



ON-THE-GROUND PROJECTS

Spotlight on James River Atlantic Sturgeon Habitat Restoration

A lack of clean, hard substrate has been noted as a limiting factor for the restoration of many anadromous species in the James River. The loss of this ideal spawning habitat is due to dredging and excess sediment entering the river from erosion. This project will promote the population of Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*) and other anadromous fishes of the Chesapeake Bay through the restoration of spawning and nursery habitat.

The project site is located in a tidal freshwater section of the James River where the dominate substrate is currently a fine sediment and where there is sufficient current to prevent excessive siltation. Many anadromous species, including Atlantic sturgeon, American shad, herring, and striped bass frequent this area.



James River Project Site

An artificial spawning reef will be constructed using approximately 2,500 tons of broken granite.

Following construction, the site will be extensively monitored for spawning activity and outreach activities will publicize the project and its findings.

The objective of the project is to increase the spawning activity of Atlantic sturgeon and other anadromous fish in the James River by providing suitable clean hard spawning habitat. This project will also highlight the need to reduce sediment entering the river from soil erosion.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has provided the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership with conservation dollars to fund numerous components of the project, including reef construction, monitoring, and outreach. On-the-ground, local level efforts, like the James River Atlantic Sturgeon Habitat Restoration project, are helping to address regional habitat priorities and coastwide conservation objectives identified by the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership.

Project text and photo provided by James River Association.

Project Partners

James River Association

Virginia Commonwealth University

The Nature Conservancy

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Luck Stone Corporation

Mary Anderson Harrison Foundation

Chesapeake Scientific

Virginia Institute of Marine Science

USGA

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership



For more information on the Partnership visit us at:
www.atlanticfishhabitat.org