

AMENDMENT ONE
TO THE
SACO RIVER STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

State of Maine
Department of Marine Resources
State House Station #21
Augusta, ME 04333-0021

March 8, 1994

The Maine Department of Marine Resources, in cooperation with other state and federal agencies and a coalition of private conservation groups, proposes to enter into an agreement with the Central Maine Power Company concerning fish passage facilities on the Saco River. This agreement establishes time tables and criteria under which upstream and downstream fish passage facilities will be constructed on the main stem Saco River from head-of-tide in Biddeford/Saco upstream to, and including, the Hiram Project (FERC #2530). The intent of this agreement is to further the management goal and objectives of *The Saco River Strategic Plan for Fisheries Management* [Saco River Plan] which was adopted by the Department of Marine Resources on March 25, 1988. The management goal of the Saco River Plan is to manage all sport and commercial fish species of the Saco River for optimum habitat utilization, abundance, and public benefit. The Department of Marine Resources' objective of the Saco River Plan is to restore runs of anadromous American shad and river herring to the Saco River and its tributaries upstream to the base of the Hiram dam. The strategy to achieve the management goal is to negotiate through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and Maine Department of Environmental Protection hydropower licensing process for the construction of upstream and downstream fish passage facilities for adult and juvenile sea-run Atlantic salmon, American shad, and sea-run alewives. Followup studies would be undertaken to document the effectiveness of passage facilities.

In accordance with the strategy of the Saco River Plan, the DMR, DEP, SPO, IF&W, ASRSC, USF&WS, NMFS, NHF&G, Cities of Biddeford and Saco, and conservation groups (ASF, TU, American Rivers) have been negotiating a fish passage agreement under the auspices of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission hydropower relicensing process. The major elements of the fish passage agreement and status of fish passage facilities are as follows:

<u>DAM</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>UPSTREAM FISH PASSAGE STATUS</u>	<u>DOWNSTREAM FISH PASSAGE STATUS</u>
Cataract & York	Saco/Biddeford	Completed & operational: May, 1993	Completed & operational: May, 1993
Springs*	Saco/Biddeford	Completed & operational: May 1, 1996	Non-generating dam; downstream passage not required
Bradbury*	Saco/Biddeford	Completed & operational: May 1, 1997	Non-generating dam; downstream passage not required
Skelton+	Dayton/Buxton	Completed & operational: May 1, 1998, or within 3yrs of date of New License from FERC, whichever is later	Same date/conditions as upstream passage
Bar Mills	Buxton/Hollis	Bar Mills, West Buxton, Bonny Eagle & Hiram to be treated as a group with the timing and site of upstream passage to be recommended by state/federal fisheries agencies based on progress of fish restoration as measured by criteria developed jointly by fisheries agencies and other parties to the Agreement. Assessments to	Interim passage provided now. Permanent passage within 2yrs of receipt of FERC License Amendment.
West Buxton	Buxton/Hollis		Same as Bar Mills

		be conducted every 4yrs beginning in 1999 and progressing through 2011. Upstream passage at the first of the four dams not to be operational earlier than May 1, 2005. Fish passage construction to be spaced no less than 2yrs apart at each dam. Trap & truck to continue from Skelton under fish agencies' supervision until passage is provided at dams.	
Bonny Eagle	Hollis/Standish		Interim passage provided now. Permanent passage within 2yrs of receipt of FERC License Amendment.
Hiram	Hiram/Baldwin	For salmon only	Not later than 2yrs following scheduled annual production stocking of Atlantic salmon above Hiram dam
Swans Falls	Fryeburg	For salmon only. Fish passage construction may be scheduled concurrently with Hiram fish passage.	Same as Hiram

*Depending on the results of fish behavior studies in 1994, the Springs and Bradbury fish passage dates may be transposed.

+Fish lift with trap & truck facilities for interim trap/truck program above dams upstream of Skelton

The Department of Marine Resources, in cooperation with other state and federal agencies and conservation groups, intends to carry out this cooperative fish restoration program with the Central Maine Power Company to the extent that funds are provided for that purpose. The DMR will develop shad and alewife stocking schedules for the Saco River and provide input on CMP-funded studies of upstream and downstream passage efficiency at Saco River dams, analysis of returning adult anadromous fish populations, and cooperative assessments of the progress of anadromous fish restoration on the Saco River. In addition, the DMR will, in consultation with other state/federal agencies, recommend further fish passage facilities as necessary to meet our objectives of restoring shad and alewives to the Saco River.