

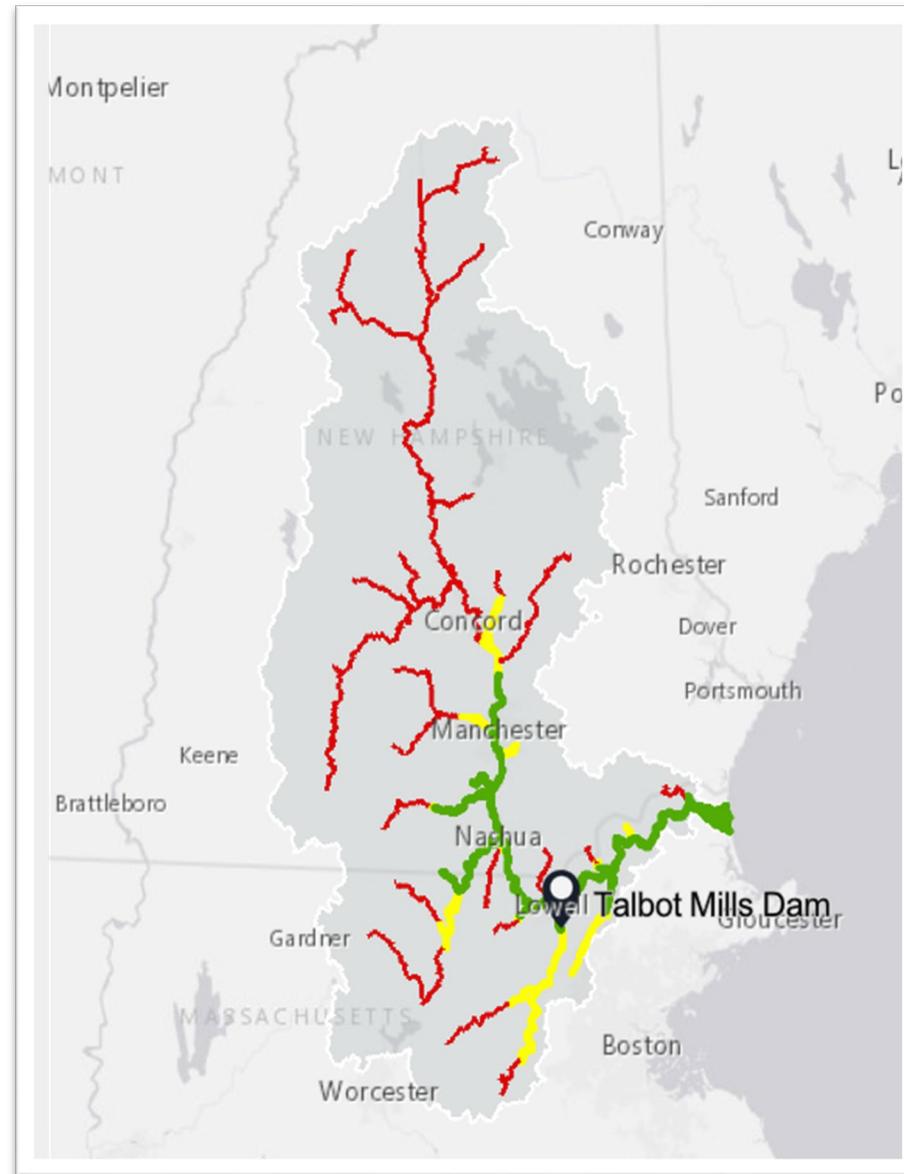
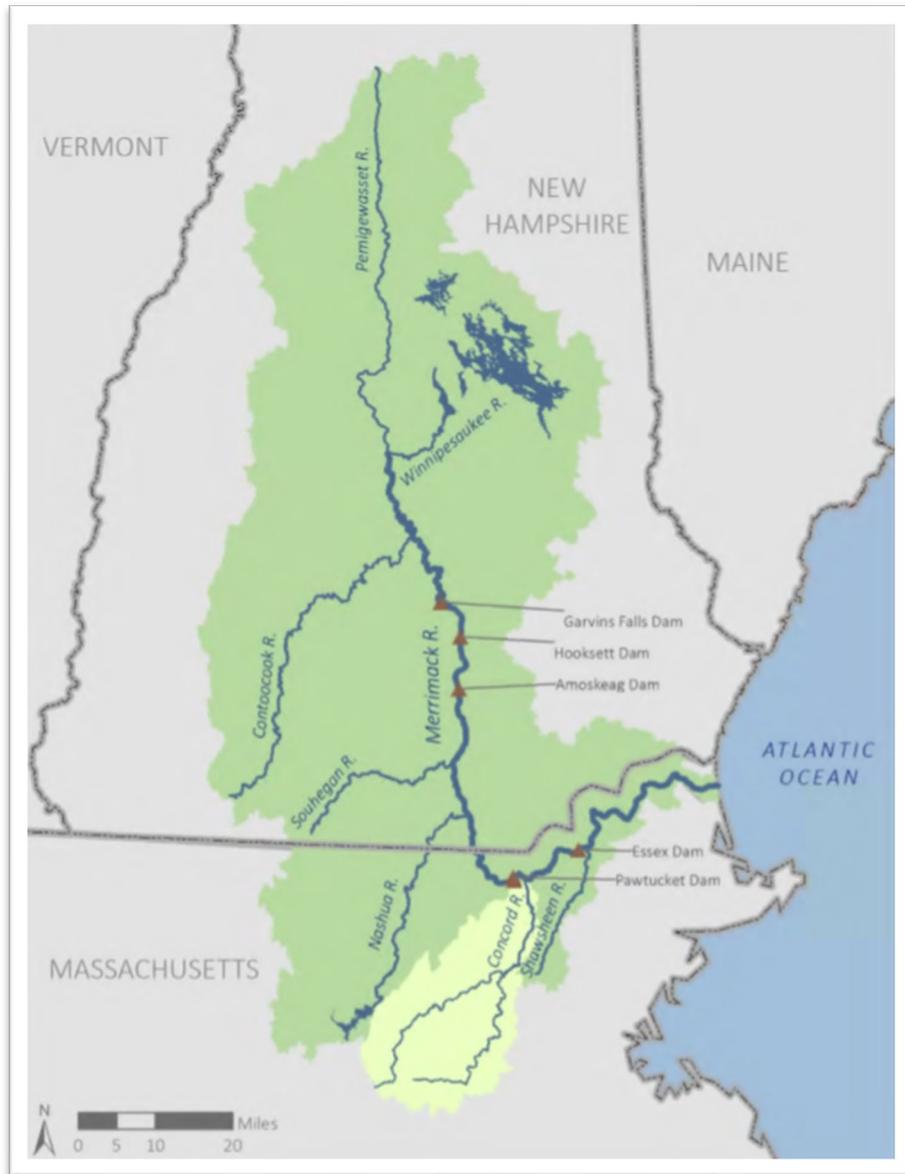
# OARS



