

27 April 2015
Support of LD 800

To whom is here to hear...

My name is Matt Whitegiver. I am a Master Maine Guide from the Downeast area. I also own and operate the Wilderness Lodge Sporting camp in Washington County. I am here in support of LD 800.

When all is said and done, the bottom line here is, know one can tell us for sure what the affect of cramming all these fish into a pristine watershed like the St. Croix will be. Certainly we can all agree there **will be** an interaction within the fishery. I don't think anyone can dispute that. Alewives will inevitably interact good or bad with the native populations of fish.

This interaction, has the **potential to destroy** an historical and much needed guiding industry in what is arguably one of the poorest counties in the state. A county that relies on an ever dwindling pulp and paper industry and can ill afford the loss of another source of income for it's residents. The sporting camp and guiding industry is of vital importance to this area of the state.

The only plus side I have ever heard regarding Alewives is the added forage for ground fish in the Gulf of Maine. Don't get me wrong, I know that fishery is important too and has had to put up with federal regulations longer than I can remember. But how many of those were due to over fishing? From what I could come up with, there are 16 waterways on the Downeast coastline alone, from the Penobscot to the Denny's river that support an Alewife run. All of which helps supply the Gulf of Maine with Alewives. None of these however, affect a major watershed such as the St Croix.

Imagine telling another historic guiding area of the state such as Rangely or Moosehead that, sorry, we are going to allow a foreign species of fish **we think** is important into your lakes, and it could very well destroy your Brook Trout and Salmon fishing and put you out of business. Imagine the outrage.

Why should the Grand Lake Stream and Downeast area be any less important? Is it because we are close to the coast and are at the mercy of the Dept of Marine Resources federal agenda? Shouldn't their influence cease at the first set of falls an ocean running species cannot transcend. A state, with **all** it's people in mind, should keep the Marine division business out of the business of Inland Fisheries division and vice verse.

We as Maine sportsmen are under attack everywhere we turn lately. With bear referendums, national parks, east/west highways, wind mills and the like, we are in threat of losing our state's heritage. do we really want to allow Alewives to be among the list of things that ends yet another Maine livelihood.

Please vote for LD 800 ought to pass...
Thank you,

Matt Whitegiver
Master Maine Guide