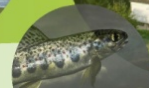
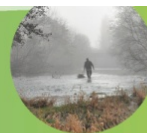


# RENAISSANCE DE LA VALLEE DE LA SELUNE

EFFACER - RESTAURER - VALORISER  
COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL - FRANCE

>24 - 26 Septembre 2019  
RENNES - AVRANCHES



## Good News: Restoring Free-flowing Rivers in Maine Works!

### The impact of river restoration on ecosystems and human communities.

Joshua Royte, Senior Conservation Scientist, The Nature Conservancy in Maine

Two key projects in the state of Maine, USA, transformed rivers that were once polluted, heavily dammed, and with negligible (<1,000/yr.) searun fish to healthy, vibrant places with newly accessible habitat that supports millions of migratory fish annually in addition to boating, fishing, and commercial harvest. In 1999, the Edwards Dam on the Kennebec River was the first in the USA to be removed based on denied federal permits because of US laws requiring ecological and social considerations, including tribal input, to be taken into account along with economic value. In 2004, a partnership collected by the Penobscot Indian Nation signed an agreement to purchase three dams on the Penobscot River to remove two of those closest to the ocean and bypass a third, allowing the dam owner to improve fish passage while also supporting increased hydropower production at other dams in the system. The Penobscot River Restoration Project improved access to over 2,600 km of previously inaccessible habitat including 100% of the habitat for lower river migratory fish and 60% of upstream migrants. The result of these projects is the largest run of river herring (alewife and blueback herring) in the West Atlantic, >8 million fish in 2019 and >8,000 American shad. It's unclear if Atlantic salmon populations are responding yet. These restored fish runs: net at least one town as much as 1/10th of their annual budget through harvest permit sales (\$700,000 of town income statewide), and provide 50% of spring lobster trapping bait for the state's most important fishery (which is \$1/2 billion/year overall- note that the second-most significant fishery is juvenile American eel). This increases productivity of these river ecosystems at multiple trophic levels, provide a food source for humanitarian relief efforts, and increases fishing for American shad and striped bass, and importantly has increased connections of people living around the river that appreciate the restored rivers.