

FACT SHEET

HUDSON RIVER

Fish Consumption Advisory



HUDSON RIVER TRUSTEES

ASSESSING AND RESTORING YOUR NATURAL RESOURCES

PCB contamination in the Hudson River has restricted fish consumption for generations.

The presence of high concentrations of PCBs in Hudson River fish has led New York State officials to close various recreational and commercial fisheries and to issue advisories restricting the consumption of fish taken from the Hudson River. Since 1976, the general population has been advised to eat no fish taken from the approximately 40 miles of the upper Hudson River. For 19 years, fishing was banned in this reach of the river, and possession of any fish (other than herring, for bait) in this reach remains prohibited. Advisories against consumption of Hudson River fish have been in effect over the entire ~200 mile stretch of the river from Hudson Falls to the Battery in New York City. Altogether, the “don’t eat” (or eat none) advisory applicable to all species in the upper Hudson River has been in place for nearly 40 years.

Hudson River Natural Resource Trustees issued an Injury Determination Report, confirming these fishery closures are an injury to Natural Resources.

The Hudson River fishery is an important natural resource that provides significant recreational, economic, cultural and ecological services to the public, yet access to this resource is limited because of the PCB contamination. The current report confirms that the public’s use of the Hudson River fishery, whether for a livelihood, a source of recreational enjoyment, or for nutrition, has been and continues to be severely curtailed as a result of the closures and health advisories detailed in this report. This report documents the events that led to the imposition of these restrictions, their changing scope over time, and the nature of the restrictions that still exist today. The Trustees conclude that this constitutes an injury to this natural resource within the meaning of federal regulations.

Injury Determination Report will inform the restoration process.

This injury report is a component of a broader investigation being carried out by three governmental agencies: the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). These agencies, which act on the public’s behalf as trustees of the Hudson River’s natural resources, are conducting a “natural resource damages assessment” to determine how the Hudson’s natural resources have been injured as a result of releases of PCBs to the River. The Trustees will then evaluate how best to restore those resources and the services they provide. The Trustees will seek to restore this loss through the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration process by, for example, seeking to increase access to fishing opportunities by improving fish habitat or increasing fish populations.

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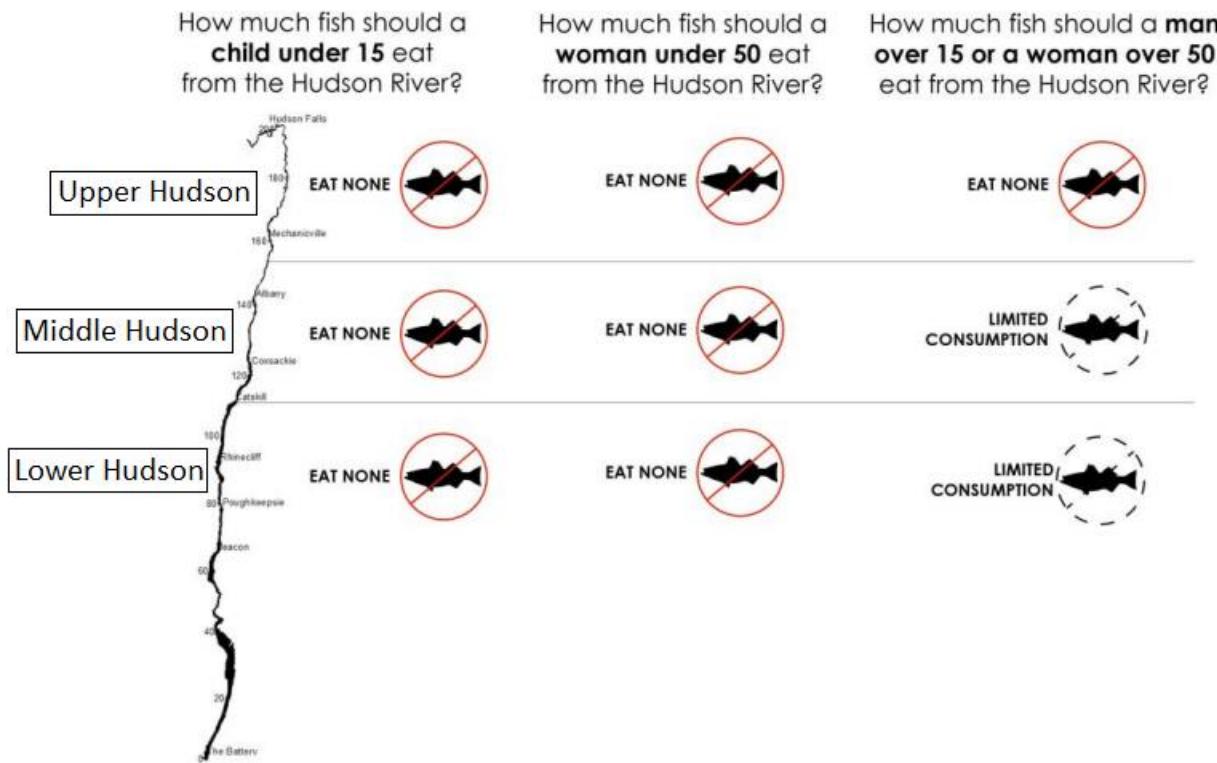


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In Depth: Fish Consumption Advisories affect everyone.

From 1976 to the present, all species of fish, from Hudson Falls south to New York City have been subject to an “eat none” advisory for children under 15 and women under 50. Men over 15 and women over 50 are currently recommended to limit their consumption of fish, with an advisory to avoid all but 4 species in the Middle Hudson. Advisories exist for fewer species in the Lower Hudson, yet limited consumption is still advised for this group. These advisories include associated tributaries, extending to the first barrier impassible to fish.



Learn More about the Hudson River

NOAA: <http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/northeast/hudson/index.html>

NYSDEC: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/25609.html>

FWS: <http://www.fws.gov/contaminants/restorationplans/HudsonRiver/index.html>

To add yourself to the Hudson River Natural Resource Damage Assessment electronic mailing list:
Send a blank e-mail to Hudson-nrda-join@list.woc.noaa.gov