

Maine Environment

Natural Resources
Council of Maine

Summer 2013

Penobscot to the Sea: Celebrating Removal of the Veazie Dam

July 22, 2013 made history as the day the Penobscot River was connected to the sea for the first time in nearly two centuries, with the breaching of the Veazie Dam. For more than 50 years, NRCM has led efforts to protect and restore Maine's rivers, and we are proud to be a founding member of the Penobscot River Restoration Project. In what is quite possibly the largest dam removal project in the country, the breaching of the Veazie Dam follows removal of the Great Works Dam last summer. In addition to removing the two dams, the project will bypass a third, and fish passage will be improved at four other dams, increasing access to 1,000 miles of habitat for endangered Atlantic salmon and 10 other species of sea-run fish, without decreasing energy production on the river.

Connecting the Penobscot River to the Atlantic Ocean will provide huge benefits for fish, birds, and other wildlife. Cultural, recreational, and economic opportunities will receive a tremendous boost as well. "The day's event demonstrated NRCM's commitment to protecting the environment so vital to Maine's economy and way of life. For NRCM it is a reminder of our beginnings in 1959, when a handful of concerned citizens worked together to establish the Allagash Wilderness Waterway," says Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann. "Since then our great love of and commitment to our rivers has continued. For example, with removal of the Edwards Dam in 1999 and the Fort Halifax Dam in 2008, the Kennebec now experiences the largest alewife run in the nation and, likely, the world, and the river has come alive in many other ways as well. Just think what will happen in the coming years for the Penobscot."

► NRCM staff members Leslie Burhoe, Kathy Thompson, Joyce Gracie, and Stacie Haines welcomed people to the site of dam in Eddington with keepsake t-shirts.



◀ Guests enjoyed ceremonial drumming performed by members of the Penobscot Indian Nation. During the drumming and throughout the morning celebration, four Bald Eagles circled over the river at the dam site, as if they, too, were eager to witness the rebirth of this river.

► Penobscot Chief Kirk Francis welcomed guests, and noted, "We are not just making history, we are rewriting it."



◀ NRCM Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann (center, in yellow) and representatives from other partner organizations showed their excitement about the occasion with a group cheer after being introduced by Penobscot River Restoration Trust Executive Director Laura Rose Day (pictured at far right). NRCM is a founding member of the Penobscot Project.

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Help Maine Lobsters Keep Their Cool!

It's hard to imagine Maine's coastal waters without colorful lobster buoys bobbing offshore. Harbors filled with lobster boats and fishermen, locals and visitors sharing picnic tables and smiling over lobster dinners—it's easy to take these iconic images for granted. But lobsters, and the \$339 million they mean to Maine's annual economy, are facing serious threats. Rising temperatures in the Gulf of Maine caused by global warming are creating a whole new environment of predator and prey for lobsters. Researchers have found that higher ocean temperatures require cold-blooded animals, like lobsters, to use more energy for breathing, leaving less energy for feeding, growth, energy storage, immune response, and reproduction. Scientists also expect that warming waters are driving lobsters to migrate into cooler, northern waters. And ocean acidification caused by carbon pollution is making it harder for lobsters to get the calcium needed to harden their shells, which can leave them stressed and more susceptible to damage.

Help us put the spotlight on this important issue, and take action to protect Maine's lobsters. Please:

- Urge Maine's Congressional delegation to support President Obama's plan for America to do its part to tackle climate change. Visit www.nrcm.kintera.org/protectmainelobsters.
- Join NRCM's Action Network at www.nrcm.kintera.org/ActionCenter to stay informed of when and how you can take action.
- Learn more about global warming and what you can do about it at www.nrcm.org.
- For more information about lobsters and climate change, visit www.nrcm.org to download our fact sheet, "Help Maine Lobsters Keep Their Cool." And support Maine's lobstermen and our economy by enjoying a Maine lobster or two this summer—either at home or at one of the hundreds of Maine restaurants. Grab a bib and get crackin'!



