



Aerial photo by J.Royte/TNC/Lighthawk

Greetings!

Thanks to countless people within the Penobscot basin, and across Maine and beyond, life on the Penobscot River system is on the rebound!

This past June, the Penobscot River Restoration Trust and the many partners in the project celebrated completion of the Howland bypass - the last big step to allow fish to reach habitat that they need to thrive and survive. Combined with the removal of the Great Works (2012) and Veazie (2013) dams, and the fish lift at the Milford dam, Atlantic salmon and other sea-run fish now have greatly improved access to about 1,000 miles of historic habitat for the first time in many generations.

Now it's time for Laura to say farewell. Having reached this milestone, the staff members of the Penobscot River Restoration Trust are moving on and we'll no longer keep offices on Indian Island or in Augusta. The Penobscot River Restoration Trust board, made up of the key public and private partner organizations and the Penobscot Nation, will complete remaining project tasks, such as monitoring the fish passage at Howland, for some time to come.

It is exciting to see the fruits of our labor so far! Atlantic salmon and other sea-run fish have finished this summer's upstream migrations, and their return back to the sea is beginning,

completing the journey that connects the ocean to rivers, lakes, streams, and forests. As they complete this ancient cycle, the Penobscot River restoration gains momentum.

As of the 2016 migration, American shad have rebounded from almost zero to nearly 8,000. Anglers catch them in waters where the fish have been absent for a century. Scientists found salmon above the Howland bypass and run numbers are hanging on with 506 counted at the Milford lift this year.

Nearly two million alewives and blue-back herring - up from fewer than 100,000 before the dams were removed - thrilled schoolchildren and inspired a festival and cross-country race at Leonard's Mills Logging Museum in Bradley. Osprey, eagles, striped and smallmouth bass fed on the silvery fish. People ate and smoked the herring, and the herring also made great early season lobster bait.

Hundreds of paddlers - from teens to elders, hailing from Old Town to Alaska - raced through newly free-flowing rapids in the national whitewater races hosted by the Penobscot Nation. Riverside communities and businesses supported them. The people and wildlife of the Penobscot are energized by the renewed river.

The restoration of the Penobscot River will continue to unfold; most of the Penobscot Trust's work is now done. It has been an honor and privilege to work with the people of the Penobscot basin, towns, conservations groups, the state and federal governments, and the Penobscot Nation, to make the Penobscot River Restoration Project a reality. The Penobscot River's sea-run fish would not have this new, fighting chance without you.

We hope that you will stay engaged with the river as it recovers. General information about the Penobscot Project will remain available at www.penobscotrivers.org. To connect with partners in the Penobscot River Restoration Project, please contact:

Project implementation: Andy Goode andy@asf.comcastbiz.net

Science-related issues: Josh Royte/Molly Payne Wynne molly.paynewynne@tnc.org

Media inquiries: Judy Berk judy@nrcm.org

Enjoy the magnificent and rebounding Penobscot River!

With thanks,

Laura Rose Day, former Executive Director, Penobscot River Restoration Trust
Don Hudson, President, Penobscot River Restoration Trust board