



Veazie Dam Removal Facts & Figures

Veazie Dam is located on the Penobscot River in Veazie and Eddington, Maine, near the head of tide. The buttress-style dam is 830 feet long, with a maximum height of approximately 30 feet. It is operated as a run-of-river facility, with inflow to the impoundment (head-pond) equal to the outflow from the dam and powerhouse. The impoundment above the dam extends approximately 3.8 miles upstream.

The first major dam to be built in the area of the current dam was in the mid 1800's – it was built on a diagonal more or less parallel to the shore, forming a "wing" shape, used by the lumber industry. Dams associated with sawmills have been recorded at the site since 1833. The current configuration of the dam was built in 1913. The site was purchased in 1889 for use as one of Maine's first hydroelectric facilities.

The Veazie Dam is scheduled to be removed beginning in 2013 and to be completed over two years. Together with the removal of the Great Works Dam in Old Town and Bradley, Maine (removed in the summer of 2012), the removal of the Veazie Dam will restore 9.3 miles of the lower Penobscot to its free-flowing state.

In the Penobscot River, populations of native sea-run fish are at or near all-time lows. Dams like the lower Penobscot Dams, which act as migration barriers, have been widely recognized as the most significant remaining impediment to the recovery of Atlantic salmon and other sea-run fish.

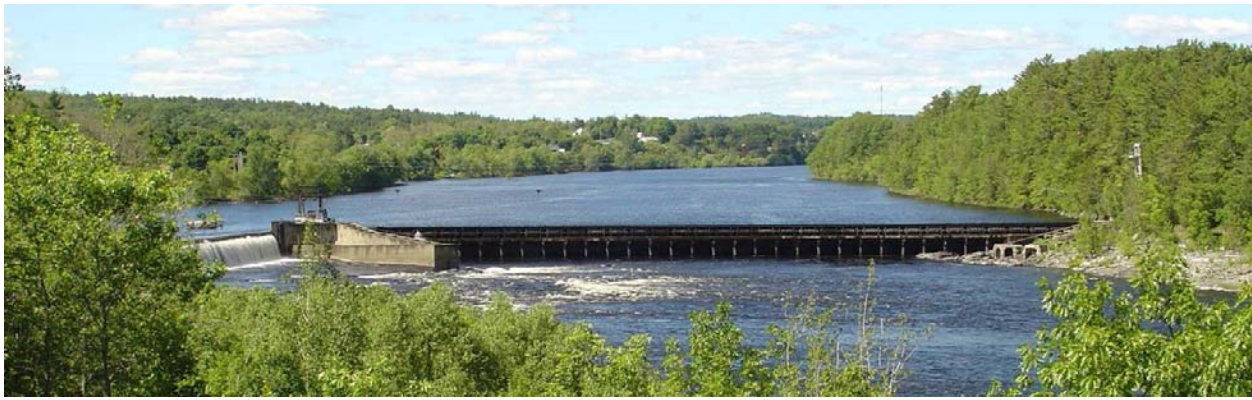
Combined with Great Works Dam removal in 2012 and additional fish passage improvements at dams in the upper watershed, the Veazie Dam removal is a key component of this historic effort to greatly improve access to 1000 miles of spawning, rearing, and nursery habitat for endangered Atlantic salmon, American shad and river herring, and benefits the entire suite of native sea-run fish. Removal of the Veazie Dam will restore 100% of the historic spawning, rearing, and nursery habitat for "lower river" species: endangered shortnose sturgeon, Atlantic sturgeon, striped bass, rainbow smelt, and tomcod.

In addition to restoring access to spawning habitat, the project's unprecedented multi-species approach to fisheries restoration will restore populations of other migratory fish species such as alewife and blueback herring that allow salmon to thrive in the upper reaches of the watershed and improve their chances of survival as they head out to sea. Increases in river herring will likely expand the food supply for many commercially important species in the Gulf of Maine that prey on these smaller fish, including cod and haddock.

Energy enhancements at six Black Bear Hydro facilities means energy production will remain at least the same as when the Project began, and likely increase.

Successful completion of the Penobscot Project will allow the Penobscot Indian Nation to more fully engage in traditional cultural practices and gain sustenance from the river that is their homeland.

The Penobscot Salmon Club -- the nation's first salmon club -- was organized in 1884, followed by Veazie Salmon Club in 1978 and Eddington Salmon Club in 1982. The salmon clubs began a tradition to send the first salmon caught each year in the Penobscot to the U.S. President. President George Bush in 1992 was the last President to participate in the tradition, which was suspended due to declining wild Atlantic salmon populations.



Atlantic salmon management operations were conducted at the Veazie fish trap (shown at center of dam in photo) up until the dam’s removal. Data was collected on each fish. Up to 650 male and female Atlantic salmon are taken to the Craig Brook Fish Hatchery for brood stock. Prior to Great Works Dam removal in 2012, the remainder of the salmon were trucked past the dam and released in Old Town. After the Veazie Dam is removed, salmon trapping operations will be managed at the new fish lift being constructed at the Milford Dam, which will become the first dam on the river.

Major funding for the Veazie Dam removal comes from a variety of private and public sources including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Wyss Foundation, and various other private and foundation sources and individuals.

The Project

The Penobscot River Restoration Project is an innovative public-private effort to restore self-sustaining runs of Atlantic salmon, American shad, river herring, and seven other species of native sea-run fish while rebalancing hydropower generation on Maine's largest river system. An unprecedented agreement between the Penobscot Indian Nation, seven conservation groups, hydropower companies, and state and federal agencies resolves longstanding disputes over management of river resources.

Project Status

The Great Works Dam was removed during the summer of 2012. The Veazie Dam removal, beginning in July of 2013, will be completed over two years. The Trust has been collaborating with the town of Howland on the cleanup and preparation of the site of the future bypass, along with adjacent areas impacted by a former tannery on the site; shared community visioning for redevelopment of the site is ongoing. Black Bear Hydro is constructing a fish lift at the Milford Dam, which will become the first dam on the river, and will improve fish passage at three other dams, while moving forward with additional energy increases at the Stillwater and Orono dams.

Project Partnership

The Penobscot River Restoration Trust is the non-profit organization charged with completing the core aspects of the restoration effort. Members of the Trust are the Penobscot Indian Nation, American Rivers, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Maine Audubon, Natural Resources Council of Maine, Trout Unlimited, and The Nature Conservancy. Project partners include the U.S. Department of Interior (Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the State of Maine, PPL Corporation, the former dam owners, and more recently, Black Bear Hydro Partners, LLC.

www.penobscotriver.org