GRAPHIC BY MARTY BRAUN



• **THE BIG PICTURE** •
by Lisa Pohlmann
NRCM Executive Director

Standing with the President on Climate Change

On June 25th, President Obama announced a significant federal climate action plan. I listened with great relief to finally hear a U.S. president talk about climate change as a critical issue that must be addressed from an environmental, economic, and human health perspective. We have been encouraging our NRCM members to thank the President and to ask Maine's Congressional delegation to stand with the President as this plan develops. Thank you for your many phone calls and signed postcards to these elected officials. Please encourage others to follow your lead. We need to show a groundswell of support for these bold measures.

The most significant part of the plan is the carbon emissions standards being set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for new and existing power plants. These power plants, which are mostly in the Midwest and burn oil and coal, have for years sent carbon, soot, mercury, and other pollutants wafting over Maine on the jet stream, contaminating water and causing bad air days and other health-related problems. Maine has everything to gain and nothing to lose from these significant emission reductions. Since power plants are one of the major sources of carbon pollution that cause climate change, setting these standards moves us in the right direction.

One of the many creatures that will benefit from our efforts to address climate change is the Maine lobster—and all of the Mainers and visitors who enjoy eating them. In fact, Maine just wouldn't be Maine without those scenes of us in the plastic bibs with the shell crackers and bright red lobsters filling our plates. It's easy to take this Maine mainstay for granted, but now I have to wonder if generations to come will be able to enjoy lobsters as we do today. Lobstermen and scientists are telling us that global warming is driving lobsters farther north and increasing their predators. Ocean acidification is making it harder for them to fight off diseases. We are sounding the alarm bell on this issue with our campaign, "Help Maine Lobsters Keep Their Cool – Stop Global Warming!" We hope all of you lobster lovers will join us in this call for power plant carbon emission standards and other measures in the President's plan.

I welcome the day when the science, the leadership, and the policy measures finally come together, and we can make forward progress. Thanks for joining in this call to action.

Remembering Harry Dwyer, Advocate and Friend

This spring, Maine lost a passionate and effective advocate for the environment with the passing of Harry Dwyer. Harry was a logger, a forester, and a lover of Maine's woods. He was also an articulate advocate and fighter for good forest policy.



I first met Harry in the mid-1990s when he was appointed by Governor King to the Maine Council on Sustainable Forest Management. This group was the first task force in modern times to begin to take on the task of ensuring that Maine's forest harvesting practices were being carried out sustainably. It quickly became clear that Harry cared as much about the long-term health of the forest as he did about logging. He fully understood the need to consider the entire ecosystem while engaging in forest harvesting. He had an impressive ability to integrate practical forest harvesting techniques with ecological sensitivity, which in my experience, is not very common. Harry was also appointed a member of the Liquidation Harvesting Taskforce in 2001 by Governor Baldacci, on which I also served. Harry bridged the gap that sometimes appeared between members of the forest products industry and the conservation community. His voice was one to which all task force members listened, and he followed through to ensure that effective rules were adopted by the Legislature.

In 2004, NRCM awarded Harry our Environmental Award. More recently, Harry stepped forward to advocate for Maine's forests in many forums—he was always an effective speaker at press conferences and in front of legislative committees, and often spoke directly to the governor or members of the Legislature. But Harry wasn't just smart, articulate, and passionate, he was also kind, funny, and generous. I will miss Harry, and this true friend to Maine's environment.

—Cathy Johnson, North Woods Project Leader & Senior Staff Attorney

Veazie Dam - Continued from page 1

▶ Seeing all of the families at the event was a great reminder of the promise the river holds for future generations. "We look forward to the day when the river is teeming with fish and wildlife, its communities flourish, the Penobscot Nation's traditions are strengthened, and the river's connection to the sea is restored," said NRCM Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann.



◀ The Veazie Dam removal is the second step in an innovative agreement between conservation groups like NRCM, federal and state agencies, the Penobscots, and company that owned the dams, PPL Corporation. This has been widely hailed as a national and even international model of collaboration.

