

Appendix D. Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife – Fisheries and Wildlife Resources Relative to the Proposed ACEC Designation

D.1 Fisheries Resources

Fish Species collected or suspected present in the proposed ACEC section of the river are listed below. All species listed are known to be found in the Housatonic River or its tributaries. Some species were not collected in the most recent survey efforts but are suspected to exist within the reach.

- Black crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*)
- Blacknose dace (*Rhinichthys atratulus*)
- Bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*)
- Bluntnose minnow (*Pimephales notatus*)
- *Bridle shiner (*Notropis bifrenatus*)
- Brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*)
- Brown bullhead (*Ameiurus nebulosus*)
- Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*)
- Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*)
- Chain pickerel (*Esox niger*)
- Common shiner (*Notropis cornutus*)
- Creek chub (*Semotilus atromaculatus*)
- Fallfish (*Semotilus corporalis*)
- Golden shiner (*Notemigonus crysoleucas*)
- Goldfish (*Carassius auratus*)
- Largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*)
- Longnose dace (*Rhinichthys cataractae*)
- *Longnose sucker (*Catastomus catostomus*)
- Northern pike (*Esox lucius*)
- Pumpkinseed (*Lepomis gibbosus*)
- Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)
- Redfin pickerel (*Esox americanus*)
- Rock bass (*Ambloplites rupestris*)
- Slimy sculpin (*Cottus cognatus*)
- Smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*)
- Spottail shiner (*Notropis hudsonius*)
- Tiger muskellunge (*Esox lucius x Esox masquinongy*)
- White sucker (*Catastomus commersoni*)
- Yellow bullhead (*Ameiurus natalis*)
- Yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*)

Sources: Division of Fisheries and Wildlife fisheries database,
Ecological Characterization of the PSA, Ecological Characterization of the ROR.
Woodlot Alternatives, Inc.
* MESA Regulated Species

Sampling by Division of Fisheries and Wildlife in the proposed reach is limited because intensive studies of the fisheries populations from the confluence of the branches to Woods Pond was conducted as part of the ecological characterization of the river in relation to remediation. Sampling of the river reach below the Woods Pond dam was conducted in 2002. That sampling effort produced records of 7 fish species: white sucker, brown trout, brown bullhead, rock bass, largemouth bass, longnose dace, blacknose dace, and bluegill. The presence of brown trout is the most notable because of that species' limited tolerance for warm water temperatures and poor water quality.

D.2 Tributaries

Most of the tributaries included in the ACEC proposal support cold water species throughout the year. Sampling records show that Mill Brook, Ashley Brook and Sackett Brook support slimy sculpin, and reproducing populations of brook trout and brown trout in addition to other minnow species. Washington Mountain Brook and Yokun Brook have documented populations of reproducing brook and/or brown trout. No data exists for Willow Brook and Sykes Brook, however, based on the topography and fish populations in adjacent waters it is likely that Sykes Brook also supports cold water fish. Willow Brook is a slightly lower gradient stream with a larger wetland complex at its confluence. These factors make it difficult to speculate on the fish populations there. As a resource agency we recognize the importance of small streams and drainages, even when site specific data are lacking. Fish will utilize these habitats on a seasonal basis or as a thermal refuge at certain times of the year. When the productive nature of the watershed is coupled with cool, high quality water, the combination can result in substantial, sustainable, cold water fisheries populations.

[Additional note: August 2008 sampling undertaken by DFW staff found native, wild reproducing populations of brook trout in Roaring Brook and the Felton Pond outflow stream.]

D.3 Wildlife Resources

The area proposed for ACEC designation contains extensive wetlands and forested areas. The diversity in habitat and community types within the proposed boundaries results in substantial use by wildlife species both common and rare. Large fauna with wide home ranges such as black bear, moose, deer, and coyote utilize the area for food and cover. Forest mammals such as fisher, squirrel and bobcat benefit from the forested western slopes of October Mountain State Forest, while aquatic or semi-aquatic mammal such as beaver, otter, mink and muskrat utilize the river and the supporting floodplain to meet their biological requirements. Open field or early

successional dependent species such as grouse, rabbits and other small mammals can be found in the fields and shrub-dominated areas. Wild turkeys are also present in strong numbers throughout the proposed area. Waterfowl surveys have shown the river and adjacent backwaters to be both a breeding area and a major migratory waterfowl area.

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