



PENOBSCOT PASSAGES

JANUARY 2006

A note to our web site visitors: Beginning in 2006, the Penobscot River Restoration Trust will also be producing a hard-copy newsletter. If you would like to be included on a mailing list to receive the newsletter, please email us at info@penobscotriver.org.

\$1 Million Award to Support Restoration Project

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has awarded the Penobscot River Restoration Trust \$1 million through the Maine Atlantic Salmon Conservation Fund to support restoration of self-sustaining runs of Atlantic salmon and 10 other species of sea-run fish. The funds will be used toward purchase of the Veazie, Great Works, and Howland dams, and require an additional \$1 million match from non-federal funds. With the removal of the two largest dams closest to the ocean, the decommissioning and installation of a nature-like fishway at the Howland dam, and improvements at four other dams owned by PPL Corporation, access to 500 miles of river will be significantly improved while hydropower production is maintained.

"This award contributes to important early momentum in raising funds for the restoration project," says Laura Rose Day, Executive Director of the Trust. "We are pleased to have the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation be a part of making the project a success."

The Penobscot River is considered the last best hope for restoring self-sustaining runs of Atlantic salmon in the United States. The award from the Maine Atlantic Salmon Conservation Fund, which was established in 2000 to promote recovery of Atlantic salmon through a special appropriation by Maine's Congressional delegation, moves us a significant step forward in purchasing the dams. With strong support from our Congressional leaders, an additional \$500,000 was secured for acquisition in the 2006 budget through the Department of Commerce. We are grateful for the delegation's leadership and ongoing support for the project. A total of \$3.5 million has now been secured from federal funds. A total of \$25 million must be raised within the next three and a half years to purchase the three dams; the Penobscot River Restoration Trust began the five-year option period to purchase the dams in June of 2004. A private fundraising campaign has also begun. Rick Warren, a lifelong resident of Bangor, Maine, is Chair of the private capital campaign.

"I am very pleased to be leading this once-in-a-lifetime and historic effort to restore the Penobscot River. It is personally meaningful for a number of reasons, mainly because the agreement really represents a win-win for everyone," Warren says. "We are rebalancing hydropower on the river, restoring the entire ecosystem, including the native fishery and wild Atlantic salmon, increasing

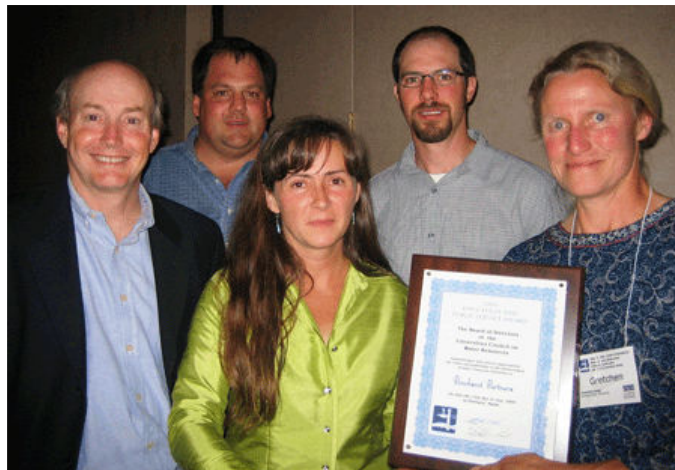
opportunities for outdoor recreation and economic and community development, and revitalizing one of the Penobscot Indian Nation's most treasured cultural resources. The agreement to restore this river represents true collaboration and I could not be more dedicated to our success."

Warren leads a group of core volunteer leaders who are engaged and working strategically to support the capital campaign in its earliest stages.

"I am encouraged by our efforts thus far and I look forward to continued success as we gain even more momentum," states Day. "I am pleased by the terrific group of Honorary Co-Chairs at the helm of our effort, including: Governor Baldacci, Senator Snowe, Senator Collins, Congressman Allen, Congressman Michaud, Senator George Mitchell, Senator Bill Cohen, John Echohawk, and Keller George."

Penobscot River Restoration Trust Honored with Awards

Last July, the partners in the restoration project were honored with the 2005 Education and Public Service Award from the Universities Council on Water Resources (UCOWR) for their role in negotiation of the Lower Penobscot River Settlement Agreement, which was signed in 2004 and paves the way for restoring self-sustaining native fisheries on the river. UCOWR is an organization of U.S. universities, non-academic institutions and international affiliates leading in water resources education, research and public service. Penobscot River Restoration Trust staff Laura Rose Day and George Aponte Clarke joined partners Andy Goode of the Atlantic Salmon Federation and Jeff Reardon of Trout Unlimited in accepting the award at the UCOWR annual dinner in Portland, Maine.



