Restoration of Shad and Anadromous Fish to the White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic River

The mission of this project is to restore shad and migratory fish passage and habitat, increase spawning areas, and benefit the resident fish in the White Clay Creek watershed.

American Shad (Alosa sapidissima)

Shad also called many other names, including Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, the Bethel Shad, and others. A close relative of the common European shad, Alosa fallax, American shad are native to the major ecoregions of the east-coast Atlantic and other watercourses in the United States. These fish are also known for their excellent flavor, the scientific name (alosa-sapidissima) means "most delicious tasting." The American shad was a vital food source to Native Americans and colonists and an important part of early American culture. Shad, like other species, migrate from the wintering grounds in freshwater rivers and estuaries to which they were born. Shad in Delaware are found in the White Clay Creek watershed. The White Clay Creek has six known dams in the Delaware portion of the watershed. Dam removal is by far the best option to restore fish passage and many dams can be removed. Fortunately, for Delaware Park, the cultural surveys, conducted by the University of Delaware's Center for Historic Architecture and Design, show that Dam No. 1 is historical and worth preserving as part of the White Clay Creek's historical and cultural heritage.

Project Scope and Progress

In 2010 the University of Delaware’s Water Resources Agency (WRA), a state institute for Public Administration, assessed the feasibility of restoring fish passage and habitat to the Wild and Scenic White Clay Creek. The project was funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and served as an environmental education project. The WRA and the Delaware River Basin Commission worked closely in partnership with the Christina River Basin Partnership to implement the project. The White Clay Creek Project was designed to restore fish passage and habitat to the White Clay Creek. As part of the project, the WRA has been working closely with the Delaware River Basin Commission and the Christina River Basin Partnership. The project’s mission is to restore fish passage and habitat to the White Clay Creek. Since the feasibility report was developed the White Clay Creek dam removal and fish passage construction project has evolved significantly to fund the removal of Dam No. 1 at Delaware Park. Project funding partners to date include:

- City of Newark
- State of Delaware
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2010)
- Fish America (2011)
- University of Delaware
- National Park Service White Clay Creek and Scenic Management Committee (2011 and 2012)

Removing Dam No. 1 will be the first dam removal project in Delaware and will open 4.8 miles of fish passage in the White Clay Creek. Dam No. 1 is a bonded dam, 3-5 feet in height and approximately 100 feet wide. It is composed of concrete and sand and located in river mile 4.1 of the property of Delaware Park. In 2015, DNREC conducted two anadromous fish surveys on the lower White Clay Creek. The catch per effort (CPUE) was approximately 590 CPUE below Dam No. 1, indicating that there is a significant fish population there. Currently, fish passage restoration plans will include a partial stream release in order to restore fish passage and habitat to the historic name of the dam.

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Shad in Schools

Shad in Schools is a program that aims to educate students about the importance of natural water quality and the role of shad in Delaware's ecosystems. Shad in Schools programs are designed to help students understand the role of shad in Delaware's ecosystems and the importance of preserving these ecosystems for future generations.

Shad in Schools programs are facilitated by trained educators and volunteers who work with school groups to conduct hands-on activities related to shad biology, ecology, and conservation. Shad in Schools programs are designed to help students understand the role of shad in Delaware's ecosystems and the importance of preserving these ecosystems for future generations.

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Universities and schools in Delaware and Pennsylvania support Shad in Schools programs in order to educate students about the importance of water quality and the role of shad in Delaware's ecosystems. Shad in Schools programs are designed to help students understand the role of shad in Delaware's ecosystems and the importance of preserving these ecosystems for future generations.

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