

Hi my name is Brian Altvater Sr., a member of the Passamaquoddy Tribe and chairman of the Schoodic Riverkeepers whose sole purpose is to help restore the St. Croix River Watershed to its original state, we also advocate for the restoration of all watersheds within the Passamaquoddy ancestral homeland which includes both the United States & Canada. You may ask who are the Riverkeepers? Quite simple, a grassroots committee of around eighteen folks from Pleasant Point & Indian Township, a Penobscot gentleman from Western Maine, the Tribal Chief of the Schoodic Band in St. Andrews, in addition to a lady from the same town that is not Wabanaki. You see we all have the same vision, to allow the Alewife along with other migratory or sea run fish unfettered access to their ancestral spawning grounds whether in the river itself or within the many lakes of the St. Croix River Watershed.

I first gave testimony to this body back in "2013" on L.D. #72; it is somewhat disappointing that I have to appear in front of this committee again, however helping to restore the St. Croix River in all likelihood is going to be a lifelong process and commitment, something that I have committed to do years ago, whatever it takes to get the job done I am willing to do. That was two years ago and a lot has happened since then; if I had my way I would have all of the dams removed from the St. Croix River altogether and let nature take its course that would be restoration in my eyes. In those two years I have seen some exciting events happening such as the removal of the Veazie Dam on the mighty Penobscot River. Blackman Stream empties into the Penobscot River and originates from Chemo Pond, since the dam removal the Alewife for the first time in two-hundred years were able to swim up Blackman Stream without the obstruction of a dam. This was in the spring of "2014" and when the fish were counted as they swam past the bridge as they entered Blackman Stream on their way to Chemo Pond to spawn, they numbered in the tens of thousands, I was there for only one day to witness this miracle and felt truly blessed that day of seeing such a special event.

During the Alewife run last spring I got to see many of the Alewife migrate upstream in other rivers such as; the Pennamaquan River, East Machias River, Dennys River, Boyden Stream to name a few, what a delight to see this fish number in the thousands making their way to their spawning grounds. Some other success stories are ones like the Sabasticook River where around three-million Alewife were counted during the Alewife run last spring, I was told that during this time by one of the locals that even the Eagles and osprey were not fighting over Alewife because there were so many available that all of the birds of prey had plenty to eat. For the first time they are now seeing Alewife in the Togus Stream that is a tributary of the Kennebec River. The Alewife feeds other species too, many shore birds, marine mammals, other fishes both salt & fresh water species and like other folks have stated before; it is the fish that feeds all. Many of the creator's creatures heavily depend on the survival of the Alewife, at one time many of our people of all races also depended on the annual Alewife run, but now their importance seems to have diminished because we do not consume them like we did many years ago, but many creatures still rely on them for forage.

Late last May I was on the walking & bike trail which is about two miles in length that runs from Pleasant Point to RT. #1 in Perry, it is near the bridge that crosses over Little River which combines with Boynton Stream not more than a half-mile upstream. The bike trail at times follows the Little River and there is also an awesome view of the Passamaquoddy Bay on one side and the sweet-grass area off RT. # 190 on the other side. At Gleason Cove on the bayside where the Little River dumps into the Passamaquoddy

the tide was low, it was raining, foggy, and I was the only sole out this early in the morning. The reason why I speak of this is because I counted no less than fourteen eagles sitting on the beach, I figured it out; the Eagles were feasting & taking Alewives from the shallows during the spring Alewife run.

I urge you to vote ought not to pass on L.D.800 thank you and I'll leave you with a quote from the great Chief Seattle;

The earth does not belong to, man, man belongs to the Earth.

All things are connected like the blood that unites us all.

Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it.

Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

Brian Altvater Sr.