

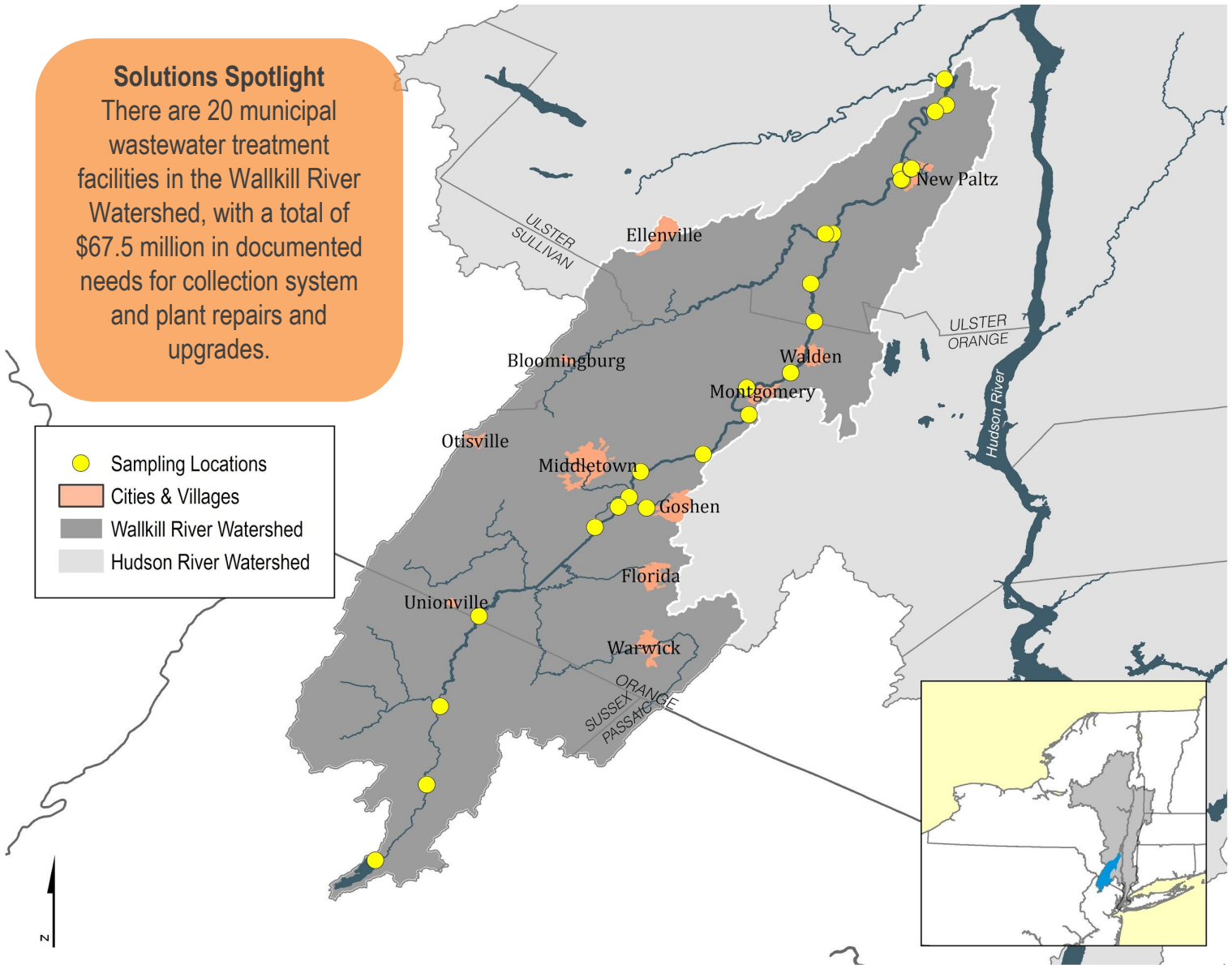
WALLKILL RIVER

Community Water Quality Monitoring Results

2012-2018

Solutions Spotlight

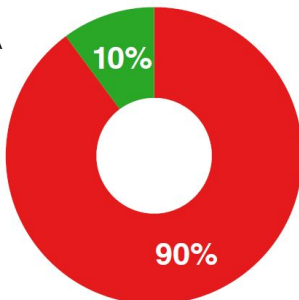
There are 20 municipal wastewater treatment facilities in the Wallkill River Watershed, with a total of \$67.5 million in documented needs for collection system and plant repairs and upgrades.



What the Data Show

What portion of samples were safe for swimming?

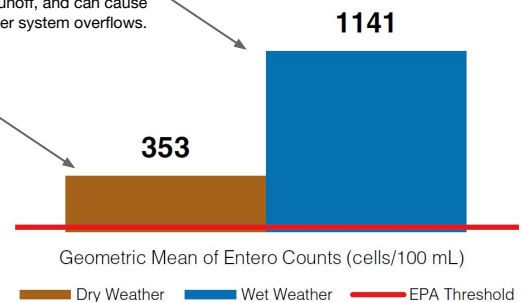
Only 10% of samples collected met the EPA guideline for safe swimming.



