases number of volunteers working to care for the environment, protect aquatic habitat, and release juvenile Atlantic salmon for the Connecticut River Migratory Fish Restoration Program;
- Plants the seed of empowerment in students for their communities and as stewards for the environment;

Accomplishment Highlights

- Students & their parents assist in stocking millions of Atlantic salmon in rivers throughout the Connecticut River watershed;
- Students serve as clerk of the works for a construction project at their school, monitoring a local brook for sedimentation and providing feedback to town conservation commission;
- Students respond to the news media with a letter to the editor;
- Students organize a stream clean-up with community support;
- Students are interviewed about the Program for newspaper, radio and television stories, some of which are carried nationally;
- Students investigate an unexplained loss of eggs in their aquarium and discover problems with the town protocol for water treatment which is reported to town selectmen;
- Students take responsibility for stocking an entire stretch of stream and follow-up with an evaluation of growth & survival;
- Students post information about the Program on Websites;
- Students are empowered to become natural resource stewards.

Program Requirements

- Demand for the Program currently exceeds capacity of core partners to deliver program & requires an application for new participants and evaluation of existing participants;
- Initial cost of equipment & materials is about \$850 with minor expenditures required annually thereafter;
- Classroom liaisons are key in assisting teachers with equipment, logistics, and reporting;
- One-day training & orientation is mandated annually for teachers and liaisons;

Core Partners

Charlie Olchowski—Deerfield/Millers River Chapter of Trout Unlimited—413-773-5352
Caleb Slater-Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife—413-792-7270 ext. 133
John O'Leary-Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife—413-792-7270
Janice Rowan-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—413-548-9138 ext.24