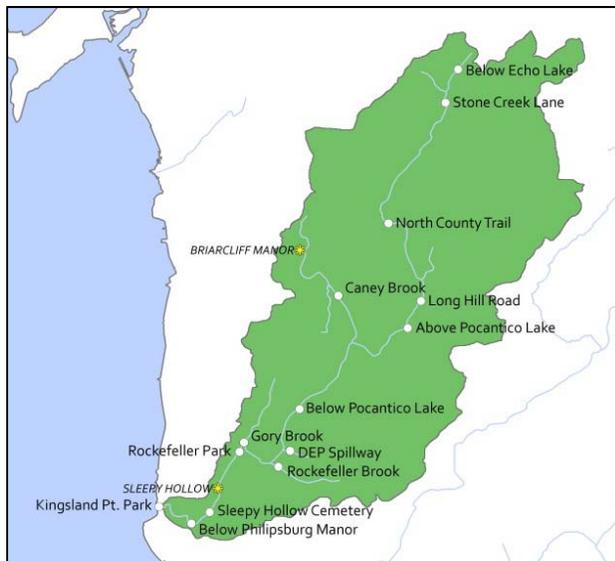


Pocantico River

Community Water Quality Monitoring Results, 2010-17



Who Is Testing the Water?

Riverkeeper and our partners have sampled over 450 locations throughout the Hudson River Estuary and its watershed. Riverkeeper and community scientists have tested the water in the Pocantico River since 2010, and have partnered with the Sarah Lawrence Center for the Urban River at Bezzak (CURB) since 2015. This work is made possible by funders including the Environmental Protection Agency Small Urban Grants Program, the NYS Environmental Protection Fund through the Hudson River Estuary Program of NYSDEC, Westchester Community Foundation, and Riverkeeper members.

Why Test for Fecal Contamination?

People should be able to get into the water for swimming, boating, playing and wading, and they need

to know if it is safe to do so. If untreated waste is present in the water, there is a greater chance that pathogens may be present, and a greater chance that contact with the water will make us sick. Sources of fecal contamination may include combined sewer overflows, sewage infrastructure failures, inadequate sewage treatment, urban runoff, septic system failures, agricultural runoff, and wildlife.

What Is *Enterococcus*?

Enterococcus (“Entero”) is a type of bacteria that lives in the guts of humans and other animals. The Entero commonly found in the environment usually does not make people sick. It is an indicator of fecal contamination, similar to coliforms and *E. coli*. To reduce risk of illness from exposure to fecal contamination, the EPA’s Recreational Water Quality Criteria include three thresholds for the concentration of Entero in water that should not be exceeded. Two thresholds are presented here: the Beach Action Value (BAV), a threshold for each sample of water; and the Geometric Mean (GM), a threshold for the weighted average of many samples. Both are measured in Entero cells per 100 mL of water. Single samples should not exceed the BAV of 60 and the geometric mean (“average”) of samples should not exceed the GM of 30.

Pocantico Watershed Water Quality Snapshot

Pocantico Watershed community scientists have collected 627 routine monitoring samples (once per month from May to October) to date. Results from the non-tidal portion of the creek are presented below. Our study is designed to learn about broad trends. The data can help inform choices about recreation, but cannot predict future water quality at any particular time and place.



| EPA GM Threshold | Pocantico River GM |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 30 | 361 |

Pocantico Watershed Wastewater Infrastructure Snapshot

The Pocantico River reaches the Hudson River at the Village of Sleepy Hollow. Much of the watershed falls within the service area of the Yonkers Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant, located near the mouth of the Saw Mill River. This plant serves over 500,000 people living in 22 municipalities in southwestern Westchester County, and accounts for nearly 35% of the average daily effluent discharge to the Hudson River. That plant's infrastructure characteristics and needs are summarized below. Each municipality owns and maintains its own collection system; the extent, age and investment needs for collection systems are not well known.

