

MITSC Analysis of LDs 72, 748 and 584

1. LDs 72 and 748 are identical bills.
2. All three LDs affect only the first two dams on the St. Croix water system: the Woodland Dam and the Grand Falls Dam.
3. All three LD's take into consideration concerns about the salmon hatchery above the Grand Falls Dam and the fishing enterprises on Spednic Lake.
4. LDs 72 and 748 provide and expedited restoration of alewife: river and blueback herring, to the lower reaches of the St. Croix water system. (MITSC Recommendation #3)
5. LD 584 provides a conservative approach to this restoration contrary to MITSC's recommendation that the restoration of the alewife be expedited.
6. LDs 72 and 748 do not include scientific measures or monitoring.
7. LD 584 includes monitoring only of the bass population.

Additional Comments

1. We should be concerned with more than the bass population monitoring in studying the return of the alewife to their ancestral waters. The gathering of dependable scientific evidence at this first stage will strengthen MITSC's first recommendation: *That river herring (alewife and blueback herring) be restored to the St. Croix watershed at the natural carrying capacity of the river system.*
2. Although all of the bills under consideration accomplish the goal of the MITSC recommendations, consultation during the preparation of these bills did not happen. Consultation is the core of MITSC's second recommendation: *That the MITSC Executive Director work with the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Passamaquoddy Tribal Representative to the Maine Legislature, the Department of Marine Resources, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and other interested parties and stakeholders to craft and support legislation to open the Grand Falls dam fish passage for sea-run alewife.*
3. In an effort to achieve MITSC's third recommendation: *the State of Maine should work with the Tribes to coordinate fisheries management in the St. Croix watershed to better meet the mutual resource needs of the State of Maine and the Passamaquoddy People and to realize the Passamaquoddy vision of river herring (alewife and blueback herring) restoration within an expedited time framework*, therefore, **legislation relative to the restoration of the alewife and the watershed should include a project management board that includes all parties to the restoration of the St. Croix watershed.** We would like to add that there should be equal state and Tribal participation in this board, and that MITSC should also be one of these parties. We have jurisdiction over waters within the watershed and are committed to strong conservation measures.
4. All LD's will move the State of Maine forward in its commitment to restore our watersheds. We need only look at the Penobscot River Restoration Project to see how crucial the alewife is to this process.