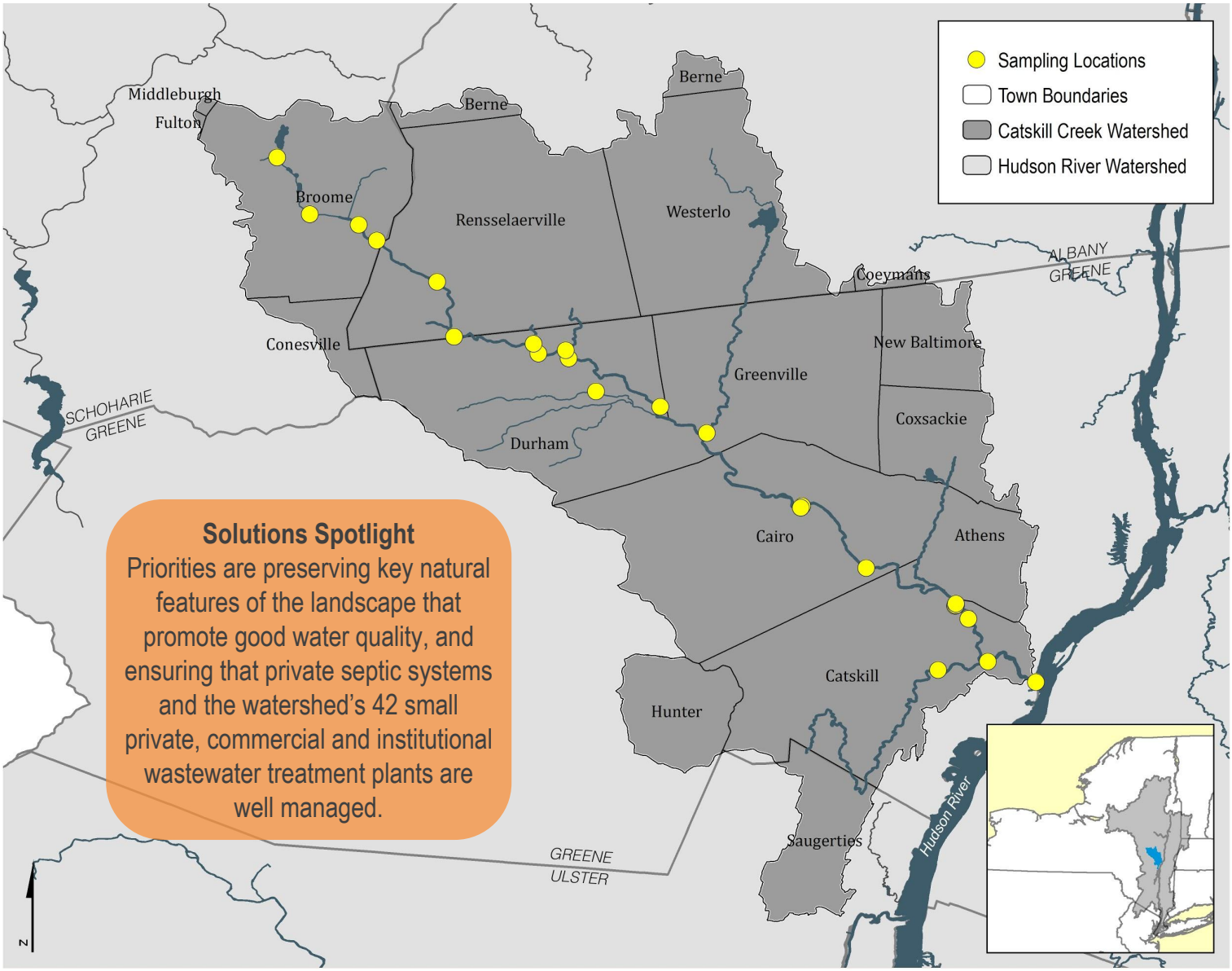
CATSKILL CREEK

Community Water Quality Monitoring Results 2011-2019



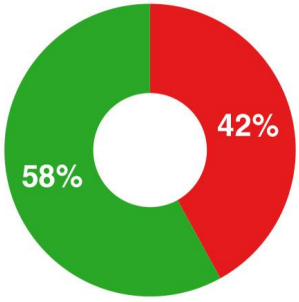
Solutions Spotlight

Priorities are preserving key natural features of the landscape that promote good water quality, and ensuring that private septic systems and the watershed's 42 small private, commercial and institutional wastewater treatment plants are well managed.

What the Data Show

What portion of samples were safe for swimming?

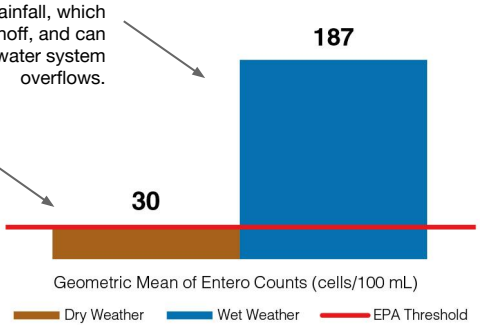
Nearly two-thirds of samples collected at non-tidal sites met the EPA guideline for safe swimming.



