

# CASTINGS

Winter

Newsletter of the Maine Council - Atlantic Salmon Federation

2009-2010

## Little River Dam Removal Completed

By John Burrows

In late September, the only dam on the Little River, a tributary of the lower Androscoggin River between Topsham and Lisbon, was removed. This dam blocked the Little River for near a century and its removal restored access to more than 40 miles of river for endangered Atlantic salmon, American eel, sea lamprey and brook trout.

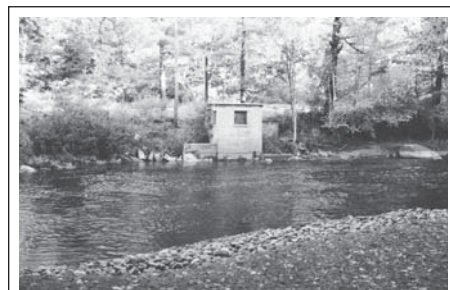
The removal of the Little River Dam was the first proactive dam removal in the Androscoggin watershed and an important milestone in the effort of restoring the river's ecology and native sea-run fish populations. The Little River offers the best Atlantic salmon spawning and rearing habitat in the entire Lower Androscoggin River watershed. The mainstem of the Androscoggin has poor habitat and all significant tributaries from the river's head-of-tide upstream to above Lewiston and Auburn are heavily dammed.

"I was born near a lovely stream...one of the major rivers in Maine: the Androscoggin. And years ago it used to be a stream where the great Atlantic [S]almon could be caught. And as they disappeared, lesser fish... until in my boyhood you couldn't catch anything else except the grubbiest of fish."

~ Sen. Edmund S. Muskie



Little River Dam Before



Little River Dam After

Historically, the Androscoggin had one of New England's largest salmon populations with an annual run exceeding 50,000 adults, but in recent decades the number of returning salmon has ranged from a couple of fish to a few dozen. The river's salmon population was listed as 'endangered' under the federal Endangered Species Act earlier this year, along with Atlantic salmon in the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers.

Neil Ward, Program Director of the Androscoggin River Alliance (ARA) and a project partner, was ecstatic about the dam's removal: "This is an exciting day for the citizens of the Androscoggin River Valley; it has been many generations since we could even dream of fishing for salmon in our river. But today we can dream again! My Great-Grandfather caught wild Atlantic salmon in this river as a young boy; now I can dream of a day when my Grandchildren or, Great-Grandchildren could some day fish for salmon in this river once again."

ASF and the ARA, along with the Maine Department of Marine Resources, intend to do fall redd counts and summer electrofishing surveys to document Atlantic salmon spawning and rearing in the Little River in coming years.

The total project cost for the removal was roughly \$80,000 and most of the funding came from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries. Private funding came from Patagonia, Inc., Orvis, Inc., the Orchard Foundation, and the Trout and Salmon Foundation.



The Maine Council of the Atlantic Salmon Federation is comprised of angling, conservation, education and watershed organizations from across the state that share a passion for protecting wild Atlantic salmon and its environment.



The Atlantic Salmon Federation is an international, nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the conservation and wise management of the wild Atlantic salmon and its environment.

Little River Dam cont.

Other project partners include the Androscoggin River Alliance, F.I.S.H., Maine Council-Atlantic Salmon Federation, Maine Department of Marine Resources, Miller Industries, Inc., Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment, Shaw Brothers Construction, Inc., and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.



## Diadromous Fish Restoration Researchers Collaborate and Look to the Future

By Erin Elizabeth Spencer

The humid air and the rumble of falling water greeted the garrulous scientists as they stepped off the school bus into the afternoon sun. The small park was quickly overshadowed by the obscured, yet arresting view of Veazie Dam, located at the head of tide on the Penobscot River. While a fixture of the landscape since 1910, the 258 m wide and 5.8 m high concrete structure is slated for removal in 2012. Great Works Dam, located a few miles north of Veazie, will be removed next year. The Penobscot River Restoration Plan also includes fish passage improvements at four additional dams. The plan will increase diadromous fish access to more than 1,000 additional miles of habitat. “This restoration effort began because of salmon,” Andy Goode, of the Atlantic Salmon Federation and Penobscot River Restoration Trust, reminded the group. The scientists were visiting restoration sites during a field trip which was part of the three-day Diadromous Species Restoration Research Network 2009 Science Meeting held at the University of Maine July 22-24. As the crowd of scientists from across the country moved back toward the bus, conversations quickly drowned out the noise from the river. The need for communication and collaboration among researchers was clear.

