

American Eel Restoration & Monitoring in the Susquehanna River Basin



Photo: Matt Shank

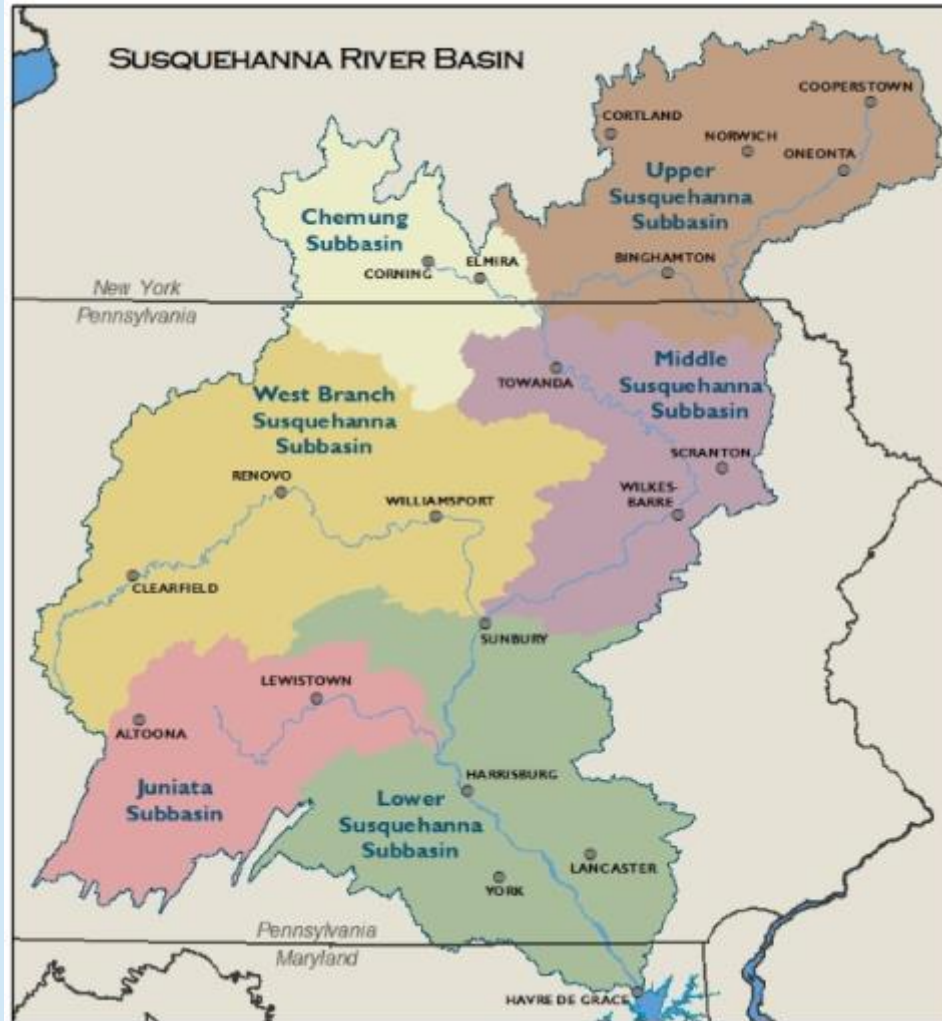
Aaron Henning


Susquehanna River Basin Commission

John Wiley

United States Fish & Wildlife Service

The Susquehanna River Basin



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History & Background



History & Background



Barriers to Passage



Photo: Cube Hydro

History & Background



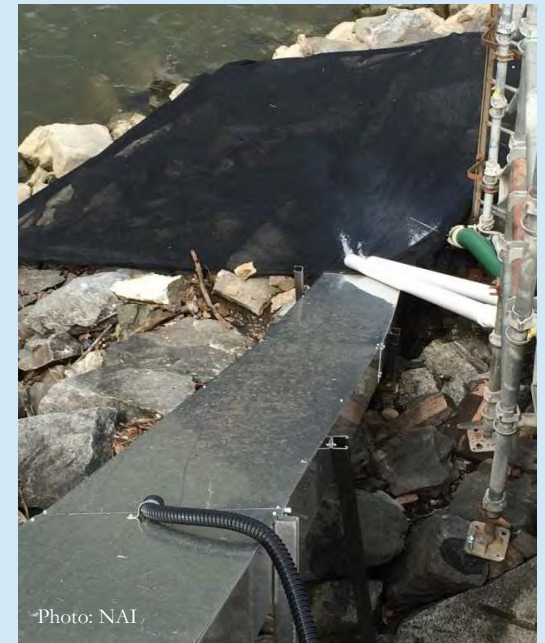
- Muddy Run Pumped Storage (Exelon)
- established T&T program through 2030

