

PLACE ON NOAA LETTERHEAD

May 9, 2010

Hello:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is writing this letter to provide you with important information in regards to dams and endangered Atlantic salmon. Many of Maine's rivers and streams are home to fish that migrate between the rivers and the ocean, including Atlantic salmon that are listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). We are asking for your help. We would like to learn where assistance is needed to provide fish passage at dams. In addition, we are inviting you to help in developing a General Conservation Plan (Plan) that will help balance conservation of important habitat for Atlantic salmon with existing land use.

On behalf of the NMFS, Kleinschmidt Associates—a professional water resources planning firm in Pittsfield, Maine—will be conducting a voluntary survey of dam owners to gather important information to help us make informed decisions in the development of the Conservation Plan. Furthermore, this survey will provide an opportunity for dam owners to express willingness to participate in the Plan development, which will allow them to receive firsthand information on public meetings, and opportunities to review and comment on draft documents. Dam owners willing to participate will receive guidance and technical assistance on activities associated with dams that can minimize harm to Atlantic salmon. Dam owners willing to implement the plan will also allow us to provide legal protections to owners as it relates to the ESA. Significant financial assistance may also be available to dam owners willing to pursue dam removal or fish passage improvements that contribute towards the continued survival and recovery of Atlantic salmon.

Kleinschmidt will be calling small dam owners, including you, over the next few weeks to talk with you about your dam. The survey takes less than 10 minutes to complete and your participation is completely voluntary. You are not obligated to answer any of the questions, though we encourage you to answer as many questions as you feel comfortable with. This will help us identify your needs and to understand ways that we may be able to assist you in meeting current federal regulations for providing fish passage.

Your cooperation in this study is very important to us. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Thank you in advance for your help with this important study!

Sincerely,

Name

Title

NOAA Fisheries Service Maine Field Station