How high were the bacteria levels?

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

Average bacterial levels from samples collected during dry weather just meet the EPA threshold for swimmable water. However, conditions vary from place to place and time to time.



More: Explore a watershed map, data from each sampling site, year-to-year patterns and more at riverkeeper.org/water-quality/citizen-data/catskill-creek-watershed

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Community Science

The water quality data presented here are based on an analysis of 791 samples collected since 2012 by community scientists and the Catskill Creek Watershed Awareness Project. Samples are collected monthly (May to October) and processed by Riverkeeper. To get involved, contact Sebastian Pillitteri at spillitteri@riverkeeper.org.

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

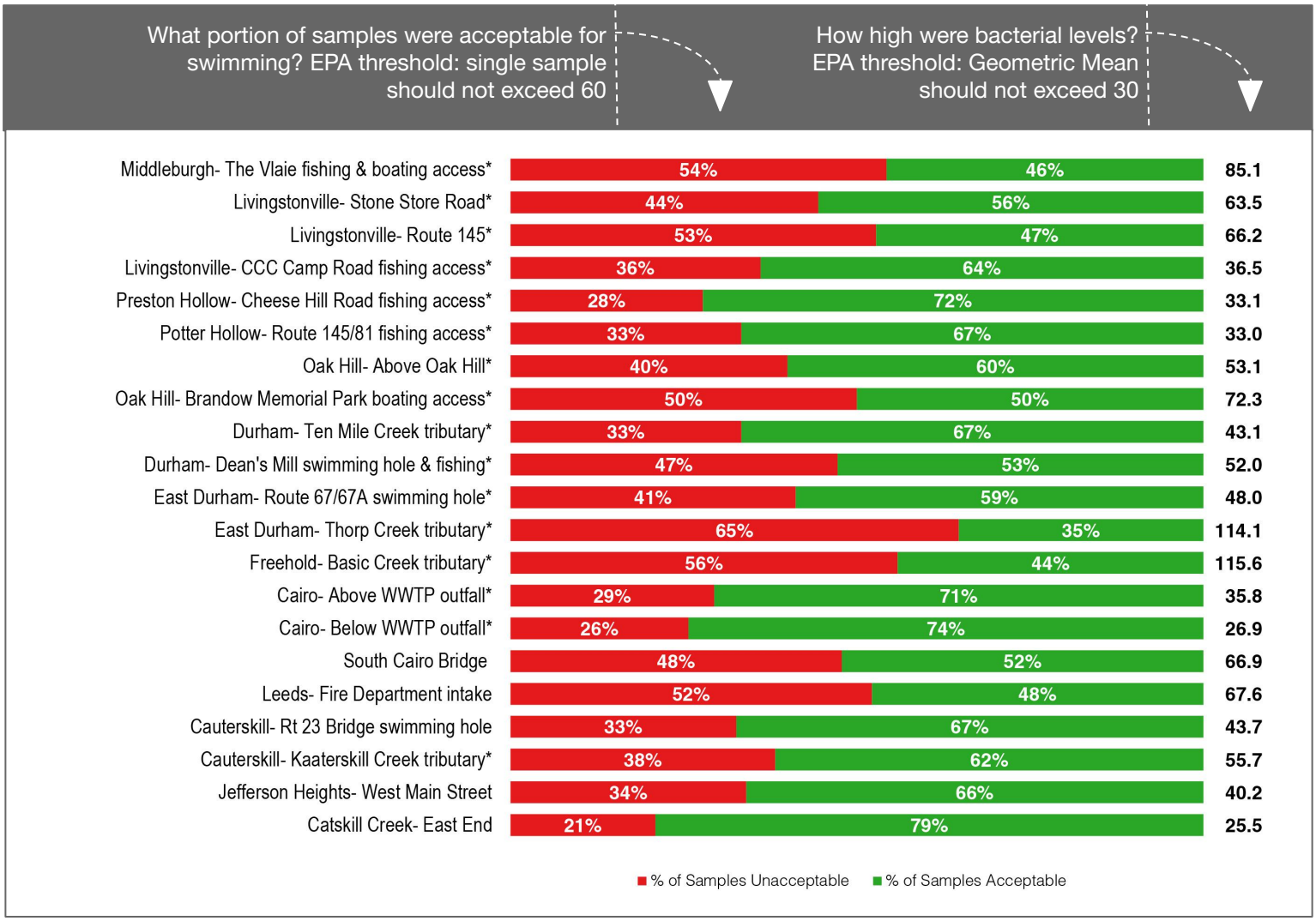
While research continues, the EPA has set thresholds to define if water is safe for swimming based on decades of science relying on measurements of these bacteria. Data are shown in Entero cells per 100 mL.

About the Catskill Creek

Forest and agriculture cover much of the Catskill Creek watershed, with most of the urban development in the watershed's lower section. The creek has several popular swimming holes and fishing spots along its course.

Signs of Progress

A Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) was completed for Greene County in 2019--the county's first ever. Much of the Catskill Creek watershed lies in Greene County and the document maps important stream habitats and features, and documents impacts on water quality, including septic systems.



*Sampling at these sites began in 2014.