The Diadromous Species Restoration Research Network (DSRRN) is all about bringing scientists together. Housed at the University of Maine Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Environmental & Watershed Research, DSRRN is the brainchild of researchers David Hart (George Mitchell Center, University of Maine), Karen Wilson (University of Southern Maine), Adria Elskus (University of Maine) and Peter Vaux (George Mitchell Center, University of Maine). They are joined by watershed science specialist and science information coordinator, Barbara Arter (George Mitchell Center, University of Maine). Core partners in the project include representatives from the Penobscot Indian Nation, Maine

Department of Natural Resources, Boston College, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, The Nature Conservancy, Penobscot River Restoration Trust, NOAA Restoration Center Northeast Region, Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife, Department of Marine Resources, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and the Lower Penobscot Watershed Coalition.

The Network is funded by the National Science Foundation and aims to “advance the science of diadromous fish restoration, promote state-of-the-art scientific approaches to multiple-species restoration on a watershed scale, and facilitate interactions among scientists, managers, and stakeholders.” In one of its first steps to accomplish these goals, DSRRN hosted the July 2009 Science Meeting. Additional meetings will be held in 2010, 2011, and 2012. Concern about the declining status of diadromous species brought hundreds of scientists together, with expertise ranging from fisheries biology to geomorphology. Arter says, “We’re excited about this unique opportunity to bring together scientists and managers from across North America to study the migration, population status, and restoration of all diadromous species utilizing North Atlantic watersheds.” Although DSRRN’s mission is broadly focused on the North Atlantic region, its vision is enhanced through its involvement with the Penobscot River Restoration Project. As a part of the research and networking coordination for the Penobscot River restoration, DSRRN hopes to serve as a model for future restoration efforts around the world.

The science meeting began Wednesday evening with a presentation by George Pess, a NOAA fisheries biologist from Washington State. According to Pess, natural recolonization of diadromous species has been happening since the retreat of the Wisconsin Glacier some 110,000 to 10,000 years ago. Pess described the successful pink salmon recolonization in newly created habitat in Glacier Bay, Alaska. “But,” Pess noted, “the time scale of recolonization can vary from 5- 25 years”. For Pess, diadromous research big unknowns include questions such as: Are diadromous populations large enough to recover? Can you exploit diadromous populations at the same time you attempt to recover them? Pess ended his talk with a reminder “We don’t need to teach an ecosystem what to do. We just need to give it the opportunity to do it.”

It’s difficult to imagine a presentation at a restoration conference that examines diadromous fish populations without the ubiquitous influence of barriers, but Gerald Chaput’s presentation Thursday morning accomplished just that. Chaput, a fisheries biologist from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, (New Brunswick, Canada) presented

findings from his study of the Miramichi River, an unimpacted river in New Brunswick. “No river is truly unimpacted,” Chaput noted, “but the Miramichi is unique as it was never impacted by dams.” Chaput explained, “On the Penobscot there are approximately 116 dams, while on the Miramichi dams are absent”. The fifty years worth of data from the Miramichi River illustrate the benefits of habitat access. In this river, American eels, sea lamprey, alewives and Atlantic salmon inhabit a majority of the watershed with an upstream migration of approximately 160 km. Not surprisingly, the Miramichi River diadromous fisheries are generally intact, while the Penobscot River has few diadromous fisheries remaining. But, not all fisheries on the Miramichi are thriving. Despite a recent uptick in numbers, Atlantic salmon populations have declined over the past four decades. The reason for the decline in Atlantic salmon abundance remains unclear, but Chaput implied that harvest and ocean factors may have contributed to the decline.

