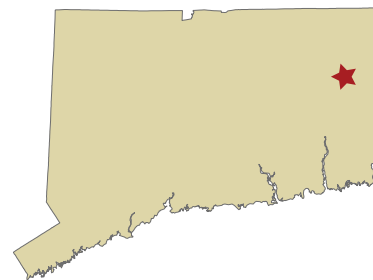


Restoring Wildlife Habitat in Northeastern Connecticut

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program



The Problem

The five-acre Yaworski Lagoon Superfund Site is situated along the Quinebaug River in Canterbury, Connecticut. From 1950 to 1973, industrial byproducts, including solvents, paints, textile dyes, acids and various other wastes, were disposed of in an onsite lagoon. Leakage from the lagoon contaminated wetlands and the Quinebaug River with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and metals, including copper, lead, zinc, cadmium and chromium. Contaminated surface water and sediments reduced the quality of the habitat for birds, fish and other wetland-dependant animals.

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program

When hazardous substances enter the environment, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources can be injured. The Department of the Interior, along with State, Tribal and other Federal partners, acts as "trustee" for these resources. Trustees seek to identify the natural resources injured and determine the extent of the injuries. Trustees work with the responsible parties to carry out restoration activities, or recover funds from responsible parties to carry out the restoration activities. These efforts are possible under the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program (NRDAR), the goal of which is to restore natural resources injured by oil spills or the release of hazardous substances.

Restoring the Resources

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) sought compensation for the impacts to wetlands and the river through restoration of similar habitats. After lengthy negotiations with potentially responsible parties, only two parties agreed to settle the natural resource damage claim. As a result, the Service received \$40,000 to

Highlights

- Engaged Citizen Science volunteers in a program to survey vernal pools, grassland birds, stream water quality and mammals; and
- Begun effort to remove the first barrier on the Moosup River to restore free flowing riverine conditions to 5 miles of riverine habitat.



USFWS

Removal of the first barrier on the Moosup River is expected in August, 2010. The effort will reconnect more than 5 miles of riverine habitat, benefitting fish and other aquatic organisms.

implement wetland restoration. Funds have initiated a Citizen Science Program in Canterbury that is coordinated by the Connecticut Audubon Society. In its first year, 59 residents logged nearly 400 volunteer hours and completed a vernal pool inventory and a grassland bird survey. The Service is also working with The Town of Plainfield to remove an antiquated cast iron pipe in the Moosup River. Removal of the pipe will reconnect more than 5 miles of riverine habitat, benefiting riverine fish and other aquatic organisms.

Thanks to Our Partners

With oversight from the Connecticut Audubon Society and assistance from



Vernal Pool Association

Citizen Science volunteers documented two vernal pools with blue spotted salamanders, a state-threatened species.



P. Coughlin

Citizen Science volunteers help collect data about vernal pools in Canterbury. The information will be compiled and provided to Town planners to help protect important wetland habitats.

more than 50 residents of Canterbury, the Service has helped expand local citizens awareness and interest in the Town's natural resources. It is hoped that information gained through the Citizen Science Program will result in better wetland protection. Removal of the first barrier on the Moosup River is being made possible with assistance from the Town of Plainfield and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

For additional information or questions contact:

Molly B Sperduto
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, New Hampshire 03301-5087
603/223-2541
molly_sperduto@fws.gov
<http://www.fws.gov/newengland>

Federal Relay Service
for the deaf and
hard-of-hearing
1 800/877 8339

February 2010

