

[U.S. Department of the  
Interior](#)



# NEWS

---

---

## U.S. Department of the Interior

Office of the Secretary  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 21, 2008

Contacts:  
Joan Moody  
(202) 208-6416

### **Secretary of the Interior Kempthorne Presents Cooperative Conservation Award for Earth Day to Maine's Penobscot River Restoration Partnership**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**— At a ceremony in the nation's capital today, Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne recognized the outstanding contributions of the Penobscot River Restoration Trust to recover endangered wild Atlantic salmon in the United States. The Maine partnership is one of 21 recipients nationwide of the Department of the Interior's Cooperative Conservation Award.

The 21 awards recognized the work of more than 700 groups and individuals who achieved excellence in conservation through collaboration and partnerships.

"These outstanding partnerships and cooperative efforts represent a fundamental way in which our Department provides stewardship for America with integrity and excellence," Secretary Kempthorne said. "They embody a broad spectrum of conservation work from restoring wetlands, rangelands and mine lands to protecting wildlife, conserving water and fighting invasive species to teaching conservation values to the next generation."

The award to the Penobscot River Restoration Trust recognizes the partnership for "one of the most ecologically significant and innovative river restoration efforts in the nation. It represents the last best chance to save wild Atlantic salmon from extinction in the United States, as well as restoring 100 percent of the historic habitat in Maine's largest river for endangered shortnose sturgeon and severely depleted Atlantic sturgeon populations, along with eight other species of migratory fish."

The award citation notes that "in an unprecedented collaboration, hydropower company PPL Corporation, the Penobscot Indian Nation, six conservation groups, and Federal and State resource agencies are cooperating to restore 11 species of sea run fish to the Penobscot River while maintaining electrical generating capacity." (The list of awardees appears at the end of this release.)

The Penobscot River Restoration project is a collaboration of diverse private, public and nonprofit entities that, together, are improving access to nearly 1,000 miles of river for sea-run fish. The nonprofit Penobscot River Restoration Trust implements the core aspects of the restoration effort, including purchase and removal of the two lowermost dams on the Penobscot River, Veazie and Great Works, and purchase and decommissioning of a

third dam, Howland Dam, where a proposed nature-like fish bypass is being planned.

The Department of the Interior's Cooperative Conservation Award recognizes conservation achievements resulting from the cooperation and participation of individual landowners, citizen groups, private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and Federal, State, local, and/or tribal governments.

"This is a fitting start to a week of Earth Day activities," the Secretary told the crowd at the main Interior auditorium. "If anyone were to ask me why America is the world leader in conservation of natural resources, I would simply point to the people in this auditorium. You are the spirit and you are the hands of cooperative conservation."

**Penobscot River Restoration (Maine)**

*Nominated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

**American Rivers**

Andrew Fahlund

Atlantic Salmon Federation

Andrew Goode

Maine Audubon

Sally Stockwell

**Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife**

Roland D. Martin

**Maine Dept. of Marine Resources**

Pat Keliher

George Lapointe

**Maine State Planning Office**

Todd Burrowes

Martha Freeman

**National Fish and Wildlife Foundation**

Thomas Kelsch

**Natural Resources Council of Maine**

Lisa Pohlmann

**The Nature Conservancy, Maine Chapter**

Tom Rumpf

**NOAA Fisheries Service**

John Catena

Matt Collins

Christopher Doley

Pat Montanio

**Penobscot Indian Nation**

John Banks

Kirk Francis

**Penobscot River Restoration Trust**

George Aponte Clarke

Cheryl Daigle

Laura Rose Day

**PPL Corporation**

Dick Fennelly

Scott Hall

Dennis J. Murphy

**Trout Unlimited**

Elizabeth Maclin

Jeff Reardon

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Marvin Moriarty

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Gulf of Maine Coastal Program**

Stewart I. Fefer

Alexander R. Hoar

Lori H. Nordstrom

Ben Rizzo