Following Chaput’s talk, Margaret Palmer presented an urban perspective of the impacts of increased development on river ecosystem health. As a professor of biology and entomology from the University of Maryland, Palmer believes the current focus on in-stream restorations that attempt to mimic “natural-looking” habitat may be misdirected, since these efforts have in some cases damaged, rather than enhanced, biodiversity. Ultimately, these small, in-stream restorations that are often done in urban areas fail to address the real source of water impairment, which is the increasing urbanization that surrounds these streams. “Restoration is only one component of ecosystem based management” Palmer explained, and “The ultimate health of our rivers is linked to land use and increasing development.” For example, in her research, Palmer found that aquatic biodiversity decreased as the amount of human development increased. Palmer concluded, “Restoration science is failing and in order to address the cause of the failure, in this case development, major institutional change is essential.”

Humorous, accessible, and witty are not adjectives typically used to describe geomorphologists, but David Montgomery is different. Montgomery, a geomorphologist and professor from the University of Washington aptly awarded a McArthur Fellowship in 2008, researches how human modifications of river channels affects aquatic ecosystems. As a geologist, when Montgomery considers the state of salmon in the Pacific Northwest he looks back some 40 million years. During his Thursday morning presentation, Montgomery examined landscape changes, ranging from periods of glaciation to the extreme human development today. “What has happened

to salmon?” According to Montgomery, the answer lies in the landscape. Without landscapes that can support the salmon’s basic life-history requirements salmon colonization cannot occur. In line with this concept, the historic abundance of sockeye salmon in Alaskan waters has increased more than 100% percent, while Seattle area populations have significantly declined. The difference between the two populations is likely linked to levels of human development. Like Margaret Palmer, Montgomery pleads for changes in management and policy, “we have a choice, an ethical choice to make,” he concluded.

With intellect and appetite satiated, conference participants clamored Thursday afternoon onto buses for Penobscot River field trips. The buses headed off to explore separate parts of the Penobscot River watershed ranging from the headwaters to the Bay. Stops along the various trips included a visit to a newly constructed fish passage rock ramp, a view of the wintering sites for shortnose sturgeon, and stops at various restoration sites along Penobscot River tributaries. The buses traversed down winding back roads providing the restoration scientists plenty of time for talking, and planning.

This collaborative spirit continued into the final day of the conference when participants discussed the future of restoration research and identified critical research topics for future DSRRN workshops. Proposed topics ranged from improving communication between the public, managers and the scientific community, to creating universal protocols for restoration monitoring. Future workshops planned over the next three years aim to provide new direction for restoration science and scientific guidance for resource managers highlighted by synthetic publications of each topic. The DSRRN conference adjourned with fresh ideas, but most importantly, the conference ended with a more unified group of restoration scientists. We can only hope that the resonance of restoration scientists in conversation continues to overwhelm the roar of the dam.

For more information about DSRRN please contact the Science Information Coordinator at [barbara.s.arter@umit.maine.edu](mailto:barbara.s.arter@umit.maine.edu) or 207/581-3286 or visit the DSRRN website at <http://www.umaine.edu/searun-fish/>



# Penobscot River Restoration Project Update

By Cheryl Daigle

Partners in the Penobscot River Restoration Project continue to make rapid strides forward in their effort to restore Atlantic salmon, American shad, river herring, and seven other species of sea-run fish to the Penobscot watershed. In late June, the Penobscot Trust was awarded a \$6.1 million grant from the NOAA Restoration Center to fund removal of the Great Works dam, a key barrier to passage by salmon and all migratory fish, as well as scientific monitoring of the Penobscot River Restoration Project. The funding was provided to NOAA through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus Act), and followed a highly competitive process that considered over 800 proposals requesting nearly \$3 billion from this \$170 million federal funding opportunity. This federal award highlights the national significance of this unprecedented partnership to restore the Penobscot River's once-magnificent fisheries.

