
Board Discussion Paper on Alewife in the St. Croix River

October 2005



International Joint Commission
International St. Croix River Board

From: Todd, Charlie

Sent: Monday, June 06, 2011 7:44 AM

To: 'Erynn Call'; Malcolm Hunter Jr; Gray, Nate; Chris Desorbo; Rick Gray; Hanson, William; Pokras, Mark'; 'Sarah_Nystrom@fws.gov'; Allen, Brad; Connolly, James; Kemper, Keel; Marden, Kendall R.; Swartz, Beth; D'Auria, Danielle; Sullivan, Kelsey M

Subject: Sebasticook River BAEA aggregation in Benton / Winslow

Importance: High

Erynn, Mac: The model for anadromous fish restoration at Benton Falls Dam is well worth a site visit if you have not been there before ... ASAP. I had the chance to fly in a helicopter from the mouth of the Sebasticook River in Winslow to Benton Falls Dam yesterday, June 5 at 1230. Most eagles do not like the noise of even this little Schweitzer helicopter so the survey works like a flush count. We counted 35 eagles heading upriver in the ~ 3 mile stretch closest to the dam. After visiting with Nate Gray (Maine DMR; 624-6344) and seeing the fish lift, we tallied 18 eagles (14 immatures, 4 adults) on the downriver run to the old Fort Halifax Dam site in Winslow. I imagine the "gang" will be back in force steadily until the fish run levels off. A single day count like this usually translates to hundreds of birds using the area over the period of the fish run. This fishery is also the major reason for the cluster of osprey nests you see on transmission lines crossing Interstate-95 just east of the Kennebec River bridge.

If you have never seen the Benton Falls Dam during the run of alewives, blueback herring & some shad ... NOW is the time! Contact Nate for better projections on how much longer, the upriver run continues.

Chris, Rick, Bill: Your satellite transmitter on the 2010 Saco River eaglet is a pretty good guide (see image attachment) to hot spots of activity there. If time permits, it may be worthwhile to deploy a spotting scope or large camera lens to look for other color banded eagles there. Mark or I can share some ideas for scoping for bands.

Sarah, Mark, MDIFW: There are more modest eagle aggregations on other Maine rivers, but the only gatherings of this scale in Maine during recent years are (at least partly) owing to artificially enhanced food supplies (farm carcasses [as in Warren], ice fishermen, etc.). With this level of eagle activity, the lower Sebasticook takes on much more significance than individual nest locations. I've been waiting to map major eagle aggregations for ~ 20 years but this is the one that best fits the intent of a local food bonanza benefitting survivorship of non-breeding eagles (= the "groupies") that like to cluster where foraging is relatively easy. We watched numerous ospreys carrying fish away yesterday that were NOT harassed by eagles (unheard of in Maine!) so clearly there is enough food for all in the Sebasticook fishery!

Charlie Todd

Attachment C

WEBBER POND

Bremen Twp., Lincoln County
U.S.G.S. Louds Island, Maine

Fishes

- Smallmouth bass
- White perch
- Yellow perch
- Chain pickerel
- Minnow species
- White sucker
- Hornpout (bullhead)
- Pumpkinseed sunfish
- American eel
- Sea-run alewife

Physical Characteristics

Area - 219 acres
 Maximum depth - 31 feet
 Temperatures
 Surface - 71° F.
 28 feet - 58° F.

Principal Fishery: Smallmouth bass, Chain pickerel, White perch

Smallmouth bass were introduced into Webber Pond in the spring of 1956 by the Fisheries and Wildlife Department. This transfer was successful and now smallmouth bass provide a good sport fishery.

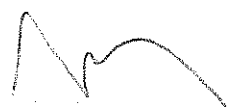
A brown trout stocking program was initiated in the 1980's. Unfortunately the program had to be terminated due to access problems.

Sea-run alewives ascend Muscongus Brook to spawn in Webber Pond. Young alewives provide excellent forage for bass. Muscongus Brook should be maintained free of obstructions which

might prevent the migration of alewives into Webber Pond.

