

Toby A. Stephenson, Ellsworth, ME.

Dear FERC Committee Members,

I live in Ellsworth, Maine at the end of Third St. and I enjoy the view of Leonard Lake and its associated dam from my property. I canoe, fish, and swim in both Leonard and Graham lakes (my family owns a home on Graham L.), so it is fair to say the dam's existence, or lack thereof, and the regulation of water levels on Graham Lake that supply peak power demands, directly impact me and nine of my family members. Knowing this, one might think I am opposed to removal of the Leonard L. Dam. Not so! I am in support of a thoughtful solution that considers the effects the dam, or its removal, has on the greater Ellsworth community, with careful consideration given to, not just economic benefits, but a healthy and robust fishery. We are all aware that run of river is critical to the biological processes of anadromous and catadromous fish, and in order to maintain healthy populations, successful, non-lethal passage must be maintained. Approving the relicensing of the dam should not be the outcome unless it can be shown that successful and robust fish passage is achievable!

Furthermore, it should be noted that by removing the dam and returning the river to its pre-dam flow, there might be significant benefits to the local economy by attracting white water sports and supporting businesses. There has been a significant shift in the last century away from removing natural resources as a means to creating jobs, to maintaining and benefitting from them. We need not look any further than Acadia National Park to see how preservation of nature has grown the economy of Hancock County!

But this may not be a win or lose situation. I would draw your attention to the Damariscotta Mills fish ladder in Damariscotta, Maine. The Mills is a successful fish passage that has been developed and maintained through strong community involvement, and has been a huge success with 1.3 million alewives returning to spawn in Damariscotta Lake in 2014, and the annual Alewife Festival attracting hundreds of people each year, drawing attention to the benefits of a healthy fishery through an aesthetically pleasing design. If there is a way to continue the use of clean hydropower and allow the safe and successful passage of alewives and salmon both up and down the Union River, then I am in support of that effort. If we could use that success as a public education showcase by attracting visitors to enjoy the fish run and observe the mechanics of hydro power, then all the better. However, to renew the license without an updated perspective of the importance of the alewife and salmon fishery to our ecosystem and our economy is unacceptable in my opinion.

In summary, I would be pleased to see hydropower in conjunction with "successful and non-lethal" passage of fish both up and down river. If that passage proves to be impossible, then I support dam removal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Toby A. Stephenson

Ellsworth, ME.

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