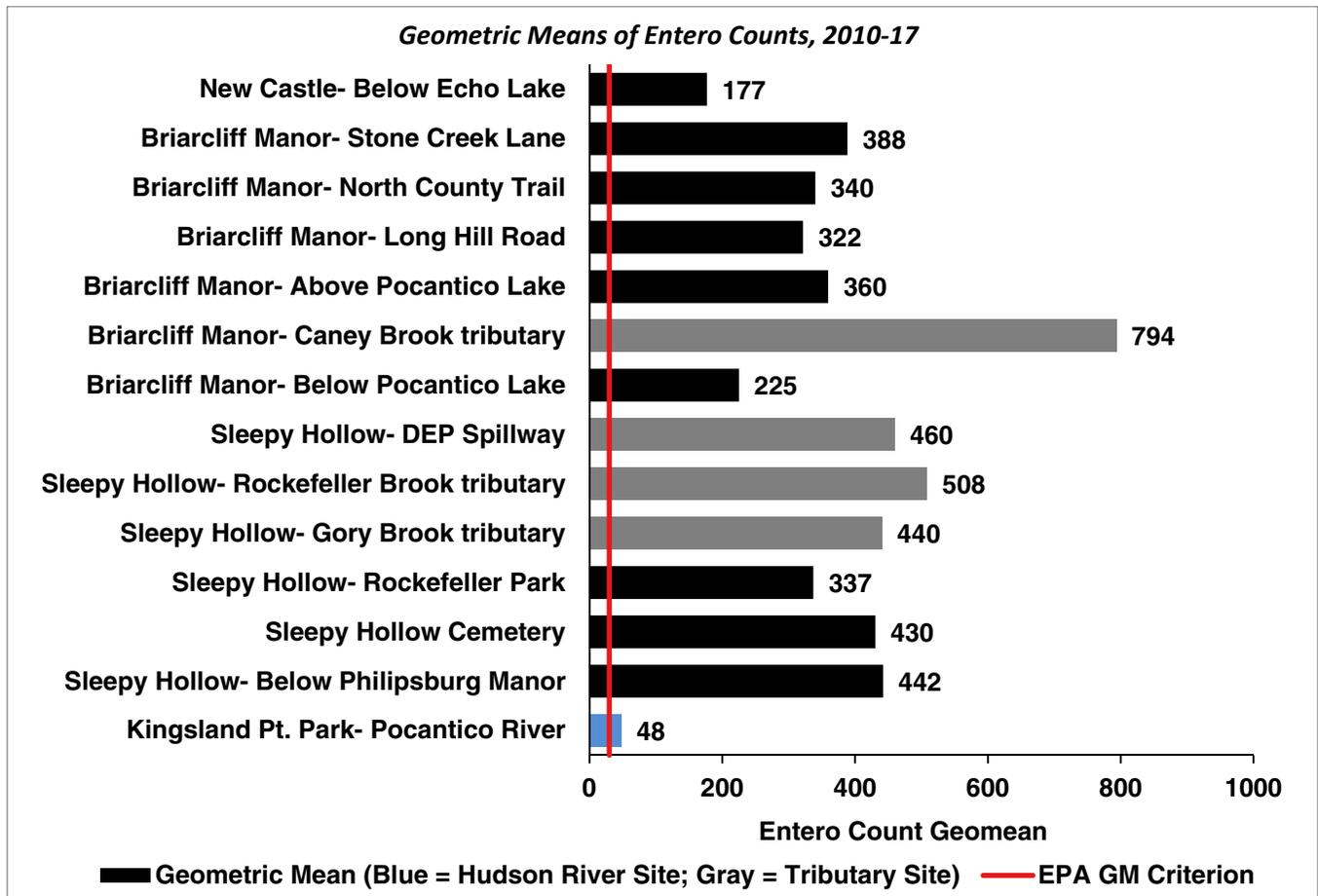
\$141 Million in needs

1 public wastewater treatment facility

25 miles of pipes

60 average pipe age

How's the Water in the Pocantico River?



What Can We Do with This Information?

Average Entero counts at all Pocantico River sampling sites exceed the EPA threshold of 30 cells/100 mL and there is not much variation along the river. Municipalities and homeowners should take any steps they can, anywhere they can, to reduce fecal contamination. The sampling results also show that Entero counts are higher after rain (data not shown). This pattern points toward some specific practices to improve water quality: repairing wastewater infrastructure to prevent leaks and spills and reducing stormwater runoff by restoring stream buffers and installing green infrastructure.

To see all the results visit riverkeeper.org/water-quality/citizen-data/pocantico-river.