

Volunteer Project Description

Position Title: Fish Monitors
Supervisors: Sally Harold and Cynthia Fowx
Location: Two sites along the Saugatuck River (approximately 2+ miles apart by car: one site off Bolton Road, Westport; second site at Glendinning Property near corner of Ford Rd & Rte 57, Westport)
Westport, Connecticut 06880
Contact: Cynthia Fowx, Conservation Coordinator, (203) 226-4991 x. 203, theden@tnc.org
Date Prepared: 2009

Purpose of this position: Volunteers are needed to monitor fish activity in the [Saugatuck River](#). The resulting data are submitted to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for assessing spawning runs of migratory fish and shared with town representatives through the [Saugatuck River Watershed Partnership](#).

Tasks related to this position:

- identify fish or record specimens with digital camera
- go in water (cold in early weeks) to check basket traps
- record temperature from analog thermometer
- clean out tubes from fish counter (requires getting in water)
- log temperature and data from counter onto clipboard
- replace batteries (stored at sites)

Qualifications:

- 17 & up; under 18 accompanied by an adult
- This is an outdoor project. Volunteers must be willing to get into cold water.
- a general scientific background will be helpful
- must have own transportation
- fish identification skills are useful, but not required
- must be able to work independently (or in self-designated, unsupervised team)
- willingness to begin work on short notice
- must commit to a regular schedule and be reliable

Preferred Start Date: April (start of migration)

Deadline for completion of project: through June or end of migration

Estimated total time commitment: Data is needed daily. The duration of the commitment is dependent upon the number of monitors recruited.

Preferred day and/or time of the week: Data is needed daily. Can develop own schedule.

How will a volunteer benefit from this position? This is a unique opportunity to develop an understanding of aquatic ecosystems in general; and the Saugatuck River and Long Island Sound watersheds, specifically. Motivated volunteers will hone scientific techniques used in field studies and gain experiential knowledge of river life.

How does completion of this project assist The Nature Conservancy? Data are submitted to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for assessing spawning runs of anadromous (a type of migration) fish and shared with town representatives through the Saugatuck River Watershed Partnership. This information plays a significant role in designing and implementing management practices within the watershed.