



Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

Save the Sound®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 29, 2018

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Save the Sound starts fishway construction on Noroton River

New Haven, Conn.—Save the Sound has started construction on a long-planned project that will re-open 6.8 miles of the Noroton River to migrating river herring and other species. The Noroton, which runs between Stamford and Darien, was routed through a culvert during the construction of I-95 in the 1950s. The culvert's design has blocked fish passage ever since.

Over seven years of collaboration among Save the Sound, the Darien Land Trust, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT) have culminated in a project will allow fish to swim upstream through the culvert safely. Preliminary site-clearing on state land to allow access for work started late last week, and in-stream work is anticipated to begin in the next several days, weather permitting.

“We expect the fishway to be usable in time for this spring’s herring run,” **said Gwen Macdonald, director of green projects at Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound.** “It will be the first time in almost 60 years that alewife and blueback herring will be able to safely migrate through this stretch of the Noroton River and reach their freshwater spawning habitat upstream. The partnerships involved in this project are a great example of how state agencies and nonprofits can work together to safeguard our rivers, fish, and habitats for the public trust.”

“This has been an incredible collaboration between Save the Sound and the Darien Land Trust over many years, and it is fantastic to see the fishway coming to fruition. Migratory forage fish, such as the river herring, play an incredible role in the ecosystem, as food for predator species and as filter feeders cleaning our waters. It’s so exciting to think of them returning to the Noroton River watershed after more than 50 years absence,” **said Flip Huffard, president of the Darien Land Trust.**

Re-opening river passage for migratory species will improve not only the health of the Noroton River itself, but will benefit the overall ecosystem of Long Island Sound. Over the last decade, fish passage projects around the Sound’s Connecticut and New York shores have dramatically increased freshwater spawning habitat for the foundational species whose return is restoring a more vibrant food web to the Sound.

Design and construction plans have been reviewed and authorized by CT DEEP, CT DOT, and US Army Corps of Engineers. Princeton Hydro provided lead engineering design services, and James Cook University assisted in designing the fish passage structures to be installed within the culvert. Schumack Engineered Construction will be constructing the project, with fabrication supplied by Burt Process Equipment.

The project is generously supported by the Long Island Sound Futures Fund, an initiative of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Long Island Sound Study; CT DEEP; Planet Fuel Charitable Fund; and Darien Land Trust members.

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Guided site visits for members of the press are possible. Please contact Laura at 540-292-8429 to coordinate.