

# Black Creek Glass Eel Program at SUNY New Paltz

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**Purpose:** To work with the DEC to count glass eels as they enter the estuary at Black Creek in an effort to monitor populations which appear to be on the decline.

## ***Project Background from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Hudson River Estuary Program***

“The American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*), a migratory fish, (see full description for development below) is born in the Atlantic Ocean and enters estuaries like the Hudson River as tiny “glass eels” each spring. The species is in decline over much of its range, and baseline studies are needed for further management. Teams of scientists and students collect glass eels using net and trap devices on several creek mouths” including the Black Creek in Ulster County, NY. “The juvenile fish are counted, weighed, and released alive, and critical environmental data is observed, measured and recorded”.



## ***The Partnership with the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program***

Working with the NYSDEC in an important ecological study such as this involves students working closely with scientists and educators. It is not simply the catch and count of glass eels that is important here, but a myriad of other issues such as the Hudson River watershed, collaborations with local endeavors and students becoming actively involved in research and communication. Several examples of such partnerships include the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) project that we will utilize in our work (Finarelli, 1998; Rock & Lawless, 1997) and the Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN) project (Donahue, Lewis, Price & Schmidt, 1998). Similar activities can be identified with Forest Watch, Signals of Spring, and the Jason projects.