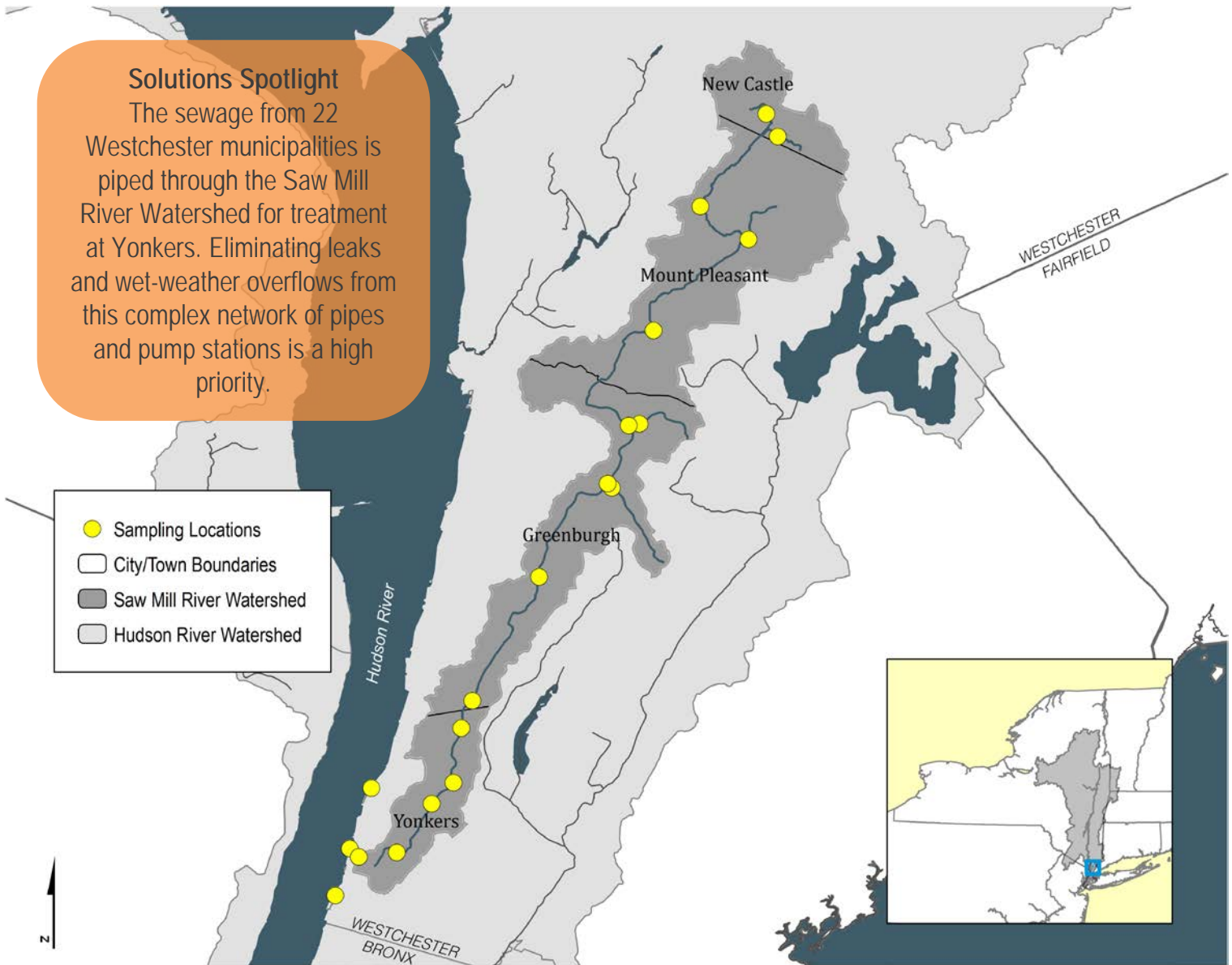


# SAW MILL RIVER

Community Water Quality Monitoring Results

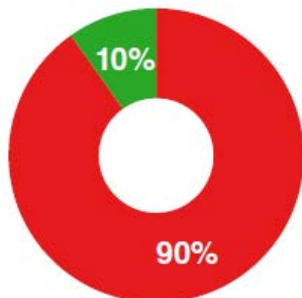
2015-2018



## What the Data Show

What portion of samples were safe for swimming?

Only 10% of samples collected at non-tidal sites met the EPA guideline for safe swimming.

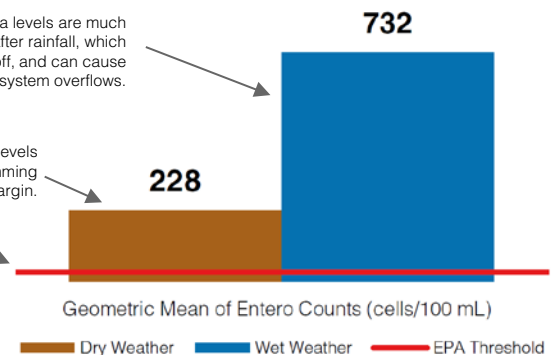


How high were the bacteria levels?

Bacteria levels are much greater after rainfall, which causes runoff, and can cause wastewater system overflows.

Even in dry weather, levels exceed the safe swimming threshold by a wide margin.

This is the level that the EPA recommends for swimmable water.



More: Explore a watershed map, data from each sampling site, year-to-year patterns and other info at [riverkeeper.org/water-quality/citizen-data/saw-mill-river](http://riverkeeper.org/water-quality/citizen-data/saw-mill-river).

