



Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

Save the Sound®

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Save the Sound completes fishway construction on Noroton River

New Haven, Conn.—Earlier this month, Save the Sound completed construction on a multi-year effort to open 6.8 miles of the Noroton River to migrating river herring and other species just in time for this year's spring fish run.

During the construction of I-95 in the 1950s, the Noroton River was routed through a cement culvert that prevented fish from safely travelling upstream for decades. Collaboration among Save the Sound, the Darien Land Trust, the Planet Fuel Charitable Fund, as well as state and federal government agencies, has culminated in a project will allow fish to swim upstream through the culvert safely.

“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.**

“With this project, we are celebrating opening up habitat that has been blocked for over 70 years,” **said Anna Marshall, green projects associate at CFE/Save the Sound.** “Returning these fish to their historic spawning grounds brings us one step closer to restoring the biodiversity of Long Island Sound.”

Re-opening river passage for species like alewife and blueback herring will improve the overall ecosystem of Long Island Sound by increasing the population of vital forage fish.

“We were thrilled to be able to contribute to this extraordinary effort. What may seem to be a simple engineering project has enormous long-term value for native fish populations, the watershed, and our greater Long Island Sound ecosystem,” **said Amy Barnouw, Director of the Planet Fuel Charitable Fund.** “The Noroton River Fishway is a success story of what we can accomplish when agency, non-profit, and local community come together to support our environment.”

The completion of the Noroton River Fishway will be marked with a private site tour and fish release celebration on **Thursday, April 26**. While not open to the public, reporters are welcome to attend.

The celebration will start at the Olson Woods Pond, where the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection will release pregnant alewife into a pond that connects to the Noroton River. This will encourage the fish to lay their eggs at the upstream location before returning to Long Island Sound, after which point they will travel up the Noroton River each year to spawn again. Later, at the site of the modified culvert, attendees will receive a tour of the fishway and enjoy a reception at the Boatyard at Smokey Joe's BBQ.

This project was 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 the Darien Land Trust.

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What: Fish release celebration and fishway tour
(Private event – open to press)

Where: Olson Woods – Heather Lane, Darien
The Boatyard at Smokey Joe's BBQ – 1308 Main St., Stamford

When: Thursday, April 26
4:00 p.m. – Fish release at Olson Woods Pond
4:45 p.m. – Fishway tour and reception behind the Boatyard at Smokey Joe's BBQ

Who: CFE/Save the Sound staff
Darien Land Trust
Amy Barnouw, Director of the Planet Fuel Charitable Fund
Steve Gephard, Supervising Fisheries Biologist with CT DEEP
Pregnant alewife