The Stimulus Act recognizes that investment in "green jobs" is both good for the economy and the environment. Work to deconstruct the Great Works dam, combined with pre-dam removal scientific monitoring, will yield nearly \$5 million in jobs for the region and is expected to employ nearly 155 people in restoration-related engineering and heavy construction jobs (the equivalent of 38 annualized jobs). The work, over a 24-month project period, will create jobs for construction workers, technical experts such as engineers and hydrologists, work for local businesses such as nurseries and contractors, as well as jobs related to scientific monitoring. A portion of the NOAA Restoration Center award, \$1.3 million, supports a significant monitoring effort to document pre-project baseline physical and biological conditions for the entire Penobscot Project. This funding will be used to coordinate and investigate pre-dam removal river conditions such as the physical characteristics of habitat; water quality; wetland & riparian community; fish passage; fish diversity and abundance; and ecosystem function. The Penobscot Trust recently hired Dr. Blaine Kopp to oversee the 18-month monitoring effort.

In other federal funding news, the Town of Howland, in partnership with the Penobscot Trust, was awarded \$600,000 through EPA's Brownfield Grants in May to continue cleanup at the Howland Tannery site adjacent to where the Trust will build a fish bypass at the Howland Dam.

The permitting process overseen by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) continues moving

forward. In August, FERC released their Draft Environmental Analysis, through which FERC staff recommended that the project, including surrender of all three licenses, removal of Great Works and Veazie Dams, and construction of the bypass channel at Howland, ought to be approved as the Trust requested, with only a few very minor staff recommendations. The public comment period ended on September 3rd with overwhelming support for permit approval. The US Army Corps of Engineers opened a public comment period on the Trust's application in September, which closed on October 15<sup>th</sup>. A similar comment period on the Trust's application to Maine DEP is expected soon. Please check the Penobscot Trust web site ([www.penobscotrriver.org](http://www.penobscotrriver.org)) periodically for information on the permitting process underway with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other project updates.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Penobscot River Revival festival was a success this past July with over 500 people attending and increased participation by conservation and environmental education groups, musicians, and local vendors. A number of other events along the river provided ample opportunity for Penobscot Trust staff and volunteers to interact with community members and to keep people informed about project happenings. The media continues to pay attention to the good work of project partners. Recent radio, television, and print news reported on electrofishing that is being conducted in the Penobscot River to document the current diversity and abundance of fish species in different sections of the river at different times of the year, all part of pre-dam removal science monitoring conducted by the Penobscot Trust, University of Maine researchers, and other partners. All recent news and editorials can be found on the project web site [Media pages](#)

New online materials include an audio-taped interview with Ted Ames of the Stonington Fishermen's Alliance and Penobscot East Resource Center as he discusses the community benefits of sea-run fish restoration, with a particular emphasis on coastal communities and commercial fishing. The Trust also added a short video of striped bass herding and feeding on juvenile alewives leaving Webber Pond in the Kennebec watershed, courtesy of Maine Department of Marine Resources (you can link to this from the home page by clicking on "Alewife Videos"). More multi-media materials will be posted in coming months, including video clips of community members sharing their connections to the river, support for restoring sea-run fish, and hopes for the future. If you are a Twitter user, you can keep up-to-date on the project by following community outreach coordinator Cheryl

Daigle at [www.twitter.com/loverivers](http://www.twitter.com/loverivers). A “Share This” button has also been added to the top of web site pages to facilitate sharing the good news about the project with others online.



## Reestablishing Habitat Connectivity One Road-Stream Crossing at a Time

Project SHARE puts \$1.7 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding on-the-ground.

By Katrina Mueller

This summer, Project SHARE (Salmon Habitat and River Enhancement) began putting \$1.7 million in federal stimulus money on-the-ground to reconnect headwater tributaries of the Machias River. SHARE was one of only two conservation organizations in Maine and 50 nationwide to receive funding for shovel-ready coastal habitat restoration projects through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) via the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Specifically, with local contractors and a cadre of student volunteers and interns, SHARE will be removing or replacing over 50 undersized and/or perched round culverts with open-bottom arched culverts over the next 18 months. This will help re-establish fish passage to over 60 miles of habitat and natural stream function at each site. An influx of stimulus funding into the Downeast Maine region with the hiring of local contractors will have a positive local economic impact, as well as engage and provide training and learning opportunities for students and professionals in on-the-ground aspects of habitat restoration, including assessment and monitoring.