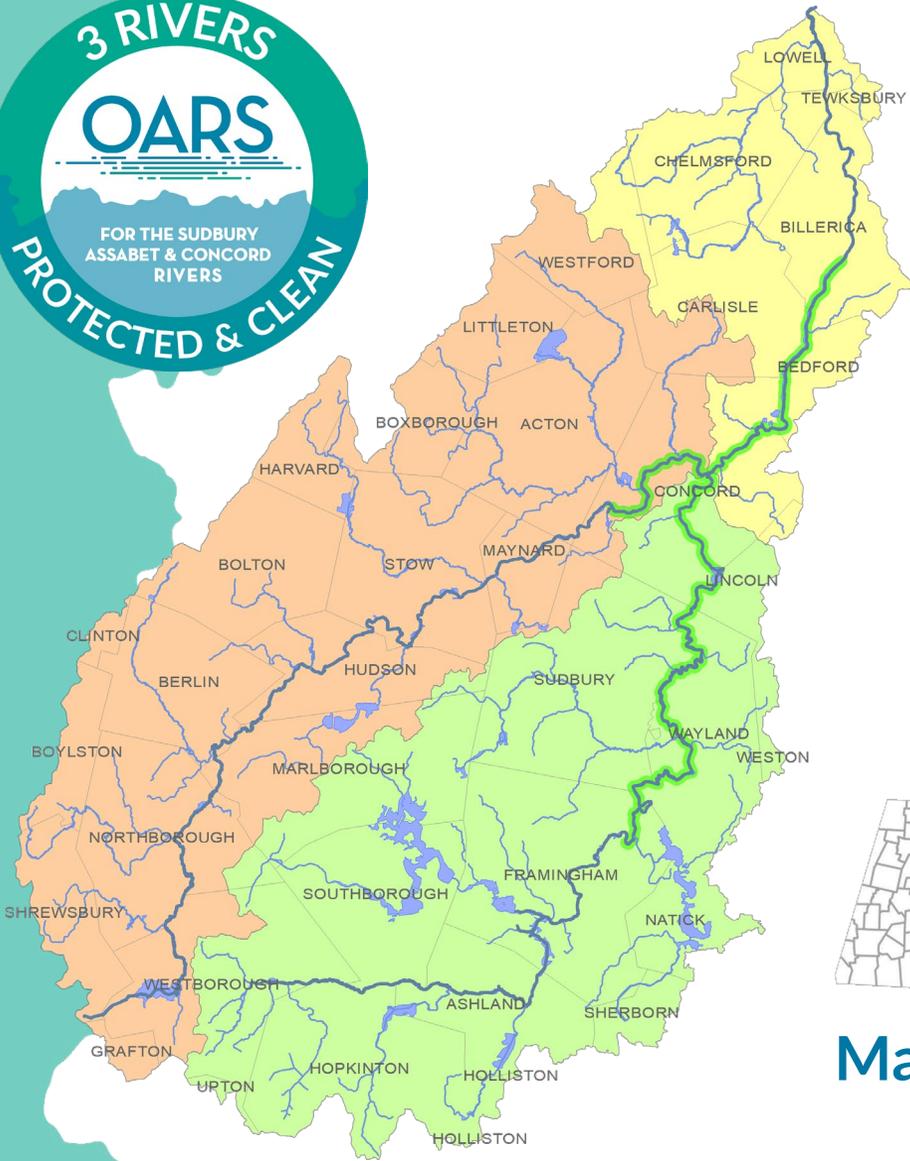
**2025 River Herring Network Annual Meeting**

