



Statement on the Penobscot River Restoration
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Maine Audubon celebrates this milestone day of the Penobscot River Restoration Project, because it heralds so many days of wide-ranging ecological benefits for the Penobscot River's wildlife and people. Today's announcement brings more certainty to realizing the vision of a complex river ecosystem restored to health.

Teeming with nutrients delivered from upstream tributaries and by fish swimming in from downstream ocean waters, the Penobscot River of the future will nourish an abundant cycle of wildlife species.

It will provide ample food for aquatic insects, mussels, and amphibians. In turn, herring, alewives, eels, and sturgeon as well as diving ducks such as the Barrow's goldeneye will eat insects, fish eggs, worms, and mussels. Fish such as striped bass and Atlantic salmon will feed on the smaller fish. Kingfishers, minks, otters, great blue herons, ospreys, and bald eagles will catch mussels, amphibians, and small and large fish. And ducks and their young can also be taken by weasels, mink, raccoons, and bears.

For anyone who loves to watch wildlife, a restored Penobscot River will put on a great show. That's crucial for river communities and the economy of Maine, where wildlife watching brings more than \$800 million into the state, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The agency also reported last year that Maine has the highest percentage of wildlife watchers of any state—an astonishing 57 percent of the population.