### Why are road-stream crossings important?

That road networks are ubiquitous and can have a negative effect on our rivers and streams is well-known. In fact, the National Research Council has ranked roads and their associated poorly-designed stream crossings second only to main-stem dams as the most significant impediment to salmon recovery. Streams are dynamic, with variable flows and movement of sediment, leaves, and branches that contribute to the character of the streambed and channel. Most road-stream crossings are designed to simply move water under the road through a culvert or bridge and fail to take into account this dynamism. As a result, culverts are frequently placed too high and are undersized, pinching streams and disrupting their natural behavior. This can result in a cascade of physical and biological changes including the creation of barriers

to fish passage through hanging outfalls and excessive or insufficient velocity and flow, warmer water temperatures caused by dead waters upstream, and disturbances to the stream’s natural nutrient, sediment and wood transport regimes.

At each site SHARE will be tackling, the width of new crossings are designed to be 1.2 times bankfull width to accommodate high flows and culverts are set at an elevation determined during assessment that eliminates backwaters and prevents scouring. This “stream simulation” design technique has been used by SHARE to complete past projects, and offers the best available method to provide unimpeded passage for aquatic organisms, promote better transport of sediments and large woody material, minimize culvert failure risk, and diminish road maintenance costs over time.

While each region has its own road history, the development of Downeast’s extensive road system coincided with the end of the log drive era and began with construction of the Studmill Road in 1970. This was followed by roughly 150 miles of commercial forest gravel roads per year for approximately the next 15 years. Because corporate landowners were aware of the significance of salmon habitat in main-stems and larger tributaries, the road network was designed to run parallel to these tributaries; road crossings of these waters were kept to a minimum and primarily consisted of bridges with minimal impact to fish passage. However, this resulted in the crossing of virtually all 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order streams, relatively close to their confluence with larger tributaries.

Although adult Atlantic salmon may not directly utilize these smaller headwaters for spawning, electrofishing surveys have recorded young-of-the-year and parr several miles upstream of spawning and stocking locations. In fact, preliminary coordination with the Department of Marine Resources Bureau of Sea-Run Fisheries and Habitat and US Fish and Wildlife Service stocking efforts suggests that Atlantic salmon can successfully be reintroduced to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order streams once connectivity has been restored. A new partnership with the University of Maine at Orono will result in the monitoring of the fish response to these road-stream crossing restoration activities as part of this stimulus project.

Headwaters streams are also significant in that they provide cold water refugia, rearing habitat, and movement corridors; deliver sediments, nutrients, organic matter, and wood from upper portions of the drainage; moderate temperature regimes; and support reliable food sources (drifting aquatic insects) utilized by juvenile

Project SHARE, cont. on page 6

Project SHARE, cont.

salmon during the stressful summer months. Likewise, disruptions caused by road-stream crossings can affect all freshwater life stages of salmon, from egg incubation to territorial rearing of parr to adults seeking cold-water refugia prior to and following spawning. Any one of a wide variety of habitats available to Atlantic salmon at a watershed, sub-watershed or reach scale can provide vital resources necessary for completion of its various life stages. Juveniles in particular can be found throughout an entire watershed, and the recent federal rule to designate critical habitat in the expanded range of the Gulf of Maine distinct population segment of Atlantic salmon indicates that all perennial streams, regardless of size, support features essential to the conservation of the species.

### Why the Machias River?

Since 2005, SHARE has focused its on-the-ground restoration activities around restoring all sites on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> order perennial streams causing connectivity issues (i.e. breaks in the links between Atlantic salmon life cycle requirements and habitat/food resources) within high priority tributary systems draining the Machias River. A combination of already-in-place protections and conservation easements in and along the mainstem, relatively high habitat integrity and security from future threats, and landowner commitments to reduce the number of new crossings and improve those crossings still in use are beneficial from a long-term restoration standpoint.

