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eComment P-2727 Leonard Lake Dam Ellsworth Maine

The Leonard Lake and the Graham Lake dams are up for their 30 year relicensing. The Leonard Lake Dam is 66 feet high, and has no fish passage either up river or down river. It is at the base of the several hundred square mile Union River watershed. The river at the base of the dam teems with alewives, shad and glass eels every spring. In fact the harvesting of these anadromous fish is a very lucrative industry. However these fish cannot get upriver to breed and continue to maintain their populations. Some fish are transported by truck up above the dams, but are cut to pieces by the turbines as they come back down in September.

These dams are not major electricity producers. The Leonard Lake Dam has four turbines that are used for peak demand only. The dam is in poor shape and needs millions of dollars of repair. To relicense these dams and have either the public or private enterprise invest in their repair makes no sense financially. There is more money to be made reestablishing the very lucrative fishing industry that would develop if the Union River watershed were reopened. Please consider not re-licensing the Leonard Lake Dam. Please consider putting a good fish ladder at the Graham Lake Dam along with a turbine or two. NOAA would probably be interested in helping with the cost of removing the Leonard Lake Dam.

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