Thursday, October 23 | 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM

# SuAsCo WATERSHED (MERRIMACK)



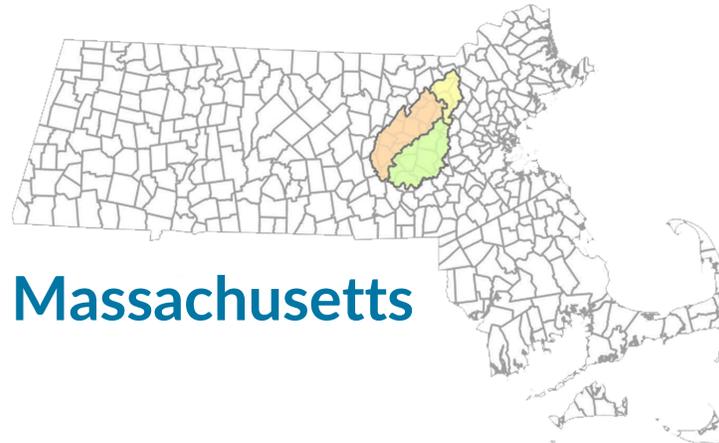
# OUR WATERSHED: Where we work, Why it Matters



SuAsCo watershed



OAR / David Griffin Photography



Massachusetts

Working together to protect, improve, & preserve the Sudbury, Assabet, & Concord rivers & watershed for all people & wildlife

