



February 28, 2022

Senator Stacey Brenner, Chair
Representative Ralph Tucker, Chair
Joint Standing Committee of Environment and Natural Resources
100 State House Station Augusta, ME 04333

Testimony in Opposition of LD 1979 "An Act to Sustain Good-paying Jobs in the Forest Products Industry by Ensuring Consistency between Comprehensive River Resource Management Plans and State Water Quality Standards"

Senator Brenner and Representative Tucker,

The Downeast Salmon Federation is a science and community-based fisheries conservation organization that has for 40 years worked to restore Atlantic salmon and their home rivers in Eastern Maine. During the decades we have worked to restore fish passage and restock Downeast Maine's rivers we have partnered with countless local, state, federal, tribal, and private agencies and entities.

We believe the changes proposed by LD 1979 will harm the future of salmon recovery in the State of Maine. Countless state, federal, and private dollars have been invested in a shared vision of Maine's river once again full of salmon and other native fish. By favoring existing, antiquated, and often harmful hydropower operations we risk wasting these valuable investments. For several years DSF has been engaged with a FERC relicensing for Brookfield-owned dams on the Union River. That project has long killed native fish and its operations have polluted the Union River (see attached photos). Without the state of Maine's ability to issue its own, independent, science-based Water Quality Certificate—a certificate that was denied for the Union River project—a new license would have been issued by FERC and these violations would have continued for another 30-50 years. While we believe comprehensive planning is essential to making good, science-based decisions we do not see this bill as providing a sound framework for that type of planning. Maine's resource agencies are staffed with highly qualified employees who should be trusted to guide those processes.

We recommend the Committee vote ought not to pass on LD 1964.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dwayne Shaw'.

Dwayne Shaw, Executive Director, Downeast Salmon Federation



Union River showing turbidity from upstream dam management March 2021



River Herring killed while passing the Ellsworth dam