History & Background



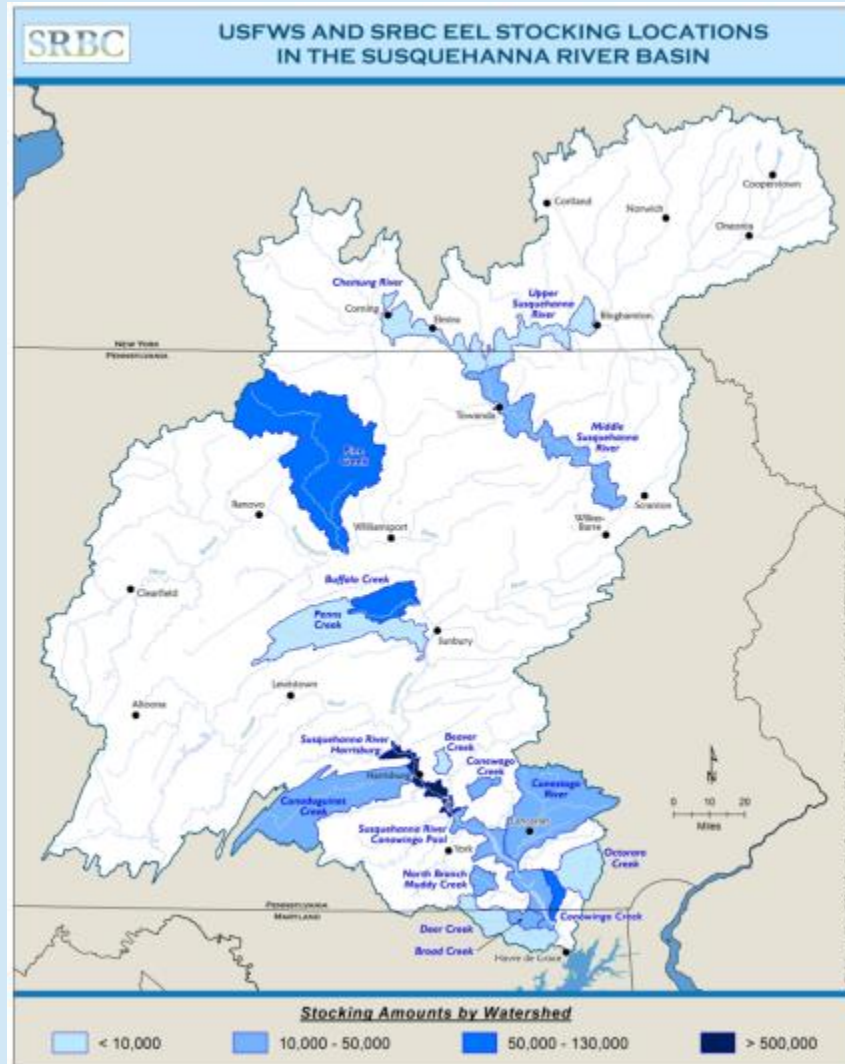
2005...humble beginnings

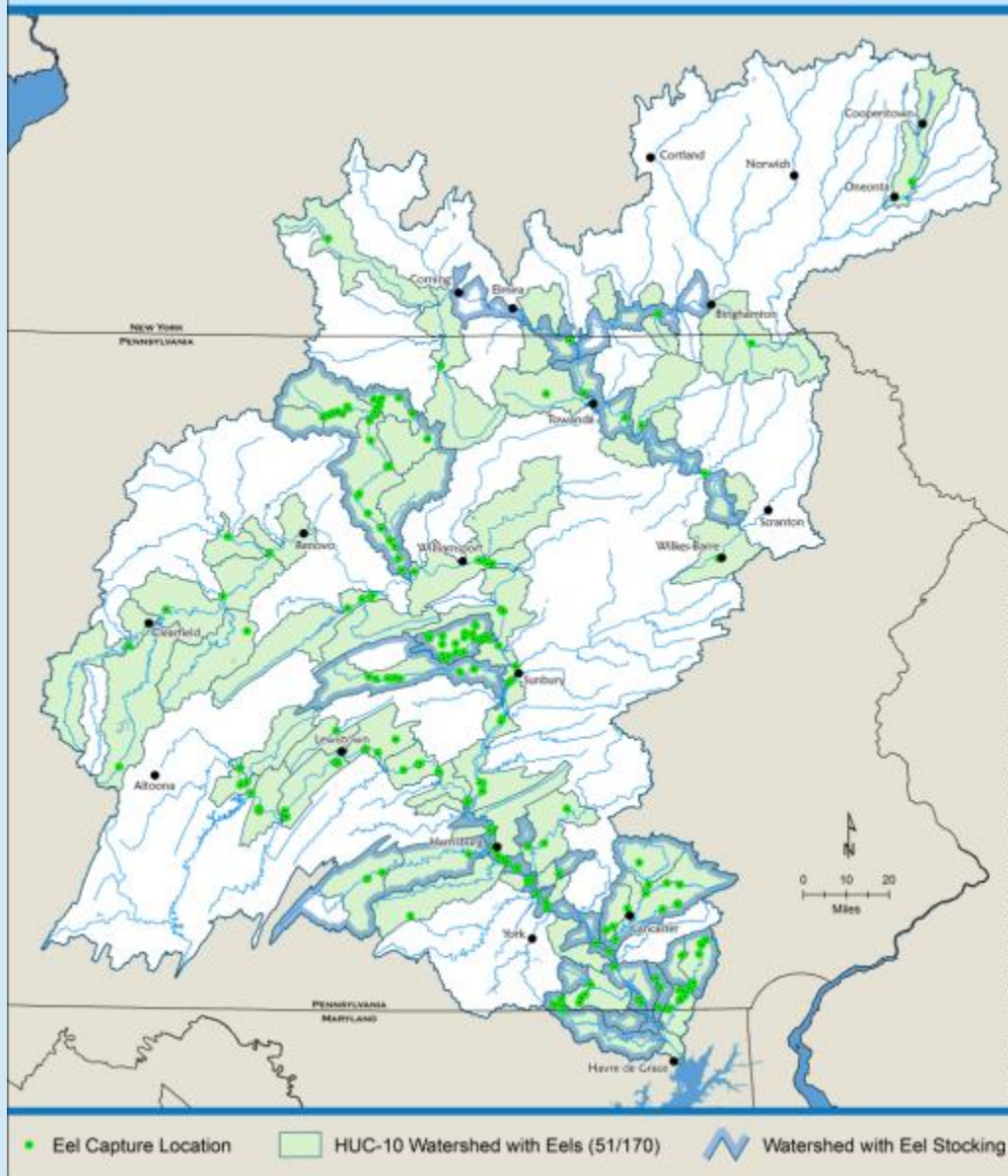
2017...what a time to be alive



Stockings & Transport

Year	Ramp location		Total
	Conowingo	Octoraro	
2005	42	-	42
2006	19	-	19
2007	3,837	-	3,837
2008	42,058	-	42,058
2009	17,437	-	17,437
2010	23,856	-	23,856
2011	84,961	-	84,961
2012	127,013	-	127,013
2013	293,141	-	293,141
2014	185,628	-	185,628
2015	58,444	7,197	65,641
2016	2,684	21,094	23,778
2017	122,300	11,347	133,647
2018	64,187	3,739	
sum	1,025,607	43,377	
avg	73,258	10,844	





You are still here



Barriers to Passage ?