"This is one of the largest, most creative river restoration projects in our nation's history. Successful implementation of the project will revive not only native fisheries but social, cultural and economic traditions of New England's second largest river."

- Universities Council on Water Resources web site, 2005.

Community Outreach

Community outreach efforts in the project area are gaining momentum with the hiring of the community liaison and outreach coordinator earlier this fall. Cheryl Daigle of Old Town is working with the Penobscot River Restoration Trust to build and maintain a strong base of community support for

the restoration project. A graduate of the University of Maine with a M.S. in Ecology and Environmental Sciences, Daigle has 11 years experience in the conservation field.

“It is exciting to be part of such an innovative collaboration to restore the natural processes of the Penobscot River, while at the same time honoring the cultural history of the region and recognizing the economic needs of the communities that reside here,” says Daigle.

Daigle has begun meeting with town managers, local legislators, congressional staff, business leaders and representatives from various civic organizations, to ensure community members are informed about the project and to be a resource for those interested in the project as implementation moves forward. She is also responsible for developing outreach materials, such as the PRRT newsletter, web site and display.

Staff working on the Penobscot River Restoration Project and members of the ambassador’s group have been speaking to conservation organizations, business groups, and town councils to highlight the benefits of the river’s restoration to the environmental and economic health of the region. Recent venues include the Common Ground Fair in Unity, ME, the Green Lake Fishery Hatchery, the Penobscot River Conservation Association, and the Tuesday Forum, a professional women’s organization in Bangor. If you know of an organization that would like a presentation on the restoration project, or if you are interested in volunteering to help with various outreach activities as the project moves forward, please contact Cheryl Daigle at (207)232-9969 or cheryl@penobscotriver.org.



Facilities for eel passage and a fish ladder will be constructed on the Milford Dam in Old Town, Maine (Photo taken December 31, 2005).

Science Steering Committee to be Developed

On December 1, 2005, an organizational committee of scientists from the University of Maine, state and federal government agencies, and PRRP partner organizations met to discuss development of a steering committee focused on scientific research related to implementation of the restoration project. This is one of the key recommendations that came out of the science forum held in October of 2004 at the university, *The Penobscot River Science Forum: Exploring Research Opportunities on the Penobscot*. The steering committee will be tasked with developing a scientific clearinghouse that coordinates past, current, and ongoing research that is directly linked to monitoring changes on the river as dams are removed and fish passage enhanced. Led by Aram Calhoun, wetlands scientist for Maine Audubon, and George Aponte Clarke, Deputy Director for PRRT, the meeting earlier this month focused on identifying individuals to be invited to join the steering committee, determining how the clearinghouse might be structured, and which organization is best suited to house the information database.

The clearinghouse will build on a literature review and data inventory of past and current research in the Penobscot River watershed currently being compiled by Catherine Schmitt, science writer for the Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Environmental and Watershed Research, as part of the "Penobscot River Synthesis." Anticipating increased interest in the river as the restoration moves forward, the Synthesis will provide scientists, educators, and communities with needed information on water quality trends, expected impacts of dam removal, river flora and fauna, environmental history, and current monitoring efforts. The project includes a clearinghouse of current scientific research, a searchable bibliography of books, reports, and references about the river, a data inventory, and descriptive summaries of river-related topics. For more information, visit <http://www.pearl.maine.edu/windows/penobscot/index.htm> or contact Catherine Schmitt at the Mitchell Center , 207-581-3286.

Spring Seminars Planned on Penobscot River Research

The Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Environmental and Watershed Research, in collaboration with the University of Maine 's Ecology and Environmental Science Program, is planning its spring seminar series "Penobscot River Research - Looking to the Future." With interest in the river increasing as the Penobscot River Restoration Project moves forward, the intent of the series is to determine what we currently know about the Penobscot River ecosystem. The seminar schedule is available at www.umaine.edu/waterresearch/outreach/lecture_series.htm. Seminars are open to all and are held at 12-noon in Norman Smith Hall on the University of Maine 's Orono campus. If you are coming from off-campus and need directions or a parking permit, contact Ruth Hallsworth at hallsworth@maine.edu or 207/581-3196.

NEW! Visit our Web site to read our new column about the fish and wildlife of the Penobscot River, and the people who live along the river's shores:

Encounters with the Wild Penobscot



Please send an email to info@penobscotriver.org with "unsubscribe" in the subject line if you do not want to receive this email in the future.

PENOBSCOT RIVER RESTORATION TRUST

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