

June 1, 2020

Commissioner Judy Camuso  
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife  
41 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Commissioner Camuso,

We are writing on behalf of the Maine Chapter of Native Fish Coalition (NFC), NFC National, Downeast Salmon Federation (DSF), Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF), Maine Council – ASF, Union Salmon Association, Upstream Watch, Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, Elliotsville Foundation, Ray “Bucky” Owen, Edward Baum, Matthew Scott, Joan Garner Trial, Mark Whiting, Catherine Schmitt, and Topher Browne to formally request that you conduct an investigation into the appropriateness of designating Atlantic salmon as Endangered [12 M.R.S.A. §10001 (19)] in accordance with the provisions of the Maine Endangered Species Act (MESA) [12 M.R.S.A. §12804].

Whereas Atlantic salmon are classified as Endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act and the only viable Atlantic salmon population in the United States is the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment (GOM DPS), it follows that Atlantic salmon should also be listed as Endangered under the MESA. In listing the Atlantic salmon as a federally endangered species, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) determined that the GOM DPS is in danger of extinction throughout its range (National Archives, Document number 00-29423, federalregistrar.gov).

Per the statement of purpose of the MESA, as a species of rich “esthetic, ecological, educational, historical, and scientific value” to the state (MESA §12801), Atlantic salmon meet the Qualifications for Consideration for Listing at the state level per MDIFW Rules (09-137 Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Chapter 8: Endangered Species, 8.02 Designation of Endangered and Threatened Species).

The lack of listing at the state level is inconsistent with the position of the USFWS and NMFS. Without a state listing, Atlantic salmon are at risk of state policies that run counter to the USFWS’ and NMFS’ position on GOM DPS. Listing Atlantic salmon as Endangered would help protect this critical resource, align the State of Maine with federal efforts to protect the species, and help conserve one of Maine’s and the nation’s greatest and most emblematic fish.

In light of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and the ongoing activities surrounding the International Year of the Salmon, we appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

**Organizations**

**Native Fish Coalition, Maine Chapter**, Emily Bastian, Chair

**Native Fish Coalition**, Bob Mallard, Executive Director

**Downeast Salmon Federation**, Dwayne Shaw, Executive Director

**Atlantic Salmon Federation**, John Burrows, Executive Director of U.S. Operations

**Maine Council Atlantic Salmon Federation**, David Huntress, President

**Union Salmon Association**, Morris Lambdin, President

**Upstream Watch**, Amy Grant, President

**Friends of Merrymeeting Bay**, Ed Friedman, Chair

**Elliotsville Foundation**, Lucas St. Clair, President

**Kennebec Reborn**, Doug Watts, President

**Individuals**

**Ray “Bucky” Owen, PhD**, Former MDIFW Commissioner

**Edward Baum**, Fisheries Scientist, Retired Program Coordinator for Maine Atlantic Sea-Run Salmon Commission

**Matthew Scott**, Emeritus, AFS, AIFRB; Retired Chief Biologist Maine DEP and former Deputy Commissioner MDIFW

**Joan Garner Trial, PhD**, Retired MDIFW Fisheries Biologist, Atlantic Salmon Commission, DMR Bureau Sea Run Fisheries

**Mark Whiting, PhD**, Retired DEP Biologist for DEP Salmon Rivers Program

**Catherine Schmitt**, Journalist and author of *The President's Salmon: Restoring the King of Fish and its Home Waters*

**Topher Browne**, Journalist and author of *Atlantic Salmon Magic*

