

HELP RESTORE MAINE'S GREAT RIVERS

Reject LD 1979 and support science-based solutions for improving the health of Maine's rivers and sea-run fish.

The health of Maine's rivers and sea-run fish – including the endangered Atlantic salmon – are 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.

Federal relicensing provides opportunities to re-evaluate the impact of dams, but dam owners are trying to limit the authority of Maine's natural resource agencies to participate fully in this process.

- 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, but LD 1979 would disrupt the state's ability to support science-based solutions for improving the health of Maine's rivers.
- Maine's natural resource agencies must retain authority to improve the health of Maine's rivers, including through recommending dam removal, despite the efforts of dam owners to protect their profits.



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The Legislature should not hamstring Maine's resource agencies by preventing them from making science-based recommendations to restore our rivers and fisheries.

- 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.
- Maine's most productive hydropower dams are mostly inland and do not block sea-run fish.
- Lawmakers should reject proposals that would limit river restoration efforts.

Oppose 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.

