

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Smart hydro project

A July 17 letter to your paper by Rep. Ken Fletcher of Winslow raised concerns about the state's commitment to restore sea-run fish on the Penobscot River. He suggests the state's fishery agencies are short-term thinkers and that the plan to remove dams will result in reduced energy production thus resulting in more greenhouse gases.

The state of Maine sees the Penobscot River Restoration Project as "Smart Hydro" — a blending of clean renewable energy and efficient fish passage.

This smart hydro project will remove two dams, however, it will not be a contributing factor to increased natural gas consumption. The dam owners, PPL Maine, have approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to increase power generation at alternate locations and to re-commission a third. Because energy losses from the dam removals are offset by additional generation at these alternate dams the project maintains all of PPL Maine's net electricity generation within the Penobscot watershed.

The Penobscot River Restora-

tion Project is fundamental to the goals of the state. The strength of the project is that it promises an extraordinary level of restoration — well over 500 miles of habitat for 11 species of sea-run fish — with no net change in renewable energy. The project provides the people of Maine with clear socio-economic benefits: restored thriving rivers and opportunities for economic growth while maintaining hydropower production. It sounds like smart hydro to us.

A true win-win-win that makes it a national model — something we've come to expect from the people of Maine.

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