
Litchfield County Times

Source to Sound paddle trip traces Housatonic's path

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Trip leaders from left are David Sinish, Dennis Regan and Schuyler Thomson.
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HOUSATONIC >> To commemorate its 75th Anniversary and celebrate the many partners who protect the river, the Housatonic Valley Association is hosting the Housatonic River Adventure, a 10-day Source to Sound paddle trip, from April 22 to May 1.

The paddle trip and series of riverside celebrations will follow the Housatonic River from its source in the Massachusetts Berkshires through Connecticut to Long Island Sound, a journey of 149 miles. Led by three expert canoe guides, people of all ages will paddle for a couple of hours, or a couple of days or for the entire journey.

Trip leaders are David Sinish, an experienced kayak/canoe instructor, trip leader and former National Canoe Poling Champion; Dennis Regan, HVA's Berkshire Director, an avid paddler and advocate for the Housatonic River overseeing programs and projects that better manage and protect the watershed in Berkshire County; and Schuyler Thomson, owner of Thomson Canoe Works in Norfolk and former two-time national whitewater downriver canoe champion.

Celebrations and educational programs along the journey will connect thousands to the beautiful river that runs through the Berkshire and Connecticut communities. Many partner organizations from the surrounding watershed will join HVA for this historic river adventure.

Traveling down every navigable stretch of this 149-mile river, paddlers will maneuver the narrow channels at the source of the Housatonic at Muddy Pond in Washington Mass. high in the Berkshire Hills; meander through the fertile flood plains of Sheffield, Mass. and Canaan Conn.; negotiate rocky rapids in Cornwall; glide across lakes Lillinonah, Zoar and Housatonic; and test the tidal waters at Derby and Shelton to the journey's end at Long Island Sound in Milford and Stratford.

Trip sponsors so far include the NRD Trustees (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), Housatonic Heritage, Connecticut Community Foundation, FirstLight, National Iron Bank, Union Savings Bank, Center Subaru and Salisbury Bank.

Registration, required for paddling, can be done online starting March 1. For more information or to sponsor the trip, visit www.hvatoday.org.

HVA is uniquely dedicated to protecting the entire Housatonic River Watershed. The watershed includes about 2,000 square miles of land stretching from western Massachusetts through western Connecticut and eastern New York to Long Island Sound. HVA monitors water quality throughout the watershed, conducts educational programs, works to link preserved space with the Housatonic River Greenway of hiking and biking trails and uses computer mapping to help towns measure the impact and benefits of land use and development. HVA's offices are in Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut; South Lee, Massachusetts; and Wassaic, New York.