

Robert Packie
Downeast Trout Unlimited
LD 1979

As President of Downeast Trout Unlimited I wish to express our opposition to LD 1979. This bill would effectively remove the ability of Maine's resource agencies to protect Maine's water and fishing resources by limiting, or in fact eliminating, their ability to advocate for water quality standards and fish passage protections beyond those required by FERC in the dam relicensing process. LD 1979 would also jeopardize the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's ability to enforce the Clean Water Act.

LD 1979 would impede or prevent future restoration projects on Maine's rivers. In recent decades river restoration projects that centered around improvements to fish passage have increased fish populations in the Kennebec and the Penobscot rivers, and in doing so have dramatically improved the environmental health of these watersheds, the recreational use of the rivers, leading to economic benefits to the entire region.

The State of Maine can be a leader in the nation with future river restoration projects and in doing so would reap the environmental and economic benefits that these projects would bring - but with the passage of LD 1979 these possibilities will not exist.

Robert Packie
President Downeast Trout Unlimited