

HELP RESTORE MAINE'S GREAT RIVERS

The ENR Committee's Majority Report on LD 1979 eliminates the threat of the initial bill. It should be supported.

The health of Maine's rivers and sea-run fish is threatened by dams that block upstream and downstream migration.

- Atlantic salmon are on the edge of extinction in the United States. Their survival depends on reaching spawning areas on the Sandy River above Skowhegan, but their migration is blocked by dams on the lower Kennebec River. Other sea-run fish such as American shad, eels, and alewives are similarly impacted.
- Brookfield Renewable owns four of the most damaging dams in Maine and has failed to propose adequate fish passage measures at these dams for nearly a decade.
- Several harmful dams have already been removed from the Kennebec and Penobscot regions and enabled dramatically increased runs of sea-run fish, helped wildlife, generated recreational opportunities, and benefitted Maine's commercial fisheries.

LD 1979 initially aimed to limit the authority of Maine's natural resource agencies to make science-based recommendations about the environmental impacts of dams.

- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is currently developing an Environmental Impact Statement for Brookfield's four lower Kennebec dams, which could determine that the dams are harming endangered Atlantic salmon in violation of federal law.
- Maine needs to be a full participant in the FERC process and our natural resource agencies must retain authority to improve the health of Maine's rivers.
- Dam owners should not influence the Legislature to limit river restoration efforts, including dam removal where appropriate.



Photo © J. Monkman/NRCM

LD 1979 has been amended to direct Maine's Department of Environmental Protection to evaluate the current process for comprehensive river resource management plans.

It no longer undermines river restoration efforts.

- LD 1979 was initially a DEFENSIVE PRIORITY of Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition, meaning that the environmental community called on lawmakers to reject the bill.
- As amended, LD 1979 no longer undermines river restoration efforts and should be SUPPORTED.
- Maine has strategically removed a limited number of small, damaging hydropower dams that generated little electricity but blocked historically large runs of sea-run fish. Removal of these dams has led to thriving fish populations, cleaner water, and economic benefits for waterfront communities.

Support LD 1979. Protect healthy, free-flowing rivers in Maine.

For more information, please contact

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Environmental Priorities Coalition



Maine's **Environmental Priorities Coalition** is a partnership of 37 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations representing over 120,000 members who want to protect the good health, good jobs, and quality of life that our environment provides.

We are counting on Maine policymakers to take the important steps needed to protect Maine's extraordinary environment so all Maine people and Maine communities can thrive.

