WHY THE PROJECT WAS BUILT As authorized by Congress, the goal of the Batsto River Fishway Restoration Project is to restore access to spawning and rearing habitat for migratory fish on the Batsto River through the installation of a permanent fishway on the river to allow migratory fish to proceed unimpeded around the Batsto Dam to historic spawning and foraging areas upstream.

WHAT WAS DONE AND WHERE The Corps and its partners installed a fishway at Batsto Lake that will provide access to approximately eight miles of river to migratory fish. The target fish species is alewife; however, blueback herring will also be suited to use the fishway. Denil fishways were used for the project, specifically the aluminum Alaska Steeppass Model A type. The fishway consists of three 10 ft. sections and a concrete sluice. A removable wooden cover provides for easy maintenance and blends in with the historic surroundings. A plant screen will be planted alongside the fishway to further blend in with the natural aspects of the park.

WHEN IT HAPPENED

√ Project authority was granted by Congress in the Water Resources Development Act of 1996.
√ The Project Cooperation Agreement was signed on July 7, 2004.
√ Construction began in November 2004 and was completed in September 2005.

WHO WAS INVOLVED

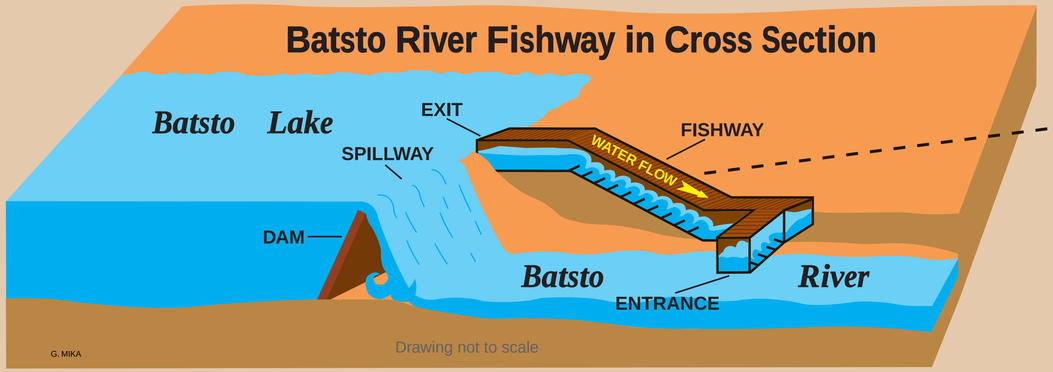
√ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Managed all construction and funded 65 percent of the project.
√ New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection: As the non-federal sponsor, provided the balance of the funding, and will provide the operations and maintenance of the fishway.
√ Other partners in the project were the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Jersey Field Office; Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership; American Rivers; National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration; Pinelands Preservation Alliance; Alden Research Laboratory; and Coastal America.

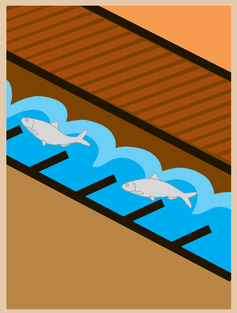
WHAT WAS THE COST Total project cost was $600,000.

Swimming the Ladder to Success

Wharton State Forest

While the Batsto Dam provided power to a once prospering village, it halted the natural migration of spawning fish. The Batsto River Fishway Project provides a pathway over the dam. This project improves the aquatic ecosystem and provides increased recreational opportunities by allowing migratory fish access to historic spawning and foraging habitat.





Closeup of fishway

How does it work?

The fishway, or "fish ladder", consists of a series of progressively higher steps the fish can swim over .

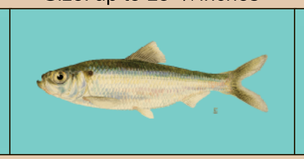
Three Fishes Go Up the Ladder

The Batsto River is a diverse ecosystem that historically included migratory routes of alewife, blueback herring and American eel. Alewife and blueback herring are anadromous species, which migrate in the spring from the ocean and bays into freshwater rivers and lakes to spawn. American eel also migrate, but from the river to the sea to spawn (catadromous).