# THE RIVERS & WATERSHED



- 399 square miles
- 36 municipalities
- 84 river miles + tributaries
- 29 miles of Wild & Scenic River
- 8 wastewater treatment plants
- 161 dams

## Sudbury, Assabet, Concord (SuAsCo) rivers watershed





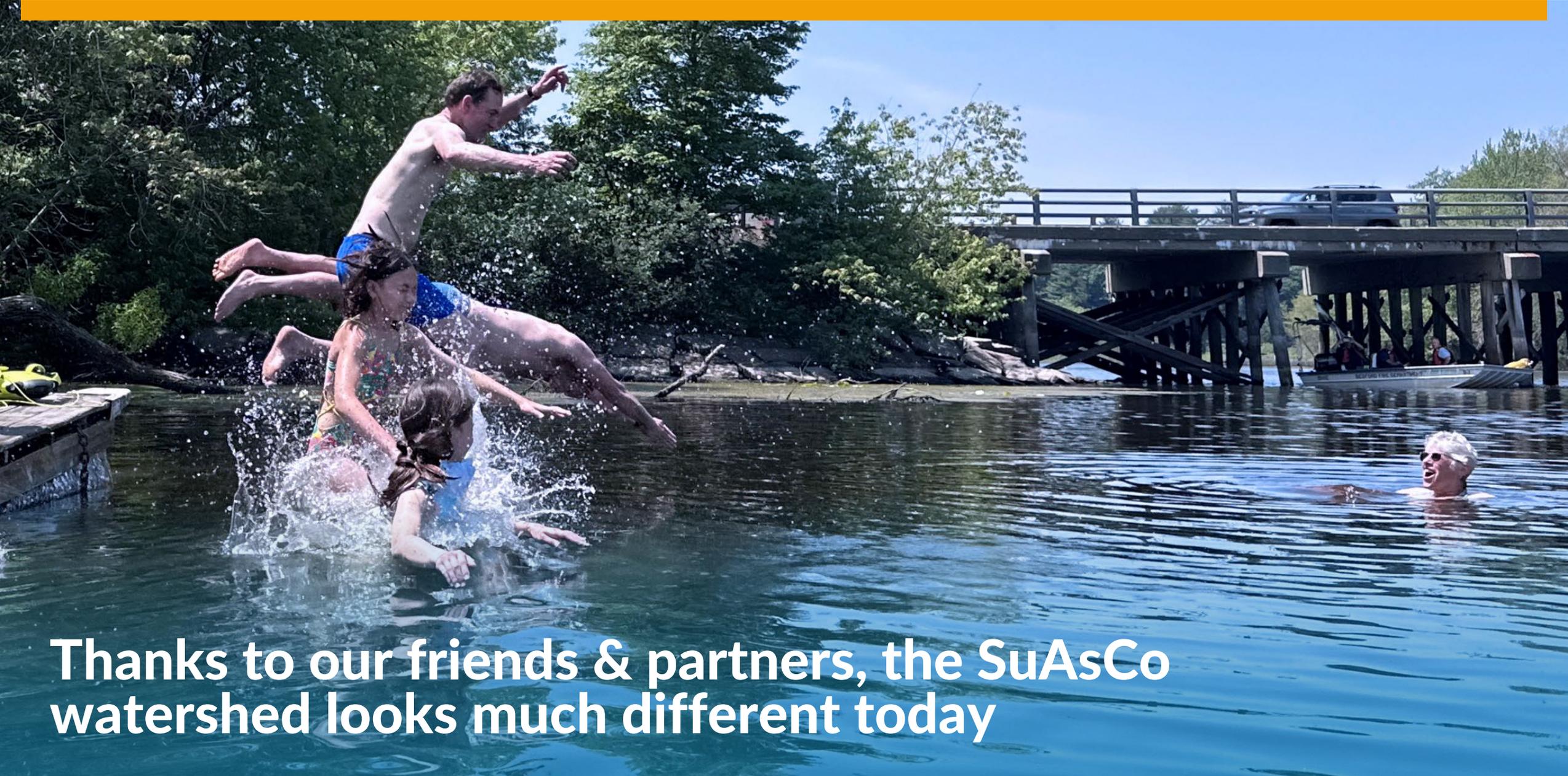