▶ NRCM Executive Director Lisa Pohlmann spoke to many members of the media about our excitement for the project and NRCM's important role in this 13-year effort to restore Maine's largest river.



◀ The breaching of a 200-year-old dam is a rare occasion. The public was invited to help collect water from the river, which was then bottled into keepsake vials to commemorate the occasion.



▶ Robert Dana, of the Penobscot Indian Nation, watched from the water in a traditional birch bark canoe. In his remarks, Chief Francis said, "To the Penobscot, this river is our very soul. It's a place where we truly hold hands with our history and our ancestors, and with each step of this project we feel that much closer to it and to realizing our people's dream of this sacred river in its natural state providing for and nurturing our people in many ways as it has always done."



◀ NRCM Outreach Coordinator Todd Martin spoke with attendees about our long history protecting Maine's rivers, including the Penobscot. NRCM was founded in 1959 by a group of citizens wanting to protect the Allagash, and our victories include removal of the Edwards Dam on the Kennebec River and Fort Halifax Dam from a major tributary, resulting in an alewife run of 3 million this year. We expect great things for the Penobscot in the coming years.

Give to NRCM through MaineShare

MaineShare makes it easy for you to donate to statewide progressive organizations through workplace giving. MaineShare receives year-round payroll deductions that provide groups like NRCM, who are working everyday to make Maine a better place to live, with a steady flow of income to keep important programs going. Sign up to give to NRCM through MaineShare at your workplace today!

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

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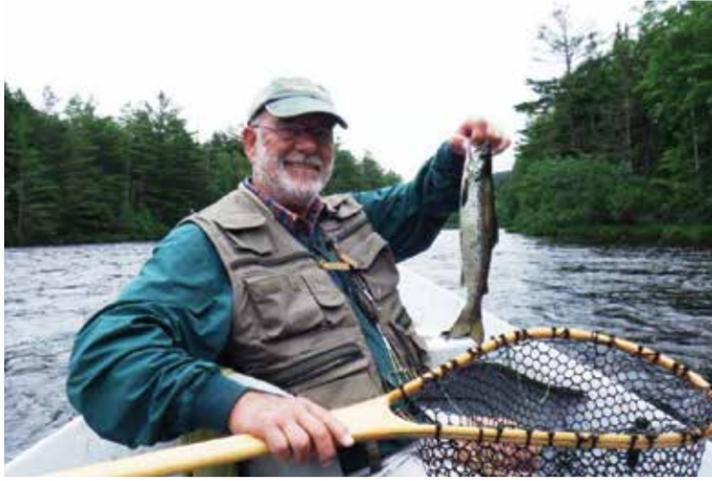
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Chuck Verrill: Legacy of Support Flows from His Love of Maine's Waters

Chuck Verrill's connection to nature was forged during his childhood on the working coast of York County, in and around Cape Porpoise. His grandfather was a lobsterman. His father worked on the boat until shortly before Chuck was born, taking a secure job on dry land to provide for his new family. Chuck worked on the lobster boat during summers in high school until his grandfather's retirement at age 95. While lobstering was tempting, he took his grandfather's advice and enrolled as an undergraduate at Tufts. Chuck has long given up pulling traps, but he has never lost his love for Maine's waters.



Chuck graduated from Duke Law in 1962 and went to work in Washington, D.C. "Practicing law in D.C. at that time was a lot like practicing law in Augusta or other small towns," says Chuck. "We did not have the big multi-discipline firms that you see now. International Trade was a new practice area, which I found fascinating. I later moved to Wiley Rein (in D.C.), where I founded and ran our practice in International Trade."

Chuck and his late wife Mary Ann bought a home on Islesboro in the '70s. Mary Ann spent the summer on the island with their five children. Chuck flew up for the weekends. The endless travel was worth the tradeoff for Chuck, whose family shared his love of the outdoors. Somewhere along the way, Chuck joined NRCM. He's been a steadfast supporter for more than 25 years.