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 more than 10 times.



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



Community Science

The water quality data presented here are based on an analysis of 937 samples collected since 2012 by Gardiner and Montgomery CAC members and watershed residents. 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* (“Enter”) 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.

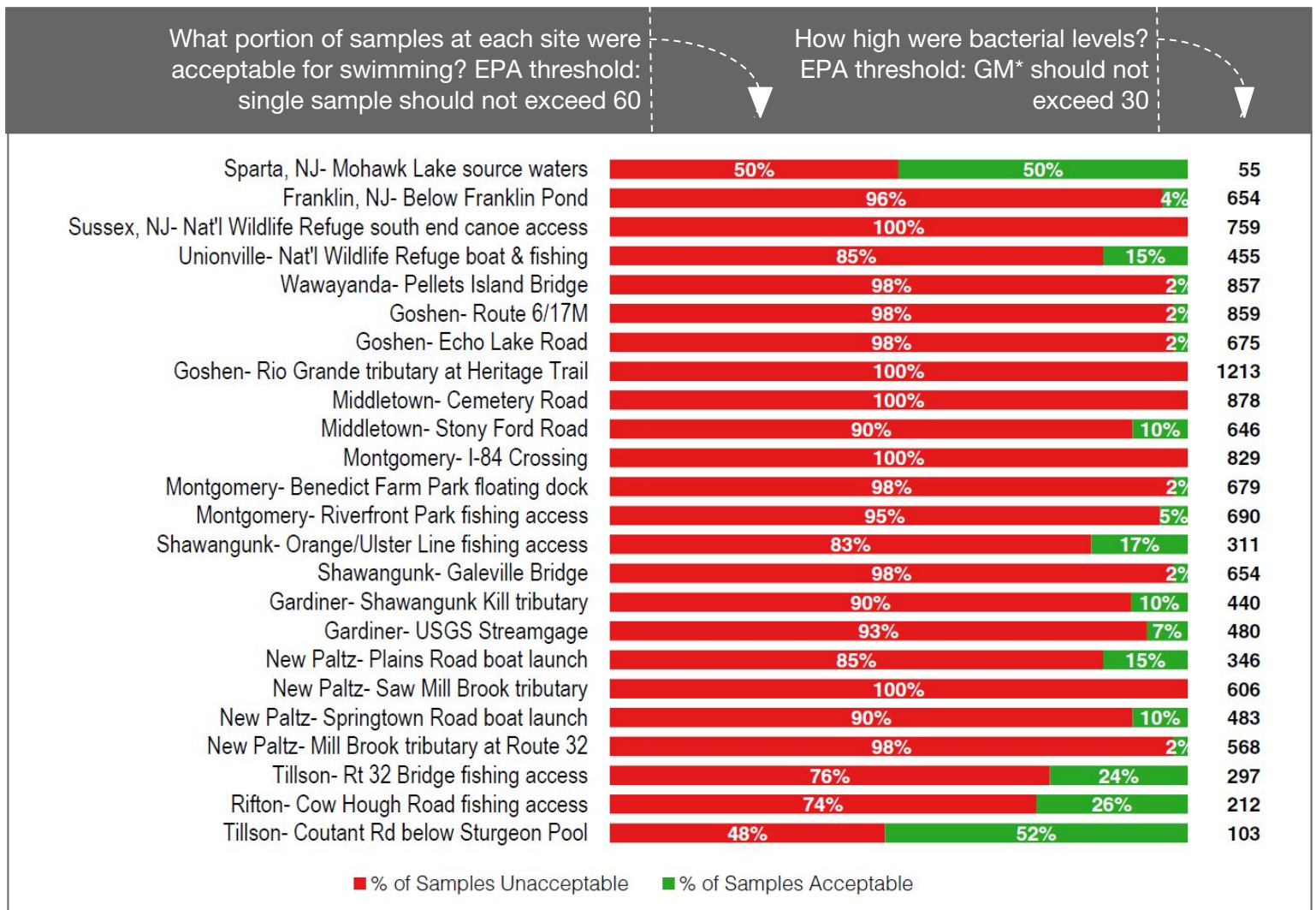
While research continues, the EPA has set thresholds to define if water is safe for swimming based on decades of science relying on measurements of these bacteria. Data are shown in Enterococcus cells per 100 mL.

A Little About the Wallkill River

One of the largest tributaries to the Hudson, the Wallkill is home to the New Paltz Regatta, a singular wacky boat race, and a haven for paddlers and anglers.

Signs of Progress

A citizens group, the Wallkill River Watershed Alliance, is dedicated to the river’s restoration. A water trail is in development. In 2018, state and local governments committed to investing \$36 million to improve wastewater infrastructure. The Department of Environmental Conservation has completed an enhanced water quality monitoring project.



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