



LD 1979
Hearing February 28, 2022

“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”

Chairman Senator Brenner, Chairman Representative Tucker, and Honorable Members of the Environment & Natural Resources Committee

My name is Greg Ponte and I am representing Kennebec Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited on this letter and we are against LD 1979.

This proposed legislation 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. DACF does not have the expertise nor resources to develop these river management plans and if required this would entail an expensive fiscal note for LD 1979.

Brookfield Renewable, the owner of the most hydro powered dams in Maine is a primary supporter of LD 1979 and is an international conglomerate with a value of \$60 billion!

This Canadian company is using scare tactics and fear mongering to avoid making required investments in effective fish passage on the Kennebec River that are necessary to allow Federal listed endangered Atlantic salmon and the suite of sea-run fish that are so important to Maine's marine economy upriver to their historic spawning grounds.

The Lockwood Dam is an excellent example of the continued failure of Brookfield Renewable to successfully pass sea-run fish beyond their hydro powered dam located between Waterville and Winslow on the Kennebec River.

Past Maine dam removals and successful fish passage requirements have resulted in sea-run fishery restorations on the lower Penobscot River with the removal of the Great Works during 2012 and Veazie Dam in 2013 and a historic stream like bypass at Howland in 2016. On the Sebasticook River Fort Halifax Dam was removed during 2008 and Edwards Dam was removed on the Kennebec River during 1999.

This proposed legislation would hamstring the state agencies and basically stop sea-run fishery restoration in Maine. Since the Edwards Dam removal during 1999, Maine has been seen Nationwide as an inspiration for effective sea-run fish passage in other states.

Sincerely,
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