

My name is Patrick Patterson and my wife Sandy and I own and operate Wheaton's Lodge in Forest City, Maine. We employ up to 23 individuals including guides throughout our season on East Grand and Spednic Lakes in Washington County. Wheaton's Lodge has been in operation as a traditional sporting camp for 63 years. A tradition I can proudly say my wife and I still maintain to this day. Over the years on East Grand and Spednic Lakes we have come to rely on the expert observation and advice from the registered Maine guides we work with – from 10 to 14 guides from May through September. Over the past few years we have witnessed the quality of the salmon and daily catch limits decline on East Grand Lake. In fact, as of last year, we can immediately assess the overall health of the salmon has deteriorated. So what's changed? We are now seeing alewives in the stomachs of unhealthy fish as opposed to the rainbow smelts in healthy pink-fleshed football sized salmon.

The past three years we have noticed a decline in our salmon anglers visiting our lodge in May and September. In speaking with our sports, many who have been traveling to Wheaton's for 20 years and more, share a common complaint about the decreasing catches and overall health of our stock compared to years past. As a business owner and employer in a distressed County (Washington), we are compelled to get to the bottom of what is happening to our salmon fishery. So of course this has prompted a lot of research. In doing so, we have found Steve Whitman's reports and addendums to be invaluable and frankly have found no other reports to actually refute these tombs of historical knowledge. My questions were also aimed at the men and women who have fished these lakes for up to and over 30 years. This group of anglers' practical knowledge is more valuable than lobbyists, or pipe dreams from special interest groups trying to line their own pockets. These men and women are our Maine state guides and on the frontlines of our lake resources every single day. They can tell you without a doubt what these alewives did on Spednic Lake in 1987. They don't need a million dollar report to what they have witnessed firsthand. With the massive combined knowledge in this room, you would all be fools not to heed or make use of the advice of one of Maine's best experts on Maine's natural resources. I implore you all not to be led down the primrose path by these special interest groups who have no interest in protecting Maine's natural resources for future generations and immediately pass LD800.

Thank you.

Patrick and Sandy Patterson

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