



Statement on the Penobscot River Restoration
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Today is a historic turning point for the Penobscot River and its communities. It is exciting to enter the next phase of this project – one of the most important river restoration efforts our country has ever seen.

Rivers are remarkably resilient, and the Penobscot is no exception. Even after years of abuse they can come back to life. By removing the Penobscot's two lowermost dams, which impede upstream passage for 11 species of native sea-run fish we will launch a river renaissance from mountains to sea that will be celebrated for generations to come.

On the Penobscot we are witnessing the future of river conservation. Thanks to a groundbreaking collaboration, the river will soon be a model for what we hope to achieve on other major rivers across the country – improved health, restored fish and wildlife, balanced energy production, and communities revitalized by new recreation and economic opportunities.

Across the country, over 700 dams have been removed for environmental, economic and public safety reasons. Removing the Penobscot's lowermost two dams and installing fish passage on a third will restore access to roughly 1,000 miles of habitat for the river's fish, making this project one of the most significant dam removal efforts ever.

In the future, healthy rivers and clean water will be more valuable than we ever imagined. With climate change bringing more intense storms, floods and droughts, a healthy river must be the keystone of a community's plan for safety, economic well-being and quality of life.

We must protect and restore our rivers so that they can continue to serve as the lifelines and lifeblood for the people, fish and wildlife that depend on them. This effort on the Penobscot shows us the way forward.

American Rivers named the Penobscot, New England's second largest river, as one of *America's Most Endangered Rivers*TM every year from 1989 to 1996 because of existing or proposed dams. We look forward to the day when we can declare the Penobscot "Most Improved".

The Penobscot River restoration is truly a collaborative effort. We would not be where we are today without the strong and diverse partnership involving federal, state and local levels of government, corporations, conservation organizations, private foundations and individual donors.

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