Now chairman emeritus of his department, Chuck has no interest in retiring soon. He continues his practice at Wiley Rein, but divides his time between D.C., Maine, and the rest of the world. In addition to working on several large and complex cases (how does one sue Zimbabwe?), Chuck recently launched a consulting firm for African and International Trade that is headquartered in the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire and is part of another group that is working to establish a system for mortgage-backed securities in Africa.

His work has taken him everywhere, and his observations have reinforced his environmental values. "Even in the poorest communities, people are happier when their rivers are clean and the native landscape is intact."

Recently, Chuck told us that he has included NRCM in his will. As he talked about his philanthropy, a pattern emerged: Chuck supports dozens of good causes, but he has directed his bequests to institutions where he has

contributed intellectually, not just financially.

Chuck has played a key role for NRCM in several major river projects over the past decade. They include the removal of the Fort Halifax Dam on the Sebasticook River in 2008 and the Maine Legislature's recent decision to throw out a 1997 law that blocked alewife passage on the St. Croix.

"Chuck loves what he is doing, and his enthusiasm is infectious," says Nick Bennett, NRCM's staff scientist, who has worked closely with Chuck on NRCM issues. "Removing a dam or improving fish passage through other means takes years. Setbacks are inevitable. Chuck

never gets discouraged. He thinks very strategically—he's wicked smart!"

Chuck has embraced the opportunity to help revive Maine's sea-run fisheries. He is an avid fisherman who frequently walks from his D.C. home to the Potomac to fish. He's been known to bring his rod and reel to meetings, hoping to catch a few minutes on a nearby river. Luckily for NRCM, Chuck also has the patience of a good fisherman: he is not fazed to hear that a project may take a decade or more to resolve.

Such is the case with the Penobscot River Restoration Project. Chuck joined NRCM's National Advisory Board in 2002, when the project was still in its quiet phase. He learned about the project at his first NAB meeting. "I was struck by the audacity of the project," says Chuck. "We talked about purchasing three dams, removing two, and creating fish passage at a third. So many pieces had to fall into place for it to be successful." The plan also called for increased energy generation at nearby dams that posed less threat to wild Atlantic salmon and other fisheries.

Chuck became a fund-raiser and champion for the project. He listened to each development and provided counsel to the project staff. As a result, Chuck helped to change the future of another Maine river: last month, he joined hundreds of other supporters to witness the breach of Veazie, the head-of-tide dam on the Penobscot River.

We are grateful for Chuck's financial legacy, but it is hard to top the environmental legacy he has created through his contributions to the restoration of the Kennebec, Penobscot, and St. Croix rivers.

—Gretta Wark, Senior Director of Development

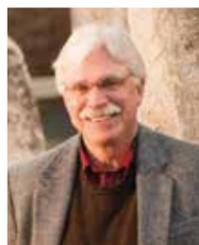
Annual Meeting set for Wednesday, October 16, in Portland

HOLD THE DATE! NRCM will host our Annual Meeting of the Membership on the evening of Wednesday, October 16, at the University of Southern Maine in Portland. NRCM members will tackle the tough issue of climate change and its effects on our state, celebrate the contributions of several citizen activists and vote on candidates to NRCM's Board of Directors, including the following nominees for their first term. Watch your mail and email or visit www.nrcm.org, for information.



Phil Bartlett, Gorham Phil is an attorney and a former state senator, representing the 6th District (Scarborough, Westbrook, and Gorham). He held the position of Senate Majority Leader in 2009 and 2010. During his time in the Maine Legislature, Phil served on the Joint Standing Committee on Utilities and Energy as well as several others. Phil is a graduate of Tufts University and earned a JD degree from Harvard Law School. He is active in numerous local groups and is one of two elected representatives from Maine on the National Democratic Committee.