**THE CRISIS**

**WHY OARS WAS BORN**

# THE CRISIS—Our Rivers Were Dying

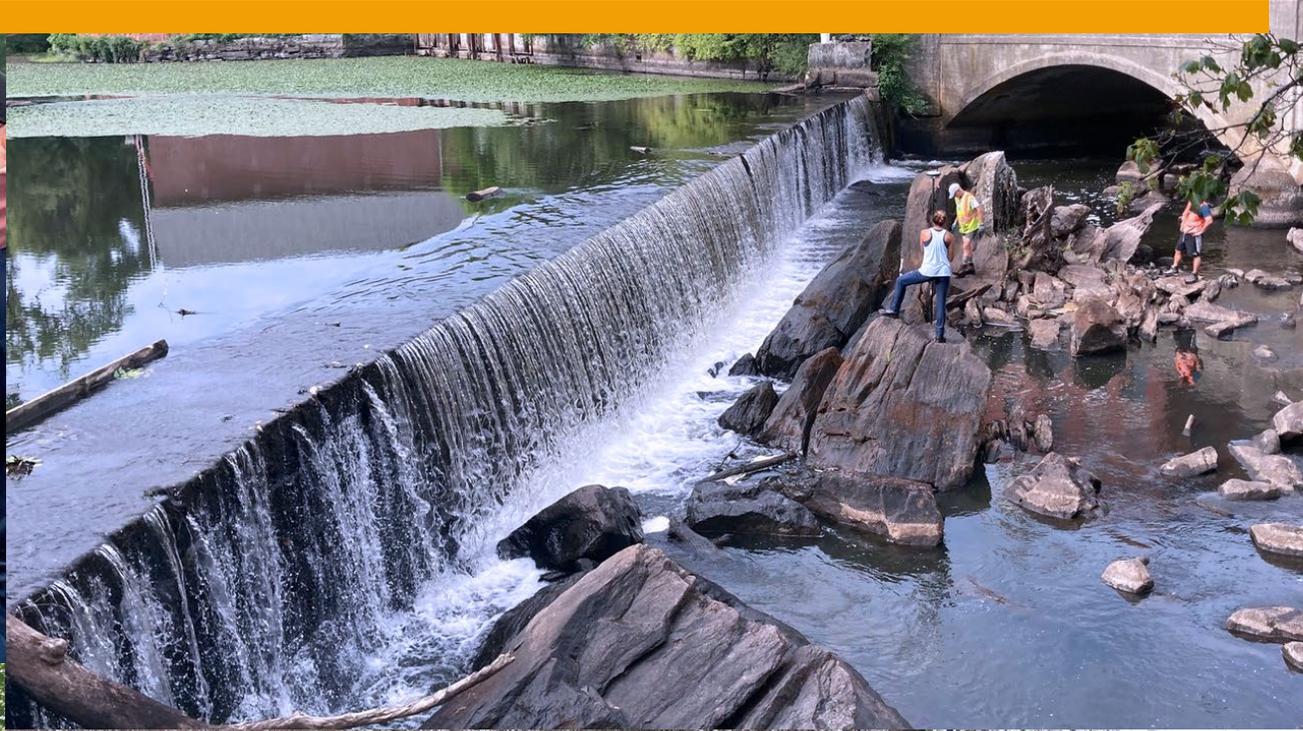


# A WATERSHED TRANSFORMED



Thanks to our friends & partners, the SuAsCo watershed looks much different today

# CHALLENGES AHEAD



THERE IS STILL WORK TO DO...



