

# Celebration on Bangor Waterfront set to mark river's revival

**T**alk to a few longtime Penobscot River valley residents and they'll be able to tell you what a polluted mess the river was not so many years ago.

Recently I talked to one such man at a local salmon club whose memories of those years are so vivid and long-lasting, he still can't believe people swim in the Penobscot today, let alone eat fish they catch there.

We've come a long way ... and the Penobscot has, too.

On Saturday, a group of people who agree with that sentiment will gather on the Bangor Waterfront for the second annual Penobscot River Revival, celebrating the return to a healthy river.

The festival, a production of

the Lower Penobscot Watershed Coalition with help from several partner organizations, will run

from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. and be held near the harbor master's building.

Cheryl Daigle of the Penobscot River Restoration Trust said the festival gives those who live near the river

the chance to mark the progress that's been made, and to imagine the progress that will continue to be made in the future.

"The festival is meant to bring people together on the riverfront, to celebrate all the

good work being done to protect the river to bring it back to health," Daigle said. "There will be opportunities for people to get out onto the river, paddling,

day doing scientific research or [working as] river guides."

This year's celebration will be a bit more ambitious than last year's, Daigle said.

"We've got more artists, some more exhibitors," Daigle said.

"We'll have food vendors there, which did not happen last year. There's been a lot more interest in the festival this year. We've got some new sponsors, so it's a renewed commitment from past sponsors and we've brought on some new ones."

Music will be provided by The Eric Green Band and Stiff Whisker and the Driftwood Kids, and Penobscot Indian Nation drummers will be on hand at 10 a.m. to start the festival in style.

In a news release, Gordon Rus-

sell, chairman of the Lower Penobscot Watershed Council, summed up the group's goal in staging the festival.

"Once again, the Penobscot River Revival offers a tremendous opportunity to draw community attention toward the Penobscot River in positive ways, while raising awareness about migratory fish and the numerous efforts to restore the health of the Penobscot River," Russell said.

Peter Steenstra, coordinator of education and outreach for the Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery in East Orland, said the festival marks years of incremental progress.

"The efforts of many people and organizations over past

years have markedly improved the quality of the river and its watershed, after years of neglect," Steenstra said in the news release. "The Penobscot River Revival provides that visible and tangible realization of the aesthetic, recreational and economic benefit sound stewardship can provide."

Admission to the festival is free.



**JOHN HOLYOKE**

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CHERYL DAIGLE

and to learn about fish and wildlife and fisheries restoration efforts. They'll have the chance to talk to people who are out on the river almost every