Stephen Mulkey, Unity Steve Mulkey is President of Unity College, the first college in the United States to divest from investments in fossil fuels. Through his leadership the College developed its central focus on sustainability science, the leading-edge of transdisciplinary (collaborative) 21st century environmental problem solving. A climate change scientist with study and publishing spanning over three decades, he has pursued research in Eastern Amazonia, Central Panama, and East Africa. Dr. Mulkey has served as a faculty member at the University of Missouri, University of Florida, and University of Idaho, and also worked for many years as a research associate for the Smithsonian Institution, Tropical Research Institute. He holds a bachelor's degree in fisheries and wildlife, a master's degree in ecology, and earned his doctorate's degree in ecology from the University of Pennsylvania.



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Cover Banner / South Branch Pond, Baxter State Park, a *My Maine this Week* photo by NRCM supporter Patty Norzow. Send us your photos to use as a *My Maine this Week* feature at nrcm@nrcm.org.



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Maine Environment is provided three times a year to more than 16,000 members and supporters of the Natural Resources Council of Maine. NRCM is a Maine-based nonprofit membership organization working to protect, conserve, and restore our land, air, wildlife, and water, now and for future generations. Membership starts at \$28/year. Join online at www.nrcm.org.

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NRCM Continues to Support Towns Speaking Out against Tar Sands



Citizens of South Portland rally in opposition to the proposed project that would pump tar sands through their town.

Maine communities along the Portland-Montreal Pipeline are taking action to keep tar sands out of their back yard. Since the beginning of the year, seven Maine towns along the pipeline have passed municipal resolutions stating their opposition to and

concern about transporting tar sands oil through the 62-year-old pipeline and calling for an environmental impact review by the State Department. These towns include Portland, Bridgton, Casco, Harrison, Otisfield, Raymond, and Waterford. Residents of these towns worked hard to educate their neighbors, collect signatures in support of their resolutions, and worked with their town government to ensure town-wide votes at town meetings or at the polls. Right now, the Concerned Citizens of South Portland, a neighborhood group, is working hard to pass a municipal zoning ordinance change at the polls in November that would block the building of infrastructure necessary to accommodate tar sands on the South Portland waterfront. NRCM has and will continue to work side by side with the Concerned Citizens of South Portland to pass the *Waterfront Protection Ordinance* in November and to keep all of Maine tar sands free.



2010: Vera Francis 2011: Belfast Co-housing & Ecovillage 2012: Bob Iles 2013: your nominee?

Vote for Your Choice!

Thanks to everyone who nominated candidates for this year's "People's Choice Award." We enjoyed learning about people in your communities who are making a difference for Maine's environment. Starting on Wednesday, August 21st, you'll have a chance to learn more about those nominees who have been selected as this year's finalists. Be sure to vote for your choice! Voting will run through September 6th, with the recipient of this year's award announced at our annual meeting later this fall. Visit our website at www.nrcm.org beginning August 21st to vote for NRCM's 8th Annual People's Choice Award. If you would prefer to call in your vote, please call (207) 430-0106 to speak with Beth Comeau.

Green Tip of the Day

The Host Can Save the Most: When hosting gatherings at your house, like summer picnics or family reunions, put out a bin to collect recyclable containers. And one for compost, too! For a green tip of the day every day, visit NRCM's website at www.nrcm.org. And tune in to WCLZ 98.9 FM on your radio dial (or web stream) to hear a new Maine Green Minute every week day, four times a day!



"My Maine This Week"



"This photo was taken in Pulpit Harbor on North Haven. The view is roughly west looking out the entrance of the harbor."

—NRCM member John Hinckley of Huntington, Vermont, and Penobscot Bay.

Send Us Your "My Maine This Week" Do you have a photograph of Maine you'd like to share? A short poem? Send your submissions to beth@nrcm.org. Visit "My Maine This Week" online www.nrcm.org.

