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**Statement of Barry Dana, Chief of the Penobscot Nation**

I am Barry Dana, Chief of the Penobscot Nation. Words may not describe what this restoration project means to me and my people.

The Penobscot River Valley has been home to the Penobscot Indian Nation since time immemorial. Our members have evolved over the past 10,000 years along this river and the abundant natural resources that this watershed supports. We are inextricably tied to the Penobscot River through a cultural, physical, and spiritual relationship that runs in our veins as the original inhabitants of this region.

Our ancestors have witnessed the destruction and degradation of this precious resource by entities that did not fully understand the long term impacts of their decisions.

This restoration effort gives me great hope. Hope that society better understands in this day and age the need to look into the future as we make decisions today. Hope that, like the blood in our veins, the Waters of the Penobscot River will become healthier. Hope that future generations of all peoples may benefit from a restored riverine ecosystem that has sustained life for thousands of years.

It is time that we, as a society, begin to repay the Penobscot River for all that she has provided for such a long time.