



# PLEASE JOIN US: MAY 21

**WHAT:** In honor of [World Fish Migration Day](#), federal, state, and local dignitaries will gather to celebrate the completion of the High Street Dam removal and bridge reconstruction in Bridgewater, Mass. This project is a national model demonstrating the environmental benefits of dam removals for restoring critical fish migration as well as a significant restoration of a natural habitat for the plants and animals living in the region.

**WHEN & WHERE:** Tuesday, May 21, 11 a.m., at Stanley Ironworks Park, 93 High Street, in Bridgewater, Mass.

**WHO:** Anticipated to attend are: **Shannon Estenoz**, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, U.S. Department of the Interior; U.S. Congressman **William Keating**, D-9<sup>th</sup> District of Massachusetts; **Manikka Bowman**, Executive Director, The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts; **Sunny Snider Centrella**, Deputy Director, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Habitat Conservation; **Ellen Bolen**, Program Lead, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, National Coastal Resilience Fund; and **Rebecca Tepper**, Secretary, Massachusetts Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Bridgewater Town Manager **Michael Dutton** will be the event emcee.

**WHY:** For more than 100 years, the High Street Dam stood on Bridgewater's Town River. It was the first barrier to migratory fish coming up the Taunton River from Narragansett Bay, blocking fish passage to an important spawning habitat. The 12.5-foot-high, 80-foot-wide dam, which was a hazard that obstructed natural river flows and contributed to local flooding, was removed over several months from late 2023 into 2024. Just upstream, the undersized High Street Bridge, built in 1790 and thought to be one of the oldest bridges still standing in the Commonwealth, was replaced with a new 55-foot, clear-span bridge that better accommodates peak river flows and prevents flooding of the town's roadway and adjacent private property. The new bridge is designed to withstand a 500-year storm and climate change projections through 2070. The river restoration opens 10 miles of river to various migratory fish species including alewife, blueback herring, American eel, sea lamprey, and American shad. Alewife will also benefit from regaining access to 354 acres of spawning and rearing habitat in Lake Nippenicket.

This is the latest in a series of barrier removals on tributaries to the 40-mile, National Wild and Scenic Taunton River, the longest, undammed, coastal river in New England. On the nearby Mill River in Taunton, removal of the Whittenton Mill Pond, Hopewell Mills, and West Britannia dams and construction of a fishway at Lake Sabbatia reconnected 30 miles and 560 acres of spawning and rearing habitats with the larger Taunton River and Narragansett Bay system. Populations of migratory fish have increased substantially.

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Diana McCloy, 978-697-9414; [diana@teakmedia.com](mailto:diana@teakmedia.com)