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Statement of Congressman Mike Michaud
Celebrating the Milestone Accomplishments for the Penobscot River Restoration Project
Riverfront Park, Old Town, Maine
August 21, 2008

In a state with many great rivers, the Penobscot is a special one for me. I grew up along this river, worked along this river, and have fought for this river in the Maine Legislature and in Washington. I learned early on that it is important to protect the rivers, mountains, and coasts of this great state to ensure that the people who depend on this landscape for their livelihoods can continue to do so for generations.

Many of you have heard the story of how I became involved in public office, campaigning to clean up a polluted Penobscot River. The Penobscot River Restoration Project demonstrates what we can all do when we work together.

As a result of this project, fish will once again be able to navigate the waters under their own power – in returning to the river they will restore old traditions and bring new activity to the banks of the Penobscot. Fishing, paddling, birding, and hunting will be strengthened and new opportunities for river-focused development will present themselves in cities and towns along the waterway.

All this will be done with little to no loss of hydroelectric generating power as remaining dams throughout the watershed are reconfigured to produce more power. The partners in this project, particularly PPL, should be recognized for the outstanding work they did in creating this innovative agreement and making it a reality.

But there is still more to be done - we celebrate today only a step in the process. I will keep on pushing for continued federal support of this project and I encourage all partners to continue doing their own work to move this project forward.

Congratulations are due, however, today, as we enter the next phase of this project.

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