

# Dammed Maine -- Five Biographies

With more dams per river-mile than any other state, Maine leads the nation in dam removals. This class has considered how government policies affect management of our rivers. Readings have touched on environmental and hydropower regulation, water law, political theory, watershed management and resource economics. Several visitors, each with differing perspectives on Maine river management and dam operations, have joined in class discussion. Each student has prepared a web based study of a Maine dam, including graphics, maps and pictures. The five "Dam Biographies" include:

- The [Edwards Dam](#) stood at the head of tide on the Kennebec River in Augusta for over a century and a half. Like many dams across the state it served several purposes and affected the lives and interests of many. The removal of the dam in 1999 set a nation wide precedent, marking the first time in history that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) ordered a decommissioning. Since then, the Edwards Dam has been seen as a model of dam decommissioning.
- The lower [Penobscot River Restoration Project](#) effort could be the last great push for Atlantic salmon restoration in the United States. Though 90% of all salmon who return to New England return to the Penobscot, the populations of migrating fish are slowly dwindling. Should this effort prove unsuccessful, it is unlikely for the nation to devote much more time or money into the research and labor that comes with fish rescue.
- [Churchill Dam](#) at the head of the Allagash Wilderness Waterway releases flows into the Nation's first state-managed "Wild and Scenic River." This 'wild' designation has created controversy over access to the waterway. The state replaced the dam in 1998 without an Army Corps of Engineers permit and had to file for an after the fact permit. Implementation of the subsequent Memorandum of Agreement, the River Drivers' Agreement, and the Maine Legislative Act LD 2077 has led to controversy over the nature of public access to the waterway and has been the subject of legislation and recent federal litigation.
- [Harris Station Dam](#) is above Wyman reservoir, and just downstream from Moosehead Lake. Releases from Harris, the largest dam in Maine, generate substantial hydropower and also support livelihoods of downstream whitewater rafting interests. Harris is in the heart of Plum Creek's land use proposal pending before LURC.
- In the 1930's proposals for a [Passamaquoddy Tidal dam](#) project were shelved. Yet the Bay of Fundy has one of the largest the tidal power potentials in the world. Maine's energy future will likely involve tidal power projects and new hydroelectric dams.

The location of these dams are shown on this map of Maine. ES 398, "Dammed Maine: Watershed Policies and Governance" is taught by [Peter Sly](#). [Send email](#)