The fishway opens approximately 8 miles of habitat for these important prey species. Enabling these species to complete their historic spawning run helps restore the natural food web, benefiting many predatory species.

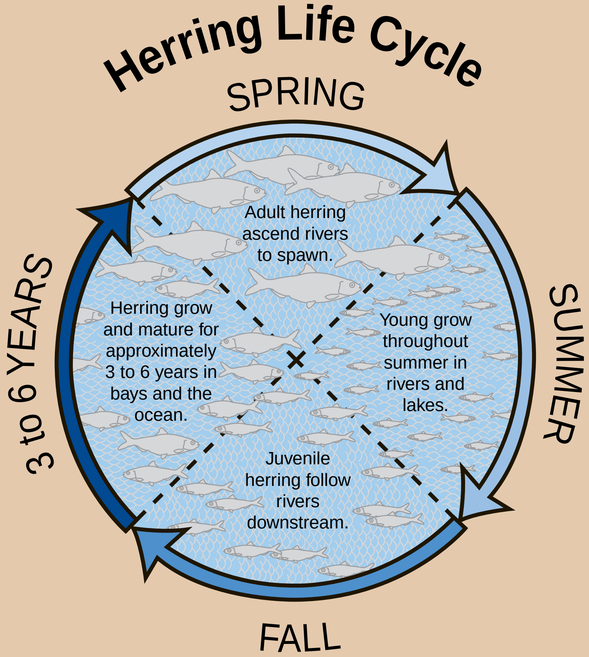
Blueback Herring
(*Alosa aestivalis*)
Size: up to 15 inches

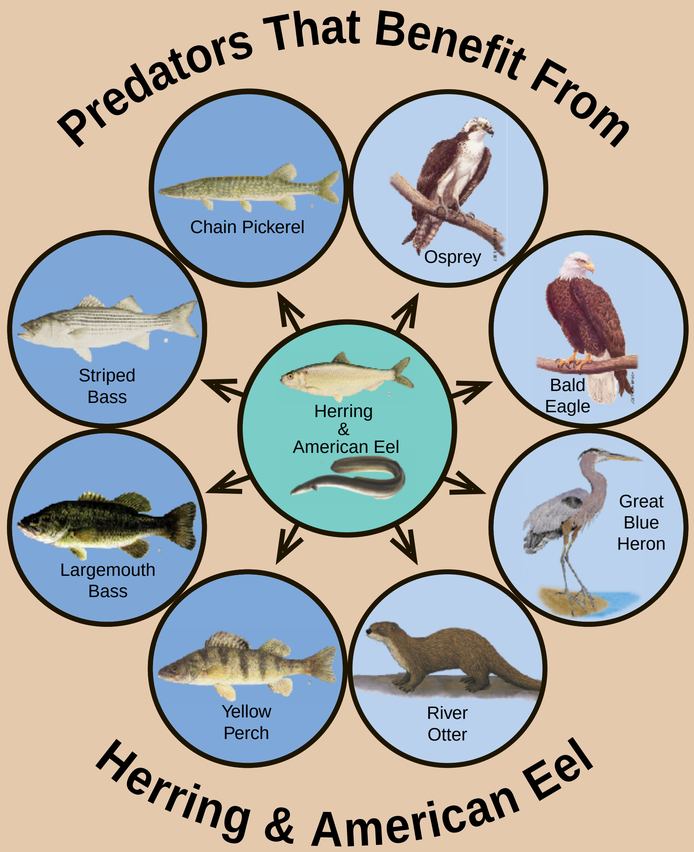
Alewife
(*Alosa pseudoharengus*)
Size: up to 15 ¾ inches



American Eel
(*Anguilla rostrata*)
Size: up to 60 inches

Illustrations: Fish courtesy of the New York State Department of Conservation
Osprey & Bald Eagle by Joe Thornbrugh, courtesy of Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks and Natural Heritage Program
River Otter by Consie Powell from *Kays and Wilson's Mammals of North America*, ©Princeton University Press, 2002
Blue Heron by G. Mika





Partners

- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- N. J. Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership
- American Rivers
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Pinelands Preservation Alliance
- Alden Research Laboratory
- Coastal America