

Connecticut Water Initiates Stream Flow Releases For Environmental Benefit Downstream of Kelseytown and Shenipsit Reservoirs

Releases honor a commitment to downstream eco-systems years before statutory requirements

CLINTON, Conn. — September 28, 2021 — Connecticut Water is keenly aware of its broader responsibility as a business to be a good steward of the environment and has been actively involved in state policy and programs to support important environmental stewardship efforts in Connecticut for years.

This month, the company is pleased to announce that its stream flow releases have been implemented 4 years ahead of the date required by state regulations for the Shenipsit Lake Reservoir at the Hockanum River and 5 years ahead for Kelseytown Reservoir at the Menunketsuk River.

Stream flow releases are planned releases of a prescribed volume of water from reservoirs into the downstream waters to support ecosystems. The releases balance the needs of human use of water for public water supply for drinking and domestic purposes, fire and public safety, irrigation, businesses and industry with those of fish, wildlife and other biota that also rely upon the availability of water to sustain healthy, natural communities. Early adoption of required stream flow release requirements means that beginning this fall the rivers downstream of our Shenipsit and Kelseytown reservoirs will more closely mimic natural flow conditions that will support a thriving habitat.

Maureen Westbrook, president of Connecticut Water said, “The Company felt this was a meaningful way to demonstrate our ongoing efforts to meet the needs of providing safe reliable water for our customers and communities while serving the environment and preserving the water resources in the state.” In addition, the company has been conducting aggressive leak detection programs to reduce lost water in its systems and recently received approval from the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority for rates that are designed to promote water conservation as well as discounted rates for income eligible customers.

Stream flow release regulations were developed following a lengthy stakeholder review process that sought to ensure that the release requirements provided the necessary balance for public water supply and environmental needs. Following adoption of the regulations, Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) established stream flow classifications across the state to indicate which bodies of water are subject to releases, and at what levels. In the event that drought may cause concerns for the amount of water available for the public water supply, stream flow release plan alterations have been developed.

While the Shenipsit Lake Reservoir (Vernon, Tolland, and Ellington) and Kelseytown Reservoir (Clinton) have already implemented their release plans, Connecticut Water will be making similar releases at some of its other surface water supply sources in the coming years.

More information on DEEP’s Stream Flow Standards can be found here: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Water/Stream-Flow-Standards/Connecticut-Stream-Flow-Standards>

About Connecticut Water Company: Connecticut Water is a public water and wastewater utility regulated by the Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority that provides water service to more than 350,000 people in 60 Connecticut communities and wastewater service to 10,000 people in Southbury, Connecticut.

The towns served are Ashford, Avon, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Bolton, Brooklyn, Burlington, Canton, Chester, Clinton, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, Deep River, Durham, East Granby, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Essex, Farmington, Griswold, Guilford, Haddam, Hebron, Killingly, Killingworth, Lebanon, Madison, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Oxford, Plainfield, Plymouth, Portland, Prospect, Simsbury, Somers, South Windsor, Southbury, Stafford, Stonington, Suffield, Thomaston, Thompson, Tolland, Vernon, Voluntown, Waterbury, Westbrook, Willington, Windsor Locks and Woodstock.

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