

Peconic River Fish Passages



Department of
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Conservation



PSEG

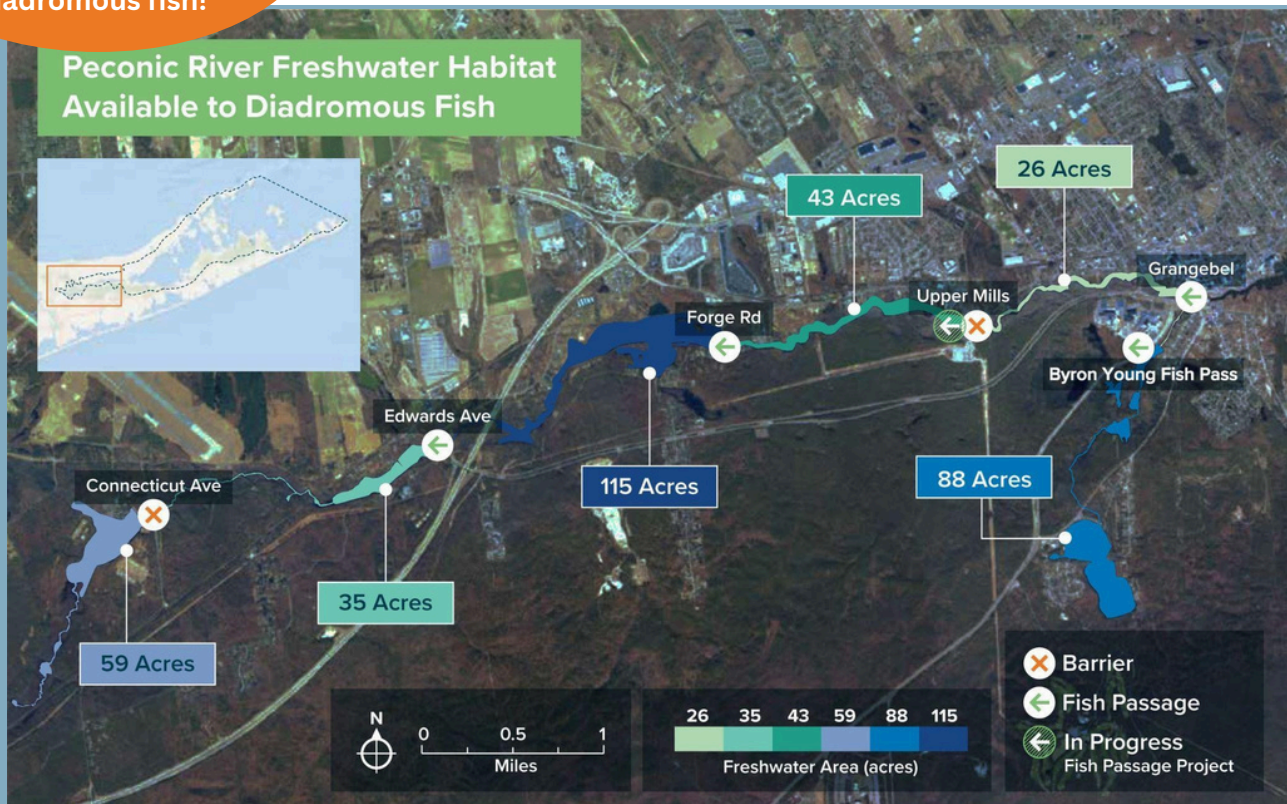


Complete Peconic River
fish passage projects
have restored over 200
acres of habitat for
diadromous fish!

River Herring

River herring (also called Alewife) are classified as *diadromous* fish, meaning that they migrate between fresh and marine waters. River herring typically return to freshwater to spawn. As a result, they provide vital natural and economic benefits including serving as prey for important commercial and recreational fish species, migratory birds, and mammals. River herring populations have been declining for the past century on Long Island in part due to migration barriers (dams and road culverts) that block access to important freshwater habitat.

Peconic River Freshwater Habitat Available to Diadromous Fish



Diadromous Fish Habitat Restoration

Until recently, six dams blocked fish from swimming up the Peconic River and its tributary, the Little River. By opening up paths around these barriers, river herring and other migratory fish, like American Eel, can finally reach the areas they need to survive. This helps the fish population grow and creates a healthier, more diverse environment for all local marine life. Currently, almost every dam on the river is being modified to let water and fish flow freely again. This project is led by the Peconic Estuary Partnership, working alongside state, county, and local governments.

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Grangebél Dam Nature Based Fishway

Status: Complete

In 2010, a permanent “nature-like” fishway was built at the first barrier on the Peconic River, Grangebél Dam, opening up **26 acres** of habitat. The success of this project has helped to spur other fish passage projects along the Peconic River. Approximately 50,000-80,000 herring herring pass through this fishway every spring!

Byron Young Fish Passage at Woodhull Dam

Status: Complete

Fish passage construction was completed in Spring of 2022, creating access to **88 acres** of prime spawning habitat within Wildwood Lake. The structure is a combination Denil pass and step pool fish passage, along with an American eel passage through the dam and bypassing the existing culvert. This project also includes a video monitoring and fish counter system.

Upper Mills Dam

Status: In Progress

The Upper Mills Dam is the next major barrier to fish passage on the main stem of the Peconic River. When complete, this project will open **43 acres** of habitat, from the Town of Riverhead to the Town of Southampton. The dam is jointly owned by Suffolk County, PSEG, and the Town of Riverhead and maintained by PSEG. USGS maintains a concrete weir 250 ft downstream of the dam in order to measure the stage and discharge of the Peconic River. PEP and Suffolk County have obtained permits and are working to secure funding for the project.

Forge Road

Status: Complete

This project opened approximately **115 acres** of historic habitat for diadromous fish within the Peconic River, starting in Spring of 2023. This project consisted of replacing the structurally damaged Forge Road Dam and constructing the fish passage.

Edwards Ave

Status: Complete

In June of 2016, an Alaska Steep Pass and American eel pass was constructed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation at the Edwards Ave dam. This fish passage opened up **35 acres** of historic fish habitat.

Connecticut Avenue

Status: Not Active

This is the most upstream barrier on the Peconic River. There is currently no fish passage at this site; however, there is potential to open up to two miles of river and **59 acres** of diadromous fish spawning and maturation habitat in the future.