

Tammy Packie
Hulls Cove, Maine
LD 1979

I am writing to oppose 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". This bill is designed to protect the status quo and to halt conservation efforts to restore Maine rivers being impacted by hydroelectric dams and forest related industries. Brookfield is pushing this bill to block dam removals and strict fish passage requirements in Maine. LD 1979 would make it impossible for Maine resource agencies to advocate for more protective fish passage and water quality standards than FERC in federal dam licensing processes, thus taking away their ability to protect Maine's clean water and fishery resources. The work to restore our rivers is not complete, and LD 1979 would stop further progress. Healthy rivers and fisheries are key economic drivers in Maine and river restoration revitalizes our communities, protects fish and wildlife, and delivers significant economic, recreational, and environmental benefits. LD 1979 would require the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry (DACF) to develop river management plans for every major river in the state with a focus on protecting hydropower interests, thus greatly increasing the cost of any restoration project. LD 1979 would also threaten the ability of Maine's DEP to independently enforce the Clean Water Act. DEP needs this ability to maintain the authority that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency delegated to the state. Passage of LD 1979 risks the EPA revoking Maine's delegated Clean Water Act authority. The best approach in any river resource management plan is to work with all stakeholders, State and Federal regulatory agencies to come up with solutions that benefit us all. LD1979 will prevent this from happening and I ask you to oppose this legislation.

Tammy Packie
Secretary, Downeast Trout Unlimited