



Meddybemps Lake Fishway

Project: Meddybemps Lake Fishway, Dennys River, Downeast Maine

Before

Tributary: The Dennys River flows 23 miles from Meddybemps Lake to the Hardscrabble estuary in Downeast, Maine. The Atlantic salmon of the Dennys River were listed as endangered in 2000. At 6,765 acres, Meddybemps Lake is very large with the potential to support a significant run of sea run alewives. The lake also provides overwinter habitat for Atlantic salmon and contains American eel, and sea lamprey.



The Atlantic Salmon population in the Dennys River was listed as endangered in 2000.

Problem: The existing Denil fishway was too short and thus prevented passage at both high and low flows. Also, the exit channel was flawed and a very large boulder below the fishway was altering the hydraulics of the fishway. Eel passage was also thought to be very limited at the site.

Solution: The fishway was extended along its axis an additional 14 ft into Meddybemps Lake, a new retaining wall at the fishway exit was built, the entrance was modified, and stream boulders were repositioned below fishway entrance. The addition of the baffles now serves to decrease flow velocities when the lake water level is high. When the lake water elevation drops, the additional baffles can





be removed to allow sufficient water to flow down the fishway. Lastly, an eel pass was constructed by Maine Council ASF volunteers.

Anticipated Results: The Maine Department of Marine Resources did not know the existing size of the alewife run but now believes the new fishway can rebuild the run to approximately 1 million adults. Likewise, eel numbers and sea lamprey numbers should also increase.

Partners: Partners included the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program (financial and technical assistance), the Maine Department of Marine Resources (technical, permitting, local oversight), and the Orchard Family that owns the land around the fishway (logistical). The Atlantic Salmon Federation provided project management and permitting and their Maine Council Director, Don Sprangers and his Washington County students built the eel pass.

Total Project Costs: \$122,900
(Engineering, field reconnaissance, permitting and construction)

Project Completion: August 2010

