



## NOAA FISHERIES

*Since the closure of fishways on the St. Croix, NOAA has been an active voice for the restoration of migratory access to native spawning habitat for alewife and blueback herring. Restoring river-run fish have ecological, economic, cultural and social benefits – providing an important food source for groundfish and other wildlife with the potential to generate new jobs and tourist- and fishery-based revenues for Maine communities.*

Here are some highlights:

- Until 2007, NOAA Fisheries provided funding for river herring counts at Milltown Dam.
- We worked in partnership with the State Department, Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies to address fish passage on the St. Croix in a holistic manner.
- In March 2013, NOAA reaffirmed its support for unfettered access for river herring on the river before the Maine legislature’s Joint Standing Committee on Marine Resources, providing invited testimony on LD 72 “An Act to Open the St. Croix River to River Herring.”
- In partnership with the Gulf of Maine Council, we provided funding and technical support for a focused study of the interrelationship and co-management of alewives and smallmouth bass in the St. Croix River, Maine/New Brunswick. The study concluded that anadromous alewives did not have a negative effect on adult smallmouth bass.
- NOAA provided technical assistance and funding to a study evaluating the ecological linkages between river herring and groundfish. Results of the study highlight the use of anadromous fish as forage for a variety of groundfish species. NOAA is conducting a second year of sampling of diets of near-shore groundfish in the Merrymeeting and Penobscot Bay.
- Over the years, we have consulted with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on potential impacts to migratory fish and habitat Endangered Species Act listed species in Maine. We provided conservation measures, including safe, timely and effective fish passage, to mitigate potential impacts.
- In response to a petition to list alewife and blueback herring as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, we are currently conducting a status review to determine if either species warrants listing.
  - For more information on the status review process and river herring please visit: [http://www.nero.noaa.gov/prot\\_res/CandidateSpeciesProgram/RiverHerringSOC.htm](http://www.nero.noaa.gov/prot_res/CandidateSpeciesProgram/RiverHerringSOC.htm).