

From: [Paye, Laura](#)
To: ["Stephen Heinz"; Jeff Reardon](#)
Cc: [Jeff Bush](#); [Latti, Elizabeth](#)
Subject: RE: West Branch Penobscot Dewatering
Date: Thursday, July 30, 2026 2:18:00 PM
Attachments: [20260506 DEP Letter RE McKay outages.docx](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)

Jeff and Steve,

Thank you for notifying me, I have been notified by several parties, including Brookfield, about the outage event and ensuing fish mortality and I will save this email to the record I have been compiling on the repeated outages. I cannot access a Facebook link for privacy purposes on a state computer, but I saw Chris Howe's email regarding the fish mortality.

Steve has already seen it, but I am attaching the Department's most recent comment in the FERC docket regarding McKay station outages.

I anticipate we will be receiving WQC applications for the Ripogenus and Penobscot Mill projects in August, and I will add you all to the interested parties list to receive updates to those proceedings.

Thank you,
Laura

Laura Paye (she/her)
Hydropower Coordinator
Bureau of Land Resources
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
(207) 219-9563

From: Stephen Heinz <heinz@maine.rr.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 5:03 PM
To: Jeff Reardon <jreardon@asfmaine.org>
Cc: Elizabeth Latti <liz.latti@gmail.com>; Paye, Laura <Laura.Paye@maine.gov>; Jeff Bush <jbush@tumaine.org>
Subject: Re: West Branch Penobscot Dewatering

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Jeff,

Thanks for highlighting this. I am in the process of putting all the information together for wider distribution and to file with FERC. The boots on the ground performed extremely well - the best photos ever obtained following an unscheduled trip event.

This underlines the importance of getting a USGS flow gage installed prior to the issuance of the new license, and have been working Liz, John Perry and Laura toward that end. Brookfield continues to provide us with additional justification.

Regards,

Steve

781-4762 (voice/fax only)

On Jul 28, 2026, at 4:43 PM, Jeff Reardon <jreardon@asfmaine.org> wrote:

Elizabeth and Laura:

I just came home to a Facebook post from Chris Howe, who I believe guides on the West Branch, of another dewatering event from Ripogenous Dam. He's shared a video with photos of dead fish, including at least one juvenile salmon.

It looks like this happened late yesterday afternoon/early evening. Here's a link to the post. Let me know if for some reason it does not work.

I wanted to make sure that DIFW and DEP are aware of yesterday's dewatering event on the West Branch Penobscot below Ripogenous Dam. Steve Heinz, copied here, has documented several other recent similar events, and I was in the middle of one two years ago in July while staying at Big Eddy. If this happened once a decade, it could perhaps be dismissed as an accident or an act of God. When it happens on a regular basis, it's a problem that needs to be addressed. Having this happen repeatedly is almost certainly related to some combination of inadequate infrastructure and/or staffing.

This seems like a clear violation of the FERC license and the Maine DEP water quality certificate. The West Branch is perhaps the nation's finest landlocked salmon river. This situation needs to be addressed. The ongoing FERC license process should provide a way to get a long-term fix, but in the meantime, Brookfield should be putting interim measures in place to prevent another occurrence.

Jeff Reardon

Project Manager

Atlantic Salmon Federation / Fédération du Saumon Atlantique

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