Special Memberships Given May 1, 2013 to July 31, 2013

Gift Memberships

Kurt and Hope Becker by Constance G. Schwarzkopf

Honoraria and Memorial Gifts

Colby College in honor of Nick Bennett's mining presentation

Georgiana Gallagher in memory of Marian Larson

Mary P. Lester in memory of Max Lester

Deirdre Sulka-Meister in honor of Violet

Barry and Roberta Zuckerman in honor of Emmie Theberge and Todd Martin

New members of **PARTNERS IN MAINE'S FUTURE** Program, our monthly giving club. Members' automatic donations help us save on administrative costs, including paper. Special thanks to these members!

Beth and Chris Comeau
Carrie and Jim Donoghue
Elizabeth Ellis
Stacie Haines and Efrain F. Ferrusca
Mary L. Hannon
John Hinckley

Shawn M. Jones
Ron and Polly T. Labonte
Melanie Lancot
Loreta Peebles
Andy Smith
Janet A. Wright

Sign Up Now for Rachel's Run! Sunday, October 6

Sign up now for our second annual **Rachel's Run and Kids' Fun** Sunday, October 6th in Augusta. Named in honor of toxics pioneer Rachel Carson, the event benefits our work reducing toxic pollution in Maine. Join us in Capitol Park, in the heart of Maine's capital city, for a 5k run or walk along the beautiful Kennebec Rail Trail to Hallowell and back, plus kids' activities including an obstacle course, interactive nature-themed activities from area groups throughout the morning, and more. Refreshments and prizes for participants! Registration for the 5k begins at 8:00 a.m., with the run at 9:00 a.m., awards at 10:00 a.m., followed by the fun run. Save \$5 on \$25 registration cost—register by August 31st. Kids' fun run is \$5. Encourage your family and friends to pledge you! Raise \$100 or more and receive a beautiful, locally made, organic event t-shirt. Register today at www.nrcm.org.



Join us in Capitol Park, in the heart of Maine's capital city, for a 5k run or walk along the beautiful Kennebec Rail Trail to Hallowell and back, plus kids' activities including an obstacle course, interactive nature-themed activities from area groups throughout the morning, and more. Refreshments and prizes for participants! Registration for the 5k begins at 8:00 a.m., with the run at 9:00 a.m., awards at 10:00 a.m., followed by the fun run. Save \$5 on \$25 registration cost—register by August 31st. Kids' fun run is \$5. Encourage your family and friends to pledge you! Raise \$100 or more and receive a beautiful, locally made, organic event t-shirt. Register today at www.nrcm.org.

Hiking with NRCM & Sheepscot Wellspring Land Alliance

Saturday, October 19, 10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Join NRCM and SWLA for a hike on SWLA's Northern Headwaters trail in Montville. This moderately difficult 3.5-mile loop takes us past a pristine section of the Sheepscot River headwaters and through a majestic forest, located on 1,100 acres conserved by SWLA's Northern Headwaters Focus Area. Meet at Whitten Hill trailhead/ parking lot, Halldale Road. Bring a bag lunch and water—and your camera! FMI visit www.nrcm.org, email nrcm@nrcm.org, or call Leslie at (207) 430-0179.

Join Us in Bethel for a Paddle on the Androscoggin!

Saturday, September 7, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.



Please join us in Bethel for a paddle on the Androscoggin River to celebrate NRCM's work protecting and restoring Maine's rivers. We've partnered with Bethel Outdoor Adventures (BOA) for a

10-mile paddle from Gilead to Bethel along a beautiful stretch of the Androscoggin River. We'll meet at 9:00 a.m. at BOA (121 Mayville Road), park our vehicles, and take the 10:00 a.m. shuttle to Gilead to enjoy a leisurely three- to four-hour paddle on this easy stretch of the river and be back at our vehicles around 2:00 p.m. Kayaks and canoes are available for rental through BOA. Registration is \$20. For more info visit our website at www.nrcm.org or contact NRCM Outreach Coordinator Todd Martin at (207) 430-0115 or tmartin@nrcm.org. We hope to see you there!



Like us If you "Like"ed us on Facebook... you'd have been among the first to see our post blowing the whistle on the LePage Administration's hush-hush attempt to weaken Maine's clean air protections. "Like" us on Facebook today!

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