# OUR APPROACH

**Science, Action, and Community**

**We take a comprehensive, hands-on approach to river health**

# OUR PROGRAMS



**RIVER  
SCIENCE**



**POLICY &  
ADVOCACY**



**OUTREACH &  
STEWARDSHIP**



**EDUCATION &  
RECREATION**



**ECOLOGICAL  
RESTORATION &  
CLIMATE  
RESILIENCY**



# RIVER SCIENCE

258

SAMPLES TAKEN  
in 2024

32

WQ VOLUNTEERS  
in 2024

30

WQ TEST SITES  
in 2024

## DATA THE DRIVES CHANGE

Collecting & deploying rigorous water quality data to achieve free-flowing, restored, preserved, & protected SuAsCo rivers & watershed for all people & wildlife.



# OUTREACH, EDU, REC, & STEWARDSHIP

25

COMMUNITY  
TALKS/EVENTS  
In 202

120

CHILDREN  
EDUCATED  
In 2024

3

COMMUNITY  
PADDLE EVENTS  
In 2024

1,700

OARS' COMMUNITY  
MEMBERS  
In 2024

## CONNECTING PEOPLE TO OUR RIVERS

Promoting the beauty & importance of the SuAsCo rivers while addressing their challenges through education, outreach, volunteer monitoring, & community events like annual River Clean-ups.



# POLICY & ADVOCACY

**ADVOCACY**

TO INCREASE MVP

**23**

TESTIMONY &  
COMMENT LETTERS

**3**

NEGOTIATED  
SETTLEMENTS UNDER  
CWA

## ADVOCATING FOR STRONGER POLICIES

Strengthening, Advocating for, & initiating policies & laws that affect the rivers & their watershed lands to restore & safeguard the SuAsCo rivers & watershed for all people & wildlife.



# ECO RESTORATION & CLIMATE RESILIENCY

**>10 M**

WATER CHESTNUT  
ROSETTES REMOVED  
in 2025

**3**

DAM REMOVAL  
PROJECTS  
PROGRESSING

**>800lbs**

TRASH REMOVED  
FROM SuAsCo Rivers  
in 2025

## RESTORING RIVERS, PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

Investing in nature-based solutions to restore hydrology, improve water quality, & create green corridors that treat stormwater runoff, while returning the SuAsCo rivers to their natural, free-flowing state.



# LOOKING AHEAD

## Bigger Goals, Bigger Impact

Together, we can grow our mission to protect the rivers we rely on



# WATER WISE WORKSHOPS—AFTER SCHOOL

## EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

- After-School Enrichment Program
  - Launching in 3 Schools, doubling by Fall 2025
  - Goal: Double again in 2026 & every year after
- Summer Camp
  - Summer 2026: Our first week-long Water Wise Camp

Inspiring the next generation of river stewards year-round



# RECREATION

## PADDLE WITH PURPOSE

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Concord River Race**
  - 3-mile, 6-mile, & kids' courses
- **River Rats**
  - Volunteers leading paddles, cleanups, and stewardship on the SuAsCo rivers
- **OARS' 3 Rivers Adventures**
  - Engage in team-building & conservation paddles

Bringing communities together to protect & enjoy our



# WATER CONSERVATION

## DRIVING CHANGE TOGETHER

- Educating Individuals on practical water-saving actions
- Collaborating with neighborhoods & municipalities to promote sustainable practices
- Advancing watershed-wide initiatives for lasting impact

Fostering a shared commitment to protect & sustain our 3 rivers



# RESTORATION

## Cleaner Rivers, Stronger Communities

- Training community members to perform culvert assessments in their towns
- Building the SuAsCo Climate Resiliency Collaborative across the 36 municipalities
- Advancing OARS Restoration Action Plan

Fostering a shared commitment to protect & sustain our 3 rivers





# RESTORATION

## Cleaner Rivers, Stronger Communities

- Advancing dam removal in the SuAsCo
- Continuing and expanding macroinvertebrate studies to track water quality health
- Engaging community members on aquatic invasive species management

Fostering a shared commitment to protect & sustain our 3 rivers

# THANKS

## Contact Information



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