Additionally, a recent designation of critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act uses three Salmon Habitat Recovery Units, or SHRUs, to provide a geographical framework that ensures a wide distribution of Atlantic salmon across the DPS and capacity within those units to weather a downturn in survival. The Downeast Coastal SHRU has its own unique geology, water chemistry, climate, hydrology, and anthropogenic influences. Six watersheds in the Downeast Coastal SHRU are managed actively for Atlantic salmon and have substantial Atlantic salmon production potential. Of these, the Machias, Narraguagus and East Machias Rivers account for approximately 40% of the spawning and rearing habitat Downeast, with the Machias containing approximately 28% of the occupied habitat and approximately 34% of the functional equivalent.

### The bigger picture

Clearly, roads can have vast implications for the quality and quantity of aquatic habitat and the species that depend on that habitat when stream ecology and

hydrology is not incorporated into crossing designs. There is a statewide need to improve the ability of road-stream crossings to better accommodate our streams and native fish populations. There are literally thousands of crossings that create barriers to migration and alter the environmental features to which our native species are adapted. There are also long-term benefits from a road maintenance standpoint as arched culverts designed with our streams in mind can accommodate their high flows that can cause catastrophic wash outs and are expected to last 75 years.

Please feel free to email us at [ProjectSHARE94@gmail.com](mailto:ProjectSHARE94@gmail.com).



## INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION ASKED TO ORDER ALEWIFE PASSAGE ON THE ST. CROIX

After 14 years of often raucous debate and political stalemating in Augusta, the St. Croix alewife controversy has entered a new arena, that of the International Joint Commission (IJC). On March 18, 2009, the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF), Maine Rivers, and the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM), filed petitions with the IJC offices in Washington, D.C. and Ottawa, Canada seeking to re-open fish passage for alewives at dams on the St. Croix River.

The St. Croix forms the international boundary between the State of Maine in the United States and the Province of New Brunswick in Canada. As such, the waters and fish and wildlife resources of the St. Croix are shared by the citizens of both nations. It has long been a sore point among advocates for alewife restoration on both sides of the international border that the State of Maine imposed its own will unilaterally on a resource which is significant not only to Maine, but also to New Brunswick, and to the federal governments of both Canada and the United States.

In 1909, the United States and Canada entered into the Boundary Waters Treaty, establishing the IJC to address boundary water issues. Most of the dams on the St. Croix River are under the jurisdiction of the IJC, and the IJC issues orders establishing water levels, minimum flows, and fish passage.

The petition, prepared pro bono publico by Attorney Charles Owen Verrill, Jr. of the Washington D.C. law firm of Wiley Rein, sets out the history of the unilateral obstruction of alewives in the St. Croix River by the State of Maine.

It spells out the ecological importance of these fish. It outlines the jurisdiction of the IJC over the St. Croix dams, and IJC's authority to order fish passage. Lastly, the petition requests that the IJC undertake proceedings which will result in an order requiring that alewives be permitted to pass through the St. Croix River dams to their historic spawning grounds.

In addition to ASF, Maine Rivers and NRCM, 24 non-governmental organizations from the United States and another 24 non-governmental organizations from Canada have signed on in support of the petition. This strong showing of international support clearly demonstrates the concern that individuals and organizations from both sides of the border have about the situation on the St. Croix. The full text of the petition and list of signers-on may be seen on the ASF Website at [www.asf.ca/news.php?id=396](http://www.asf.ca/news.php?id=396)

On June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 the IJC held a public hearing at the historic railroad station in McAdam, New Brunswick, about 5 miles from the international border crossing at Vanceboro, Maine. Several dozen people from both Canada and the United States spoke to the IJC in favor of alewife restoration, and presented evidence as to the historic presence of alewives in the watershed and the fact that alewives present no threat to smallmouth bass. Proponents included environmental and conservation organizations, anglers and sporting groups, commercial fishermen, and first nations and tribal interests.

Only 2 opponents of alewife restoration spoke, and they presented no scientific or historic information.

Both the International St. Croix River Watershed Board, an advisory group created by the IJC, and the St. Croix International Waterway Commission, an agency created by compact between the State of Maine and Province of New Brunswick, have long advocated for alewife restoration in the waters of the St. Croix River and its headwater lakes.

