The Hartford Courant
HARTFORD, CONN.
D. 170,459 SUN. 219,365

MAR 14 1976

State Seen With Clean Rivers

By TERESE KARMEL

STORRS — State residents can expect most of their streams and rivers to be "aesthetically pleasing" and fit for recreation within the next four to five years, predicts the chairman of the New England River Basins Commission.

And, says Frank Gregg, the state is ahead of many others in its efforts to eliminate pollution from waterways because of ambitious efforts on the part of pollution-control officials.

Gregg said the state is nearing completion of secondary sewage treatment plants that will eliminate 85 per cent of water pollution by 1978. He added there are steps towns can take to wipe out the remaining 15 per cent.

These remaining problems include nutrients which contribute to algae growth, pollution that runs off the land and chemical pollutants such as polychlorinated biphenyls, known as PCB, he said.

Gregg was in Storrs Thursday and Friday for a two-day workshop on river management research needs sponsored by the University of Connecticut.

"Federal money is now flow fairly generously" for pollution control, he said, which could help smaller communities that are strapped fiscally.

Some problems, such as the PCBs will require extensive research and treatment efforts, he said.

He suggested industries be required to evaluate the environmental effects of a potential chemical pollutant before using it, in the same way the federal government inspects health aspects of a new food before it goes on the market.

Existing antipollution legislation could deal effectively with the PCBs, but it will have to be enforced more stringently and companies will have to be pressured to follow through, he said.

PCBs have been linked to several diseases in animals and fish and to disfiguring skin ailments in humans who handle the toxic chemical.

Gregg also had news for Connecticut River salmon watchers, saying the fish now have gotten as far north as the Enfield dam.

A southern Vermont dam is blocking the fish for swimming upstream, Gregg said, but a utility company has agreed to built a "fish ladder" so the salmon can continue their trek. The ladder orginally was to be completed about now, but financial problems will delay the project for two years, he said.

MONS 037135