## Community Science

The water quality data presented here are based on an analysis of 805 samples collected since 2015 by the Sarah Lawrence College Center for the Urban River at Beczak (CURB), our partners, and watershed residents. Samples are collected twice per month, May to October, and processed by CURB. To get involved, contact Ryan Palmer at rpalmer@sarahlawrence.edu.

## About the Saw Mill River

No, it's not just a Parkway! The Saw Mill River and its tributaries have been damaged by decades of channelizing, rerouting, and paving over, but in the City of Yonkers the river is getting new life thanks to a series of "daylighting" restoration projects.

### Why We Measure Bacteria

Fecal indicator bacteria such as *Enterococcus* ("Entero") usually do not make us sick. But because they live in the guts of warm-blooded animals, when these bacteria are present in water, pathogens that can make us sick may also be present.

Sources of fecal bacteria may include sewer overflows and failures, inade-

quate sewage treatment, urban or farm runoff, septic system failures, wildlife and contaminated sediment.

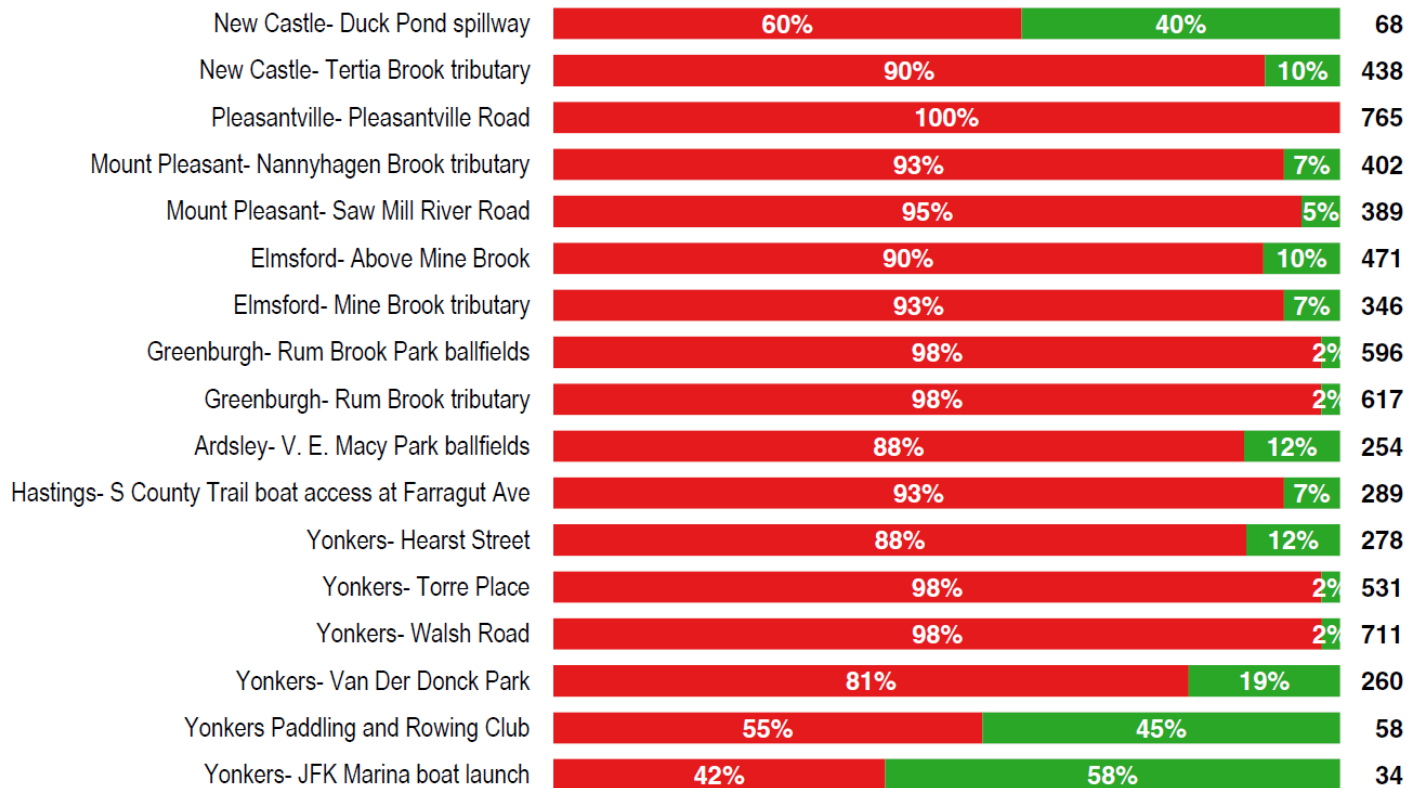
While research continues, the EPA has set thresholds to define if water is safe for swimming based on decades of science relying on measurements of these bacteria. Data are shown in Entero cells per 100 mL.

## Signs of Progress

CURB has partnered with Groundwork Hudson Valley to revive the Saw Mill River Coalition's presence in the watershed, and with Riverkeeper and others in the Lower Hudson Urban Waters Collaborative to advocate for better watershed management practices in the region, including a county-led watershed plan for the Saw Mill River.

What portion of samples at each site were acceptable for swimming? EPA threshold: single sample should not exceed 60

How high were bacterial levels? EPA threshold: GM\* should not exceed 30



■ % of Samples Unacceptable    ■ % of Samples Acceptable

\*The geometric mean (GM) is a weighted average of all samples.