On July 10, 2009, the Honorable Irene B. Brooks and The Right Honorable Herb Gray, respectively the United States and Canadian Chairs of the International Joint Commission, sent a letter to Maine Governor John Baldacci. The letter states, in part:

“The IJC has weighed the scientific evidence, has gauged public sentiment in the basin, and has concluded that anadromous alewife passage in the St. Croix River should be restored.”

The letter points out that while the IJC could proceed on its own, it seeks to work with the State of Maine in achieving the stated goal.

On August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Governor Baldacci replied to

the IJC in a letter detailing the efforts of the State of Maine to negotiate with the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkmikuk (Indian Township), and pointing out that those efforts had met with no success. He stated that the State would work with the IJC to achieve an agreement if possible, and ended by stating that:

“If an agreement is not reached, then I would assume the IJC would consider moving forward on its own to resolve a matter that has been in stalemate for some time.”

It should be noted that only Governor Nicholas of Passamaquoddy Tribe at Motahkmikuk (Indian Township) opposes alewife restoration in the St. Croix River and it is unclear whether he represents the official position of Indian Township or just himself. The Passamaquoddy Tribe at Sipayik (Pleasant Point) supports alewife restoration, as established by resolution on February 17, 2009, as does the Passamaquoddy Band located in New Brunswick. In addition, the Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission, by letter dated July 24, 2009 and signed by its chairman Paul Bisulca, strongly supports full alewife restoration to the St. Croix.

In recent weeks, there have been several closed-door meetings involving fisheries biologists from both sides of the border, certain tribal interests and IJC staff. The exact nature of these meetings is unknown, but we believe that the parties are negotiating an adaptive management plan that will allow limited alewife restoration into some waters above the Grand Falls Dam. ASF and our colleagues are extremely concerned that such a plan will set the number of alewives allowed upstream at an arbitrarily low number based not on the best available science but on political whim.

So, while it appears that things are moving in the right direction, much work remains to be done to ensure that alewives will have unrestricted passage by the spring 2010 spawning migration.

Staff from the ASF U.S. Office in Brunswick, Maine and the ASF headquarters office in St. Andrew's, New Brunswick have been working jointly on this issue, along with the Maine Council-ASF, the New Brunswick Salmon Council, and several ASF Directors, including Tom Benjamin, Buff Bohlen, and Bill Townsend.



**Atlantic Salmon Returns Since 2006**

<i>Watershed</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2006</i>
<i>Maine</i>				
Androscoggin	24	17	21	12
Aroostook	15	31	5	2
Dennys	8	8	3	4
Kennebec	24	22	16	15
Narraguagus	8	25	10	13
Penobscot	1,958	2,113	916	1,044
Saco	14	62	24	26
St. Croix	0	0	0	4
Sebasticook	4	--	--	--
Union	0	0	0	0
<i>New England</i>				
Connecticut	76	140	141	214
Merrimack	78	119	74	91

**SAVE THE DATES!!**

**Atlantic Salmon Research Forum: Atlantic Salmon and their Ecosystems**

**January 6 & 7, 2010**

(snow dates: January 7 & 8)

University of Maine

Wells Conference Center

FMI: sharon.maclean@noaa.gov

Phone: 401-782-3258

**Maine Council-ASF Annual Meeting**

**January 30, 2010, 10 am to 2 pm**

Eddington Salmon Club

Come here the latest news on Atlantic salmon conservation and enjoy a great meal!

FMI: asfjb@blazenetme.net

Phone: 207-725-2833

**Annual ASF-MC Dinner & Auction**

**Saturday, March 20, 2010**

Hilton Garden Inn - Freeport, ME

Registration 5:30

Silent Auction - Dinner - Live Auction

FMI: asfme@blazenetme.net

Phone: 758-2833

Please visit the Maine Council website at [www.maineCouncilasf.org](http://www.maineCouncilasf.org) for our electronic newsletter and for more information. We ask that you notify us by phone or email if you would like to be removed from our Castings mail list in lieu of the electronic copy on our website. This helps to save trees and mailing costs.

Contact Mary Jo Barrett at 207-725-2833 or

Email [asfme@blazenetme.net](mailto:asfme@blazenetme.net)



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