Recaptures



Eel Passage Advisory Group

- Multi-agency collaboration
 - monthly calls, annual meeting
- Guide stocking
- General coordination
- Study requests

Supporting Studies & Programs

- USFWS – Pine & Buffalo Creek mussel recruitment
- SRBC – fish community & biomass monitoring at stocking sites
- SUNY – rusty crayfish & pearly mussel ecological response
- New York stocking?
- Eels in the classroom pilot project
- eDNA based distribution?

American eel restoration for Susquehanna includes 3 Lancaster County spots

AD CRABLE | Staff Writer Jul 11, 2017



Outdoor News
 Outdoor News Minnesota Wisconsin Michigan
 Classifieds
 "Looking for a guide, a used boat, a dog..."
 PA: Eels trying to slither back to Susquehanna
 September 1, 2011 by Site Staff
 Havre de Grace, Md. – There was a time, and not so very long ago, that the American eel, not smallmouth bass or American shad, were the king fish on the Susquehanna River.

Bay Journal

Home Topics Features Opinion Travel Blog Films Events

Eels returning to Susquehanna; will mussels, water quality follow?

After years of stocking and lifts, biologists are finding more, larger fish in new locations

By Karl Blankenship on November 10, 2016

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The Daily Star
 Chicago, New York

Returning the American Eel to the Susquehanna River



by Josh D. Tryninewski
 Fisheries Biologist
 PFBC Anadromous Fish Restoration Unit

The Susquehanna River once supported tremendous numbers of a long-lived and highly migratory fish that looked more like a snake than a fish. The American Eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) with its slimy, slender, elongated body, slithering movements and reclusive and nocturnal lifestyle can conjure up feelings of fright and disgust to the unsuspecting angler. However, the misunderstood American Eel has a complex and fascinating life history with environmental importance that has gained appreciation, understanding and a refreshed restoration focus in recent years.

The American Eel is a catadromous fish that requires access to both freshwater and marine environments to complete its life cycle.

A Normandeau Associates Biologist counts American Eels at the Conowingo Dam eel collection facility.

Biologists say eel is back in upper Susquehanna

By Erin Jerome Staff Writer Jul 31, 2018

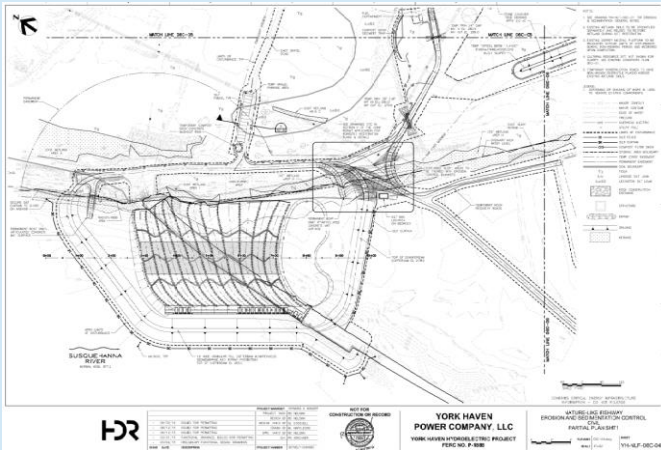


Challenges



Opportunities

- Relicensing of hydro operations
- York Haven Nature Like Fishway...2021
- Dam removals



Colliersville Dam



- Enel Green Power Licensee
- Settlement Agreement Reached in 2018 (NYSDEC SRBC FWS)
- Expected License Issuance in 2019-20
- Upstream eel transport implemented immediately
- Eventual construction of seasonal eel ladders after siting
- Downstream passage and protection in 2024-25
- Restore access to 22.4 miles of mainstem river + tributaries

Acknowledgements

- SRBC – Matt Shank & Jeff Zimmerman
- Normandeau – **MIKE MARTINEK**
- USFWS – Sheila Eyler & John Wiley
- EPAG members
- anglers, regional biologists who reported eels

Questions ?

