



## LOCAL 4-9

July 27, 2021

Kathy Davis Howatt  
Hydropower Coordinator  
Bureau of Land Resources  
Maine Department of Environmental Protection  
17 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0017

Re: Shawmut Hydroelectric Project FERC No. 2322  
Section 401 Water Quality Certification (DEP Application #L-19751-33-H-N)

Dear Kathy:

I am writing on behalf of my membership of 470 United Steelworker members that work at the Sappi Somerset Plant in Skowhegan. While many of my members are experienced outdoors men and women, they understand the balance between maintaining an environment that supports our fisheries and wildlife as well as their workplace. Statistics have shown that for every paper mill job, seven jobs in the outlying communities are also supported.

Our plant in Skowhegan has been extremely fortunate in that we have been able to attract significant capital improvements over the years which has helped us maintain our competitive edge in several markets. We have had to react to declining markets by diversifying and today continue to service several different markets in order to protect our assets and by extension our very jobs. Closing the Shawmut Dam would have extensive costs upwards of 50 million dollars in the beginning phases of the project with the potential for annual maintenance costs moving forward for years. From many of my members perspectives, spending our capital improvement funding should be focused on continuing to diversify to protect our jobs and maintain our competitive edge in the markets that we are successful in.

My members are also aware of effective fish passage facilities that have been cost effective with limited adverse effects as well as maintaining compliance with state water quality standards. I have also been contacted by IBEW members from Sister Locals that would be adversely affected by the loss of their jobs upon removal of dams in the State of Maine. On

behalf of my members that work at the Sappi facility, we ask that the Maine DEP support our jobs by not decommissioning the Shawmut Dam, but to construct fish passage ways as a means to support the recovery of diadromous fish in the local region.

Thank you,

C. Patrick Carleton  
President, United Steelworkers Local 4-9