No stocking is recommended until a public access agreement can be worked out.

Surveyed - August, 1941
 Revised - 1963, 1998
 Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Funded in part by Federal Aid in Restoration Act under Federal Project F-28-P L4857B



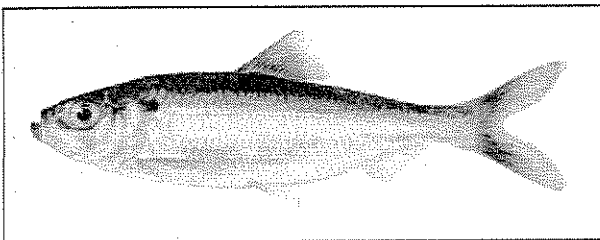
February 17

Rival measures would restore alewives into the St. Croix

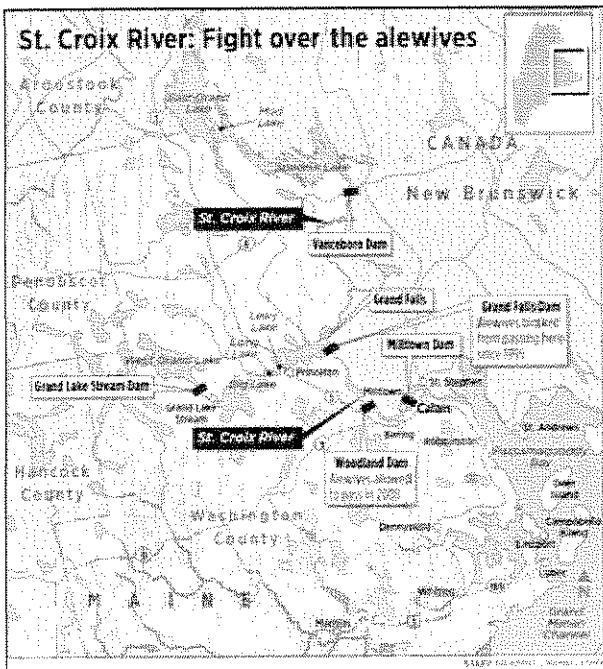
Gov. Paul LePage's administration would move cautiously. A competing proposal would open river dams immediately.

By Colin Woodard cwoodard@pressherald.com
Staff Writer

The future of spawning alewife runs in the St. Croix River will likely be decided by state lawmakers next month as they evaluate rival bills aimed at allowing the fish back into the watershed.



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Attachment E



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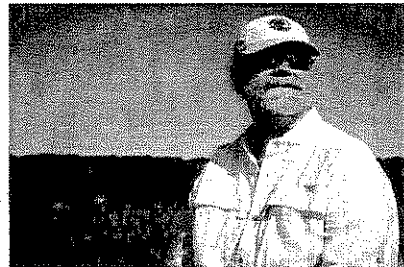
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Fall in the air!

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Sometime in the middle of August things begin to change outdoors the days are noticeably shorter, the nights cooler (thankfully) and water temperatures begin to fall. The eagle chicks are fledged and hanging around the nest sites hoping that one of the parents will stop by with a fish. Many of our summer birds begin to drift away in fact folks will frequently comment late in August about the lack of birds singing. The falling water temperatures is a signal for fish to begin to feed much more actively making the next six weeks or so some of the best fishing of the year.



In the Saint George drainage we are fortunate to have large numbers of sea run alewives that come to lay their eggs in the ponds each spring. As the small alewives begin to move back to sea with the first rains all of the predator fish begin to feed actively. Yesterday I was down in White Oak Pond with clients and many of the bass that they caught were actually potbellied from all of the feed they have been enjoying.

So while the unofficial end of summer is Labor Day the best weather and fishing of the season is finally here get out and take advantage of it! And if you can't get away check out the video in the next section of this e-newsletter to see what you are missing.

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