

Jed Koller
Georgetown, Maine
LD 430

Greeting Committee Members,

I'm opposed to LD 430 and believe that a moratorium on dam removals is not in the best interest of the people of Maine, our healthy futures, or our economic vitality.

I live at the mouth of the Kennebec River and have spent my life working on rivers that have had their ecosystems devastated by dams and seen firsthand what has been lost in the name of hydropower, and I think there is tremendous potential for the Kennebec's restoration and am excited by it. I know so many other Mainer's are as well.

The Kennebec once had the largest runs of Atlantic Salmon in the United States and was the most productive river in Maine for migratory fish. Today, that salmon run, once hundreds of thousands strong, is down to about 50 fish per year.

The Sandy River, which enters the Kennebec above Skowhegan, Maine, provides the best single piece of Atlantic salmon habitat in Maine and likely the U.S.

Unfortunately, four outdated dams between Waterville and Skowhegan owned by Brookfield Renewable Partners (Brookfield) are blocking salmon from reaching the Sandy River. These dams also block other native sea-run fish—such as shad, river herring, American eel, and sea-lamprey—from much of their historic spawning and rearing habitat.

These species need access to the spawning beds upstream of the dams to have a chance at healthy populations. This should be a priority for the people of Maine.

It is short sighted to prioritize electric power generation and short-term revenue over the vitality and functionality of natural ecosystems. As humans we are part of these ecosystems, and our own health and well-being, including our economic well-being, are dependent on the health of the natural world.

Legislatively our representatives should be doing everything possible to secure the health and vitality of future generations. LD 430 is a step backwards and away from this.